



**CITY OF VAUGHAN
VAUGHAN METROPOLITAN CENTRE SUB-COMMITTEE
AGENDA**

This is an Electronic Meeting. The Council Chamber will not be open to the public. Public comments can be submitted by email to clerks@vaughan.ca. If you wish to speak to an item listed on the Agenda, please pre-register by contacting Access Vaughan at 905-832-2281 or clerks@vaughan.ca by noon on the last business day before the meeting.

Tuesday, April 11, 2023
9:30 a.m.

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2. DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST	
3. COMMUNICATIONS	
4. DETERMINATION OF ITEMS REQUIRING SEPARATE DISCUSSION INCLUDING MEMBERS RESOLUTION(S)	
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6. CONSIDERATION OF ITEMS REQUIRING SEPARATE DISCUSSION
7. NEW BUSINESS
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VMC Sub-committee Report

DATE: Tuesday, April 11, 2023

WARD: 4

TITLE: VMC DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY UPDATE – APRIL 2023

FROM:

Haiqing Xu, Deputy City Manager, Planning and Growth Management

ACTION: FOR INFORMATION

Purpose

To provide an update on the status of development activity in the Vaughan Metropolitan Centre (VMC).

Report Highlights

- Efforts are being undertaken to maintain a healthy balance between current population trends and available hard and soft infrastructure, including community services, parks, open spaces, and facilities.
- Residential development:
 - 3,900 completed residential units are home to 7,722 residents
 - 5,649 residential units are under construction bringing an additional population of 11,185 residents
 - 10,666 residential units have been approved by Council and will house 21,119 future residents
 - 18,933 residential units, for 37,487 potential residents, are proposed currently through active development applications and subject to Council approval
- **The realization of developments that are occupied, under construction, or approved represents more than 40,026 residents in over 20,215 units, greatly exceeding the population target established for the 2031 planning horizon.**

Report Highlights (Continued)

- Office and retail development:
 - Currently, about 78,000 m² (~840,000 ft²) of new office space has been built or approved, representing 55% of the 2031 office space target.
 - Two development applications propose an additional 76,000 m² (~820,000 ft²) of office space. The built, approved, and new applications represent 110% of the 2031 office target.
 - In 2022, about 40,000 m² (~431,000 ft²) of retail space was occupied, under construction, or approved by Council, representing 56% of the 2031 retail target.
 - To date, about 65,000 m² (~700,000 ft²) of retail space is occupied, under construction, approved by Council, or subject to Council approval, representing 92% of the 2031 retail target.
- **Despite the progress on office and retail uses, the exponential growth and interest in residential development continues to far exceed non-residential uses and creates an imbalance of uses in the downtown.**

Recommendation

1. THAT the VMC Development Activity Update – April 2023 report be received for information.

Background

The VMC is the City of Vaughan's emerging downtown and central business district. It will be the financial, innovation and cultural centre of the City, with a vibrant sense of place, a high-quality public realm and environmentally sustainable design practices. The vision of the VMC is to create a dynamic and balanced community encompassing different built form typologies, and a mix of uses that are transit supportive and pedestrian friendly.

To achieve a critical mass supportive of a downtown and meet the minimum density target of 200 people and jobs per hectare established by the Provincial *Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe* (the 'Growth Plan'), the VMC Secondary Plan ('VMCSP') established a population target of 25,000 residents and 11,500 jobs by 2031.

The existing VMCSP provides a strong vision and policy foundation for the VMC and has helped guide development since its partial approval by the Ontario Land Tribunal ('OLT', formerly the Ontario Municipal Board and Local Planning Appeal Tribunal) in 2015. **Since this time, development interest in the VMC has exceeded expectations. The exponential growth in residential intensity was not anticipated when the VMCSP was initially developed, nor planned for in the related engineering and community service master plans.**

The City is undertaking an update to the VMCSPP to address provincial and regional policy updates, and to respond to the rapid growth that is putting pressure on realizing Council's vision for a vibrant and balanced downtown. The VMCSPP Update will result in a renewed policy framework that supports the completion of a downtown and central business district as a complete community that is well supported by municipal services and social infrastructure to 2051 and beyond.

The VMCSPP Update is being coordinated with concurrent studies including the VMC Parks and Wayfinding Master Plan (PWMP), VMC Transportation Master Plan Update, and the VMC Functional Servicing Strategy Report. The findings of these related studies will inform the update to the VMCSPP. Please refer to the VMC STUDIES UPDATE – APRIL 2023 for more information on these background studies.

Previous Reports/Authority

[VMC Development Activity Update – March 5, 2019](#)

[VMC Development Activity Update – November 10, 2020](#)

[VMC Development Activity Update – November 2, 2021](#)

[VMC Development Activity Update – September 20, 2022](#)

[VMC Secondary Plan Update – Phase 1](#)

[VMC Secondary Plan Update – Phase 2 Approach](#)

[VMC Secondary Plan Update - Phase 2 - Land Use Options](#)

Analysis and Options

Residential development activity continues to dramatically surpass the population targets established in the VMCSPP

Residential development has exceeded the targets set out in the VMCSPP for residential units and number of residents. Currently, more than 23 high-rise mixed-use buildings have been built or approved in the VMC, at almost 1.6 times the density set out in the Secondary Plan.

This residential development includes:

- 3,900 units, or approximately 7,722 residents, in developments that are completed and occupied
- 5,649 units, or approximately 11,185 future residents, in developments that are under construction
- 10,666 units, or approximately 21,119 future residents, in developments approved by Council but not yet constructed
- 18,933 units, or approximately 37,487 potential future residents, based on in-progress development applications

The realization of developments that are occupied, under construction, or approved represents more than 40,026 residents over 20,215 units, greatly exceeding the population target established for the 2031 planning horizon.

Residential uses need to be supported by other uses

The ratio of residential to non-residential uses continues to widen, raising concern for a lack of balance in the VMC. Development intensification is trending at a rate that is an average of 1.6 times greater than the maximum permissions afforded by the VMCSPP. Density aspirations in the marketplace continue to set new precedents.

While the magnitude of development interest and activity in the VMC is exciting, the risk of growing too quickly is that the downtown may not develop into a complete community. Residential interests need to be balanced with other uses to achieve the vibrant downtown envisioned by Council and described in policy. Additionally, the VMC requires a healthy balance of social infrastructure to serve the existing and growing population.

Recognizing this concern, staff have proactively advanced several VMC plans and studies, as noted earlier in this report, to address these trends, reassess the development context, and refocus efforts moving forward.

Generating a diversity of building typologies and family-sized units continues to be a challenge in the VMC

The predominate form of development continues to be high-rise residential towers on podiums, with the delivery of other building typologies, such as low-rise and mid-rise buildings, lagging. Staff continue to encourage the integration of other building typologies to address the “missing middle” challenges in the City. This issue is exacerbated as previous development applications that included mid-rise buildings are revisited and revised for high-rise development.

Based on approved development applications, 98% of the VMC housing supply comprises apartment units, with the balance represented by townhouses. There is also a continuing trend toward smaller units and less unit mix diversity. Within multi-unit buildings, the vast majority of units are 1-bedroom (57%), followed by 2-bedrooms (41%), while only 2% of the units are 3-bedrooms.

While the VMC has successfully secured its first purpose-built rental building, a focus on providing equitable, affordable housing and additional rental tenured buildings continues to be a priority.

Development must be balanced with supporting social infrastructure to achieve a complete community

Vaughan’s downtown has enjoyed a competitive advantage in the marketplace with its strategic location and catalytic infrastructure investments. This success, however, has come with unexpected consequences. As previously mentioned in this report,

residential growth in the VMC continues to outpace office, retail, and other non-residential uses. As a result, the provision of social infrastructure necessary to support a complete community, such as parkland, schools, community services and facilities, has not kept pace with the residential population generated by new developments.

In order to achieve Council's vision of a vibrant, diverse, thriving downtown and central business district, and to deliver on the City's Term of Council Strategic Priority of City Building to "Develop the VMC as a complete community", the provision of social infrastructure must be implemented in lockstep with residential development.

Of growing concern is the City's capability to build out parks, schools, cultural spaces, emergency services and provide affordable housing to support the existing and growing community. The dramatic increase in residential density trends suggests a deficit in the available parkland. To address these concerns, the City initiated the VMC PWMP to provide the City with a Parks and Open Space Master Plan that identifies parkland provision gaps and provides a plan that can be implemented in a timely manner to fulfill the VMC parkland target at a mid-to-long term time frame. This work has been used to inform the ongoing land use options developed as part of the VMCS Update. Given the recent changes to provincial planning legislation, it is imperative that the procurement of parkland be made a top priority to benefit residents and visitors with a wide variety of recreational opportunities in the VMC.

Concern to develop suitable school sites across the VMC

The City continues to work with the School Boards and landowners to develop suitable school sites and urban school typologies across the VMC. The size and quantity of future school sites is being reviewed to ensure the demand from the increase in resident population can be properly facilitated. Additional schools may be required to accommodate the influx of residents.

Proposed office area on course with 2031 planning horizons but no longer balanced to achieve a vibrant central business district

At the end of 2022, a total of about 73,000 m² (~786,000 ft²) of new office space was approved or built. Since then, almost 5,000 m² (~54,000 ft²) of new office space was constructed. Two development applications currently under review are proposing an additional almost 76,000 m² (~820,000 ft²) of office space which, if built, would represent 110% of the 2031 office target projections. This is offset by a previously approved development that has reapplied for additional residential density, significantly reducing their proposed office space.

Achieving significant office uses is a fundamental component in realizing the City's vision of a world class downtown and vibrant community. Despite being on track to meet the office and job targets established by the VMCS Update, development interest in office uses has been largely dwarfed by that of residential uses which is more than triple the office development trend, resulting in an overall imbalance of uses.

Residential development interest in the VMC has resulted in a 7:1 resident-to-jobs ratio, based on developments that have been completed or are under construction, far exceeding the 2.6:1 resident-to-jobs ratio indicated in the original VMCSPP. This ratio risks being further eroded to 8:1 based on the applications currently under review with the City, and the PACs that have taken place. Should this trend continue, Council's vision of a world class downtown, with a vibrant central business district and balanced community, may no longer be possible.

To help address this trend, and to help inform the land use options developed through Phase 2 of the VMCSPP Update, an Office Feasibility Assessment ('Feasibility Assessment') was completed on March 18, 2022, by Parcel Economics, to understand the market demand for office in the VMC. Recognizing the current challenges associated with developing new office uses in a post-pandemic landscape, this Feasibility Assessment has helped to identify a number of mechanisms – or policy solutions – to help improve feasibility conditions.

The Feasibility Assessment demonstrates that by utilizing a combination of policy mechanisms, the financial conditions for office development are improved, which ultimately encourages the growth of a critical mass of office activity within the VMC over the long-term planning horizon. Consideration will need to be given to balancing current development pressures that predominantly focus on residential uses with longer-term goals relating to growth in office employment. The results of this Feasibility Assessment will be relied upon to support policy-related decisions for the VMCSPP Update.

Proposed retail uses have increased

By the end of 2022, about 12,000 m² (~130,000 ft²) of retail space was completed and occupied, almost 11,000 m² (~118,000 ft²) was under construction, and about 17,000 m² (~183,000 ft²) of retail space was approved by Council. Currently, an additional 25,000 m² (~270,000 ft²) of retail space is proposed, subject to Council approval. Should the applications proceed to full approval and construction, 92% of the 2031 retail target will be attained.

Retail is a critical component to achieving a vibrant and sustainable downtown. While retail uses often follow the establishment of a critical mass of residents, early planning for a significant retail space is critical in creating a complete community. As with office uses, the VMCSPP Update must assess whether this emerging balance of uses is appropriate for the vision of the VMC as a complete community.

Financial Impact

There are no economic impacts resulting from this report.

Operational Impact

Staff have actively coordinated with other City departments, including Economic Development, to provide input for this report.

Development applications for the VMC are actively reviewed through a Pre-Application Consultation process whereby applicants meet with City staff to present a preliminary concept plan. The City then identifies the submission requirements for a complete application to ensure future submissions can be processed efficiently. City staff review incoming applications internally across various departments and with other external agencies to ensure the proposed developments adhere to the guidelines of the VMCSPP and City and regional policies.

Broader Regional Impacts/Considerations

Building a downtown is a lengthy, challenging and ambitious goal. York Region's Official Plan places tremendous importance on the centres and corridors within its local municipalities as the cornerstone to achieving provincial population and employment growth targets.

Regional staff have participated and will continue to be actively in various City initiatives, such as the VMCSPP Update and the development application process, by providing input and comments as required to ensure the successful implementation and coordination of projects in the City's downtown.

Additionally, collaboration with broader regional stakeholders continues to be an important factor in ensuring the success of the VMC.

Conclusion

City staff are committed to ensuring that the VMC continues to develop as a complete and balanced community with high-density mixed uses that are balanced, transit supportive and pedestrian friendly, with a vibrant sense of place, a high-quality public realm and environmentally sustainable design approaches.

As the average density of projects continues to increase with new applications, a significant focus must be placed on the delivery of community services and social infrastructure. To balance the increase in residential population, a recalibration of the provision of hard and soft infrastructure will be required to support this new community, including parks, community services and facilities, transportation, and municipal servicing systems.

The VMCSPP Update has been initiated to address new provincial and regional policies and to confirm that the framework is still relevant considering the nature of existing, approved, and proposed development in the VMC. Updates to the VMCSPP will continue to recognize the VMC as the City's priority intensification area and downtown, while ensuring the area continues to develop as a complete, balanced and equitable community that supports the City's strategic priorities as outlined in the 2018-2022 Term of Council Service Excellence Strategic Plan.

For more information, please contact Christina Bruce, Director of Policy Planning and Special Programs, Ext. 8231.

Attachments

N/A

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Reviewed by



City Manager
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VMC Sub-committee Report

DATE: Tuesday, April 11, 2023

WARD: 4

TITLE: VMC CAPITAL PROJECTS AND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN UPDATE

FROM:

Haiqing Xu, Deputy City Manager, Planning and Growth Management

ACTION: FOR INFORMATION

Purpose

To provide an update on the capital projects and implementation plan within the Vaughan Metropolitan Centre (VMC).

Report Highlights

- Construction of several critical infrastructure projects, including roads and parks, required to support development in the emerging downtown, are underway or complete.
- The development of Vaughan's first Urban Park continues to advance.
- Final design of the Edgeley Pond and Park is complete, and most agencies have provided approvals.
- The Black Creek Renewal design is underway.
- The On-Street Paid Parking Pilot is in its second year of a two-year pilot project.
- Public Art advances creative placemaking in the VMC.

Recommendation

1. That the VMC Capital Projects and Implementation Plan Update report be received for information.

Background

As construction progresses in Vaughan's downtown, the VMC team continues to focus on advancing critical infrastructure improvements in each of the four

quadrants to keep pace with development and provide the necessary infrastructure to support the emerging community. Given the complexity of the planned capital infrastructure, seamless design coordination and timing of constructed works is being carried out.

Construction has commenced for many of the priority infrastructure projects identified in Attachment No. 1, several of which are complete. In parallel with implementing these critical civil infrastructure works, the VMC team is focused on prioritizing the planning and design of parkland and social infrastructure to ensure that a complete community is developed in step with the growing population. The VMC Development Activity Update – April 2023 report and VMC Studies Update – April 2023 report received today outline the current situation in the downtown and provide projections to inform the City’s focus moving forward. This report will concentrate on the efforts that have been undertaken, or are underway, in each of the quadrant areas to advance the initial infrastructure required to support growth.

Previous Reports/Authority

[VMC Capital Projects and Implementation Plan Update September 2022](#)

[VMC Capital Projects and Implementation Plan Update November 2021](#)

[Black Creek Renewal and Edgeley Pond and Park Project Update June 2021](#)

[VMC Capital Projects and Implementation Plan Update November 2020](#)

[VMC Pay-and-Display On-Street Parking Pilot Project May 2020](#)

[VMC Implementation and Construction Update December 2019](#)

[VMC Parking Conditions and Management Strategy June 2019](#)

[VMC NW and SW Quadrants Implementation Update June 2019](#)

[VMC Implementation Plan and Priority Infrastructure Project Update March 2019](#)

[VMC Development Activity Update March 2019](#)

Analysis and Options

Design and Construction activity is advancing in each quadrant of the VMC

At the September 2022 VMC Sub-Committee meeting, staff identified critical infrastructure improvements and construction activities completed or underway to support redevelopment activity in the downtown.

Significant progress has been made through 2022 and early 2023 on projects captured in the VMC Implementation Plan. The following sections highlight activities that have advanced in each quadrant.

Northwest Quadrant

Road works are advancing on the widening of Portage Parkway and opening of Bent Tree Drive

Since the opening of three spine roads in 2019, including Applewood Crescent from Highway 7 to Portage Parkway, Commerce Street from Highway 7 to Apple Mill Road, and Apple Mill Road from Applewood Crescent to Edgeley Boulevard, further advancements to the road network are currently underway. This includes the detailed design and utility relocation coordination work related to the widening and reconstruction of Portage Parkway between Jane Street and Applewood Crescent. The Portage Parkway widening detail design is expected to be finalized in Q2 2023. The road widening works are expected to be initiated in Q3 2023 and completed by Q2 2026. Utility relocation is part of the first phase of construction and is anticipated to last 13 months.

Construction of Bent Tree Drive, a new local road connecting Millway Avenue to Jane Street, is underway and is expected to be completed in Q1 2023 and open to the public in Q2 2023.

David Braley VMC Centre of Community is approaching its one-year anniversary

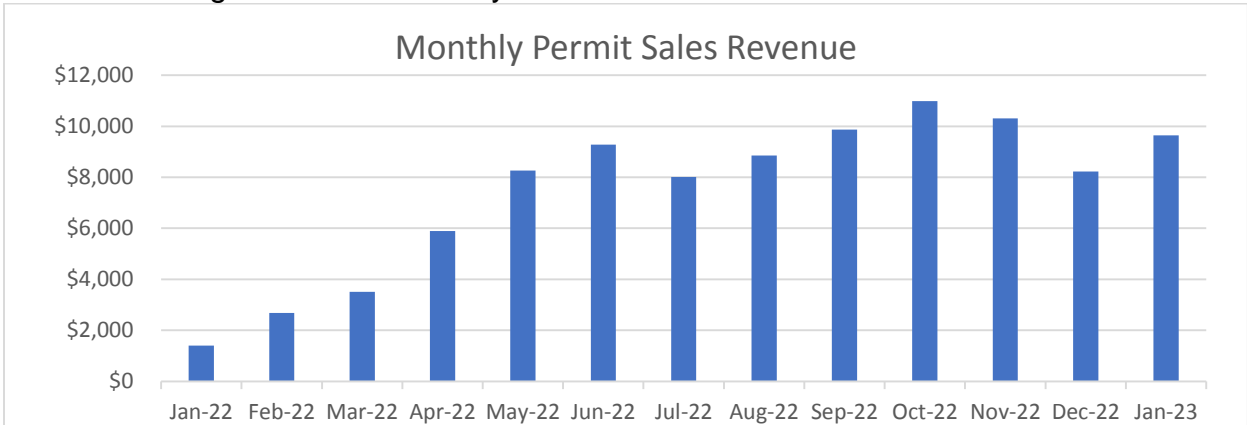
The iconic David Braley VMC Centre of Community will be celebrating its first-year anniversary in June 2023. The state-of-the-art facility located at 200 Apple Mill Road includes a YMCA, daycare and City of Vaughan library and community recreation space (Vaughan Studios & Event Space). This facility is proving to be transformational to the downtown, providing important social infrastructure and community space for downtown residents and businesses and was recently recognized with a Vaughan Urban Design Award of Excellence.

The Parking Pilot Project is in its second year of a two-year pilot project

In October 2021, the City launched its first paid on-street public parking initiative in the VMC Mobility Hub area. The pilot accommodates demand for short-term (3-hour maximum) public parking from various road users such as local residents, businesses and visitors on three downtown streets including, Apple Mill Road, New Park Place and Buttermill Avenue. Special provisions are in place for the segment on Buttermill Avenue adjacent to the Centre of Community to facilitate the ease-of-use for parents to accommodate the YMCA day-care. Parents do not have to register their vehicle at a parking meter, they can simply scan a QR code at the YMCA day-care front desk or scan a QR code on a business card. Accommodation for persons with accessibility needs is also provided at preferred, designated locations free of cost.

Through the first year of implementation, sales revenue continues to be promising. In the first 13 months since the launch, a steady increase has been observed in monthly revenues. See Table 1 below.

Table 1 Parking Revenue Summary



The pilot is going through its second winter season (2022-2023) where snow clearance adjacent to the parking meters is being provided in a partnership between the City (on public right-of-way) and SmartCentres (on unassumed road sections).

A Communications Plan was developed with various stakeholders at the onset of the pilot and is being implemented in consultation with City's Corporate and Strategic Communication department; with both internal and external websites live to the public providing guidance to valuable information such as City and Vendor contact information and answers to [Frequently Asked Questions](#).

The parking pilot continues to be closely monitored by various stakeholders/departments such as Bylaws, Public Works, Corporate and Strategic Communications, Financial Services and Policy Planning and Special Programs.

City staff will provide further updates as the pilot completes its full two-year term in October 2023.

Vaughan's first Urban Park continues to advance

The City has completed the acquisition of the remaining blocks of the future North Urban Park from the landowner. Staff continue to coordinate the planning and design of the park and work collaboratively toward the implementation of the first phase.

Block 1 (between Edgeley Boulevard to the west and KPMG Tower to the east) was presented to the Vaughan Design Review Panel in March 2021 and the conceptual park master plan has been incorporated into the VMC Parks and Wayfinding Master Plan. Staff continue to evaluate delivery options targeting a solution that will deliver maximum benefit to the City.

The delivery of the North Urban Park will provide needed active and passive park amenities and recreation options to the growing downtown population.

Northeast Quadrant

The Edgeley Pond and Park final detailed design is complete with most agency approvals obtained

The Edgeley Pond and Park (EPP) is an existing pond block located northeast of the Jane Street and Highway 7 intersection and within the Black Creek corridor. The EPP will be retrofitted with landscape enhancements including trails to create an iconic park within the City of Vaughan's emerging downtown while treating local drainage to current stormwater management standards.

The September 2022 VMC Capital Projects and Implementation Plan report provided an update on the Edgeley Pond and Park project. At that time, permits and approvals were obtained from most of the approval agencies. A resubmission was made to the Ministry of Northern Development, Mines, Natural Resources and Forestry and their approval is pending. The timing for the Edgeley Pond and Park permit approvals will coincide with the other City activities being undertaken for the Black Creek channel improvements along and downstream of Highway 7. To provide a seamless delivery, the Edgeley Pond and Park construction will be incorporated with the single Design-Build assignment known as the (expanded) Black Creek Renewal (BCR) project. The (expanded) BCR project also includes the detailed design and implementation of the Highway 7 culvert improvements at Jane Street.

Jane Street Streetscape & Plaza + Plateau detailed designs are complete and the Jane Street Hydro Underground work was initiated

The detailed design for both the Jane Street streetscape and Plaza & Plateau are completed. The construction of these VMC projects will also be completed as part of the expanded Black Creek Renewal project.

The hydro undergrounding project includes the conversion of the overhead transmission lines to below grade infrastructure fronting the Edgeley Pond and Park, along Jane Street from Portage Parkway to north of Highway 7. City of Vaughan is coordinating with Alectra to undertake this work, which will commence by Q4 2023 and will be completed prior to the construction of the Edgeley Pond retrofit and Jane Street streetscape works. It should be noted that the hydro undergrounding along the frontage of the Met development along the east side of Jane Street and south of Portage Parkway is complete, which includes the future proofing and installation of the necessary utility ducts.

Construction of the Expo City continues

Building upon the park vision and program set through the Edgeley Pond and Park public consultation, this parkland is a crucial component of the overall Edgeley Pond and Park open space system. park will provide active recreation facilities including a natural playground, an ice-skating loop, a splash pad, and a pavilion with programmable community space and washrooms where private and public events can be hosted throughout the year.

The pavilion building construction is at 80% completion and the park works are 50% complete, with the remaining landscape work to be completed in Q2 and Q3 2023.

Southeast Quadrant

Works for Black Creek Renewal expanded project scope are underway

The Black Creek corridor defines the westerly edge of the northeast and southeast quadrants of the VMC and provides a unique frontage opportunity for development. The [September 2022 Black Creek Renewal – Project Update](#) provided a summary of the expanded project. The BCR project remains a high priority and supports the City's commitment to mitigate flooding, enhance stormwater management, and create parks and open spaces within the VMC.

Given the interdependencies between the Edgeley Pond and Park (northeast quadrant), the Highway 7 culvert improvements, and the Black Creek Renewal (BCR) project (southeast quadrant), all three project components are combined into one design-build delivery model, known as the (expanded) Black Creek Renewal project. Commenced in 2021, the BCR project allows for a seamless delivery, to incorporate the implementation of the Edgeley Pond retrofit, detailed design and implementation of the Highway 7 culvert improvements, and detail design and implementation of the Black Creek renewal south of Highway 7. The expanded BCR project will allow for delivery efficiencies and mitigate construction risks of the critical infrastructure in the VMC.

While the design-build delivery model accommodates advancing certain design elements, property acquisitions for the Black Creek Renewal project are essential to ensure that the Project's delivery schedule is achieved. The project team is moving forward with property acquisitions required to facilitate construction and has commenced negotiations for those properties. The timely completion of this task will aid in advancing the Project.

To date, the City has completed property acquisitions for private lands and York Region owned public lands. City staff are advancing negotiations with Infrastructure Ontario and the Ministry of Transportation, that are expected to conclude in 2023. The need for the remaining lands along the corridor continues to be assessed as they are private properties.

The feasibility of implementing the potential interim measures and the associated impacts to existing businesses is currently being analyzed by the Technical Advisor. The analysis is scheduled to conclude in early 2023.

Staff remain focused on advancing critical infrastructure improvements along the Black Creek channel corridor north, south and through Highway 7 to keep pace with development and provide the necessary infrastructure to support the emerging downtown. Implementation of key infrastructure projects will continue to leverage investments in the VMC.

Staff will continue to work closely with internal (City of Vaughan departments) and external (TRCA, York Region, and VMC landowners) stakeholders to facilitate the advancement of the BCR project.

Southwest Quadrant

Construction of new local roads are underway

Development activity in the southwest quadrant continues to advance and construction is near completion on the Mobilio development which includes the delivery of significant municipal infrastructure. The construction of the new Millway Avenue is complete; widening of Interchange Way east-west is underway, servicing of Autumn Harvest Road and Mable Smith Way are in progress, and the roads are expected to be completed this year, including the provision of north-south and east-west publicly accessible private pedestrian mews.

Block 3N, known as Festival, will include delivery of a new local road named Celebration Avenue, and improvements to the existing Commerce Street and widening of Interchange Way. Within the block interior, the pedestrian mews will connect into an animated privately owned public space. These two interconnected open spaces will be activated by retail, commercial uses and programming. Construction servicing is underway, and the roads are expected to be completed in 2023/2024.

Block 3S includes the delivery of the Commerce Street realignment based on the VMC Secondary Plan objective to create a fine-grain grid network of streets. The old curvilinear Commerce Street has been realigned and extended south to create a north-south minor collector road (Commerce Street) and traversing east to extend the minor collector road (Doughton Road) to Interchange Way. Both realigned Commerce Street and Doughton Road extension are now open to the public.

The Millway Avenue Linear Park detailed design is complete

Staff and the landowner have finalized the detailed design of the Millway Avenue linear park south of Interchange Way in the southeast quadrant and the landowner undertook an initial tender in Q4 2022. The first phase of the park, including lawns and significant tree planting, will be constructed in Q2 and Q3 2023.

The second phase will have facilities suitable for the new Mobilio community, including a playground, active play equipment, basketball half-courts, a shade structure, and social gathering spaces flanked by perennial planting beds and a flexible lawn. This phase will be delivered in Q2 and Q3 2024.

Public Art advances creative placemaking in the VMC

Public Art continues to contribute to downtown's identity as a distinctive cultural destination. Notable advancements in several Public Art projects are bolstering creative placemaking at the VMC.

In the north-east quadrant, design development is nearing completion for Cortel Group's Expo City CG Tower Public Art installation overlooking Edgeley Pond and Park, near the northeastern corner of Highway 7 and Jane Street. The monumental, three-dimensional multi-media sculptural piece, *Edgeley Pond Fathom* (working title) by artist team Alan Tregebov and Joanne Heinen, slated for installation in 2024, alludes to the previous industrial life of the area through a transformation-themed storyline paying homage to the landscape, history of the land and the story of Black Creek. Interpretively aligned with the EPP's design to store heavy rainfall or snow melt in the landscape, the artwork will respond in a similar manner to the change of climate, measuring and transmitting the response of the floodplain to an indicator visible to viewers along Highway 7.

In the south-east quadrant, QuadReal's Assembly Park Outdoor Gallery Program launched this summer with the inaugural curated exhibition, *Transitions*, honouring the journey of Assembly Park and its current passage into the creation of a future community. Located west of 80 Interchange Way, this space, featuring the work of a roster of resident and GTA artists, is anchored by the strategic layout of 13 shipping containers displaying a series of multi-disciplinary and site-specific artworks on their

facades, complemented by plantings and garden beds to define the spatial footprint. Coupled with a robust activation plan, the Gallery space provides meaningful opportunities to advance placemaking aspirations for the VMC by creatively animating the existing urban design context through the narrative of transformation and community connection. Assembly Park received a Vaughan Urban Design Award of Merit.

Public Art planning is advancing for several new installations slated soon for the VMC. The Public Art Plan for SmartCentres' VMC East Block North major gateway feature sited at the corner of Jane Street and Portage Parkway is in the design concept phase. A substantial on-site contribution of \$2,185,000 was secured through the Metrus (Terra) Property Inc. development for a future gateway Public Art installation at Highway 7 and Jane Street. The City-led *ARTonBOXES* program will launch through its *Group of Seven REMIXED* pilot phase in Q2 2023, debuting original art on designated traffic signal boxes in high-profile, publicly accessible locations across all five wards of the City – including the VMC.

Financial Impact

There are no economic impacts resulting from this report.

Operational Impact

Consultation and collaboration continues across various City operations to solicit feedback and identify potential impacts spanning different departments (Infrastructure Delivery, Economic Development, Transportation and Fleet Management Services, By-Law and Compliance, Licensing and Permit Services).

Broader Regional Impacts/Considerations

Collaboration continues with regional stakeholders which is an important factor in realizing the success of the VMC.

Conclusion

The VMC team will continue to work closely with Toronto and Region Conservation Authority, York Region, York Region Rapid Transit Corporation, and VMC landowners to facilitate the advancement of priority projects in the downtown. These catalyst projects, together with the momentum generated by development activity, are rapidly contributing to the realization of Vaughan's downtown.

The VMC team is focused on advancing critical infrastructure improvements in each of the four quadrants to keep pace with development and provide the necessary infrastructure to support the transitioning downtown. Implementation of key

infrastructure projects will continue to leverage investments in transit and support early placemaking strategies for the downtown.

For more information, please contact Christina Bruce, Director of Policy Planning and Special Programs, ext. 8231.

Attachment

1. VMC Priority Infrastructure Projects.

Prepared by

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Christina Bruce, Director, Policy Planning and Special Programs, ext. 8231.

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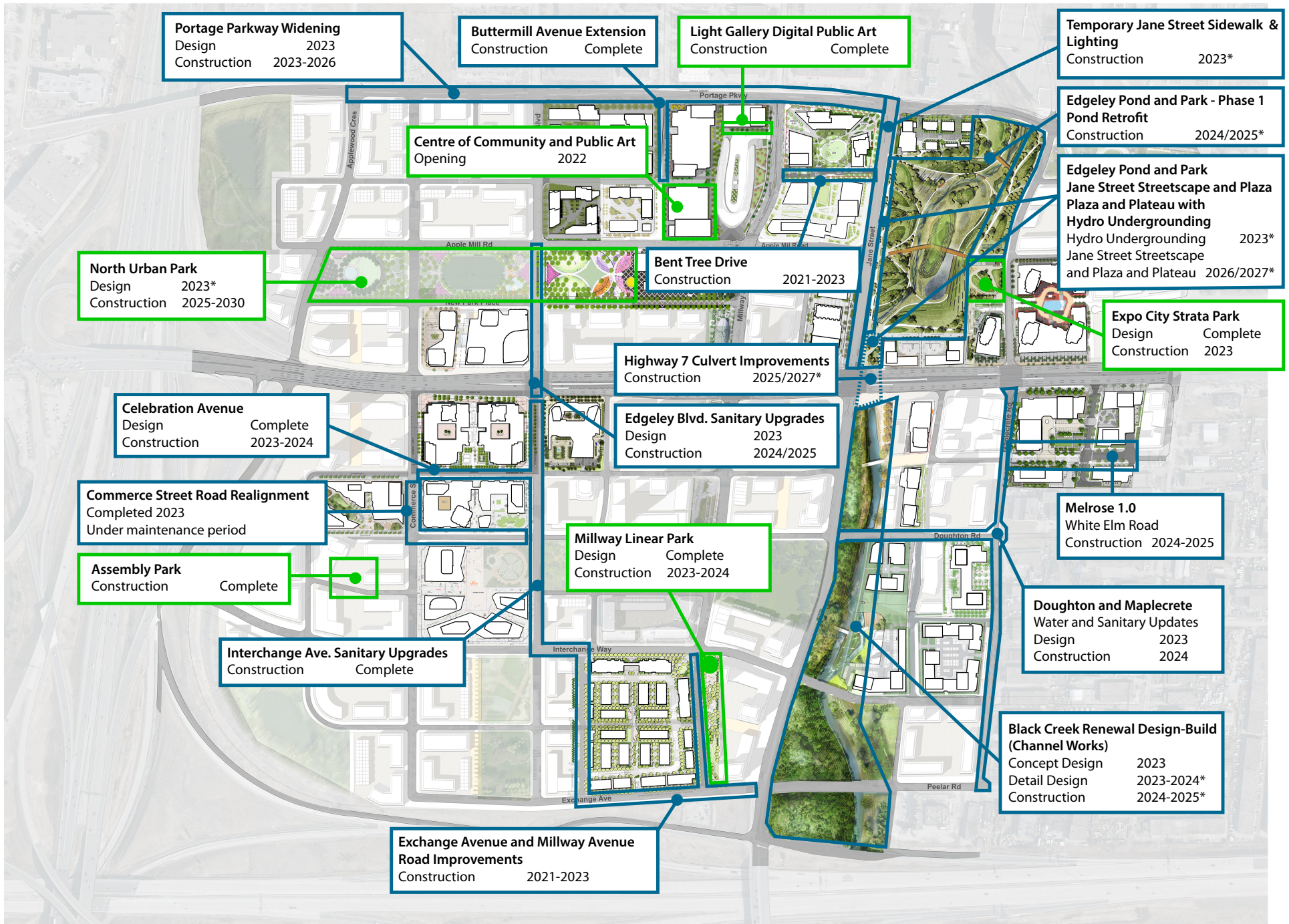


Haiqing Xu, Deputy City Manager
Planning and Growth Management

Reviewed by



Nick Spensieri, City Manager



VMC Sub-committee Report

DATE: Tuesday, April 11, 2023

WARD: 4

TITLE: VMC STUDIES UPDATE – APRIL 2023

FROM:

Haiqing Xu, Deputy City Manager, Planning and Growth Management

ACTION: FOR INFORMATION

Purpose

To provide an update on current Vaughan Metropolitan Centre (VMC) plans and studies, their purpose and implementation, and how they contribute to the creation of a complete community in the VMC.

Report Highlights

- Efforts are being undertaken to maintain a healthy balance between current population trends and available hard and soft infrastructure, including community services, parks, open spaces and facilities.
- The VMC Secondary Plan Update initiated Phase III, which involves developing a preferred land use framework to best achieve Council's vision of a world class downtown and complete community.
- The VMC Parks and Wayfinding Master Plan has completed a master plan and cost estimate and devised an implementation strategy outlining priorities and strategies for parkland delivery, while also preparing to install prototype signage as part of its wayfinding pilot project, with a final report expected in Q3 2023.
- The VMC Functional Servicing Strategy Update is advancing with a final draft expected by Q3 2023, and the final report completed in conjunction with the city-wide Integrated Urban Water Plan study.
- The VMC Transportation Master Plan Update is advancing with results and recommendations planned for Q4 2023.

Report Highlights (Continued)

- The various VMC plans and studies inform each other and are being closely coordinated to ensure their collective contribution to the Term of Council Strategic Priority of City Building to “Develop the VMC as a complete community, with emphasis on cultural development”.
- Staff continue to ensure every study undergoes a robust and strategically coordinated public consultation process to optimize input.

Recommendation

1. That the VMC Studies Update – April 2023 report be received for information.

Background

As outlined in the VMC Development Activity Update – April 2023 Report being received today, 3,900 residential units are built and are home to 7,722 residents; 5,649 residential units are under construction bringing an additional population of 11,185 residents; and 10,666 residential units have been approved by council and will house 21,119 future residents. The realization of developments that are occupied, under construction, or approved represents more than 40,026 residents in over 20,215 units, greatly exceeding the population target established for the 2031 planning horizon. Given that this growth trend is expected to continue, staff have refocused the priorities of the VMC.

To meet the hard and soft infrastructure needs of this growing community, staff are undertaking an update of the VMC Secondary Plan, the VMC Transportation Master Plan, and the VMC Functional Servicing Strategy Report. They are also undertaking the VMC Parks and Wayfinding Master Plan.

The VMC Capital Projects and Implementation Plan Update April Report, also received today, outlines activities that have been undertaken, or are underway, to provide the infrastructure to support development and growth in the emerging downtown.

Previous Reports/Authority

Previous reports relating to the VMC Studies Update can be found at the following links:

[VMC Studies Update September 2022](#)

[VMC Studies Update November 2020](#)

[VMC Studies Update May 2020](#)

[VMC Implementation Plan and Priority Infrastructure Project Update March 2019](#)

Analysis and Options

The VMC Program comprises a multi-disciplinary, dedicated team working to ensure the efficient and effective delivery of infrastructure and services to the current and future residents, workers, and users of the VMC. The VMC Program's broad scope of work includes the coordination and delivery of the various studies identified below so that they inform each other and collectively contribute to the creation of a complete community in the VMC.

VMC Secondary Plan Update

The VMC Secondary Plan (VMCSP) Update was initiated in August 2020 and is being led by Gladki Planning Associates in association with Greenberg Consultants, DTAH, and Parcel Economics. It is being undertaken to address provincial and regional policy updates, and to respond to the rapid growth that is putting pressure on realizing Council's vision for a vibrant and balanced downtown. The VMCSP Update will result in a renewed policy framework that supports the completion of a downtown and central business district as a complete community that is well supported by municipal services and social infrastructure to 2051 and beyond.

The VMCSP Update is being undertaken in five phases and has recently concluded Phase II – *Prepare and Develop Land Use Options* which utilized the priority issues identified from Phase I – *Background and Issues* to develop preliminary land use options for consideration. Phase II included a robust and comprehensive public consultation component, which is instrumental in informing the next phase of the project.

The project team has initiated Phase III – *Elaborate a Preferred Framework*, which will assess and balance the feedback that was received as part of the Phase II consultation and will develop a preferred land use framework that best achieves Council's vision of a world class downtown and complete community. Once the preferred land use framework is developed, additional consultation and stakeholder engagement will be conducted.

As part of Phase III, the project team will ensure hard and soft infrastructure is available to deliver a renewed VMCSP vision. This work includes collaborating with the VMC's TMP team to run traffic models on the land use options; as well as working with the City's Development Engineering Department and York Region to confirm servicing capacity.

The VMCSP Update will be brought forward as the first secondary plan under the City's new official plan.

VMC Parks and Wayfinding Master Plan

The VMC Parks and Wayfinding Master Plan (PWMP) was initiated in May 2020 with the successful proponent, Janet Rosenberg & Studio. The challenges of COVID-19 made clear how vital parks are to our citizens, especially in high-density communities that have little private open space. The PWMP outlines a master plan scheme and establishes an implementation strategy to facilitate the timely development of parks and open space for VMC residents, commuters, and visitors, as outlined in the VMCSPP and envisioned in supportive placemaking studies, together with the development of a public realm wayfinding strategy that can be implemented incrementally to achieve a legible and cohesive public realm. The study is being coordinated with the VMCSPP, which will deal with land designation.

Growth trends in the VMC are outpacing the provision of social infrastructure, with parkland an area of particular concern. In this context, the study has identified opportunities to add active parkland and improve the public realm, both within and adjacent to the VMC.

Master Plan and Implementation Strategy

Building on the findings of the Assessment Report and public engagement process, draft design principles and facility fit study, the PWMP has developed an ultimate VMC master plan supported by a costing and implementation strategy outlining short-to-long term parkland targets for the VMC. The master plan identifies up to 20.9 hectares of Public Squares, Neighbourhood Parks, and Urban Parks within the VMC, and up to 55.8 hectares outside of it, some of which may be shared with other intensification areas. This parkland can be implemented over time in a measured response to development and will provide the City with options for service level delivery.

The master plan creates compact, balanced, and meaningful parks and open spaces within the VMC boundary, while recognizing a need, shared with Vaughan's other intensification areas, to access larger sporting facilities, trails, and green space outside of its boundary. It has identified the need for a robust active transportation network, in order to seamlessly connect parks and open space, within the VMC and across the City. A final report is expected in Q3 2023.

Signage Pilot

As part of the strategy to promote the implementation of an interconnected parks and open space network in the downtown, a signage and wayfinding masterplan and strategy was developed to help define how residents, visitors, and businesses perceive the VMC and assist them in moving through it.

The consultant has developed and refined potential options for VMC signs, with significant input and evaluation by various City departments and transit authorities. The second part of this study involves the creation of a series of prototypes which are being fabricated and installed in key areas of the VMC in Q2 2023. Prototype installation will be followed by an analysis of sign durability and effectiveness achieved through an engagement strategy aimed at residents and visitors to the VMC. Feedback received from the engagement strategy will be used to guide the future refinement and expansion of the VMC wayfinding system.

VMC Functional Servicing Strategy Update

The VMC Functional Servicing Strategy Report (VMC FSSR), is one of several study areas of the Integrated Urban Water Plan (IUWP) led by Infrastructure Planning & Corporate Asset Management (IPCAM), and awarded to Civica Infrastructure Inc.

The IUWP is a strategic level planning document that provides a roadmap for long-term servicing requirements to meet the City's intensification and future growth needs. This Study documents existing issues and opportunities, considers and evaluates solutions, and identifies preferred water, wastewater, and stormwater servicing strategies. This Study is being conducted in accordance with the Master Planning process outlined in the Municipal Engineers Association (MEA) Municipal Class EA guidelines. This approach involves the preparation of a Master Plan document at the conclusion of Phases 1 and 2 of the Class EA process.

Public Information Centre (PIC) 1 was held in February 2021 and provided the purpose of the study, background information, servicing considerations, and concepts. PIC 2 was held in July 2022, which provided alternative servicing options, evaluation and draft preferred alternatives, and preferred recommendations for water, wastewater, and stormwater.

A final draft VMC FSSR document is expected by Q3 2023, and the final report will be completed in conjunction with the city-wide IUWP study. The FSSR assesses water, wastewater, and stormwater systems performance under existing and ultimate buildout scenarios, based on projected population targets and trends, and will establish a long-term strategy to provide safe, reliable, and sustainable services to the existing and future population of the VMC. The VMC FSSR is an update of the current VMC Municipal Servicing Master Plan (2012), ensuring that servicing capacity can support the anticipated increase in height and density of future growth and intensification in the VMC.

VMC Transportation Master Plan Update

The VMC Transportation Master Plan Update (VMC TMP), including Municipal Class Environmental Assessments (MCEA) for Millway Avenue and Interchange Way, is being led by WSP, and is being conducted concurrently with, and informing, the VMC Secondary Plan Update.

To date, and following Notice of Commencement in November 2020, Phase 1 has been completed for the VMC TMP Update and Millway Avenue and Interchange Way projects. Key elements of the work plan included identification of problems and opportunities, confirmation of the need to continue to build from the VMC Secondary Plan transportation network, and corroboration of the need to advance planning, design and implementation of the collector road network including the Millway Avenue and Interchange Way projects.

Consultation and engagement with stakeholders, the public, and Indigenous Communities is key component of the process. An in-person Public Information Centre (PIC) 1 was held on Feb 16, 2023, and online virtual PIC remained open for public viewing and commenting (including through a survey) until March 24, 2023, seeking feedback and input on the information presented on:

- VMC TMP Update challenges and opportunities, and identification of potential solutions in supporting the Secondary Plan update
- Millway Avenue and Interchange Way preliminary road alignments and a preliminary cross-section option in conjunction and informed by findings from technical supporting reports such as an archaeological assessment, contamination overview study, cultural heritage report, hydrogeological report, and traffic impact assessment.

With input and feedback from the first round of consultation, the VMC TMP Update and MCEAs are progressing into Phase 2 where transportation solutions are being developed and assessed based on the future population and jobs projections from VMC Secondary Plan Update land-use Options 1 and 2.

Preferred transportation solutions for the VMC TMP Update and preferred preliminary designs for Millway Avenue and Interchange Way will be presented at a future and final formal round of consultation as part of the study process. PIC 2 is anticipated in Q2/Q3 2023. The VMC TMP and MCEA studies are expected to be concluded in conjunction with the VMC Secondary Plan Update, targeting Q1 2024.

As part of the VMC TMP, the Highway 400 Colossus Overpass corridor protection area continues to be coordinated in conjunction with the ongoing Weston 7 Secondary Plan and Weston 7 Transportation Master Plan.

An Innovative and Coordinated Consultation Plan is Being Developed

Staff are ensuring every study undergoes a robust and strategically coordinated public consultation process to optimize input to the work. In addition to leveraging the VMC Landowner Working Group platform developed over many years, staff are working both internally and with external consultants to develop engagement processes that effectively reach Vaughan's residents, business owners, and other stakeholders. Current consultation methods are focusing on virtual connections and will be evaluated over time.

Financial Impact

There are no financial impacts resulting from this report.

Operational Impact

The studies staff are undertaking have been robustly coordinated across City departments and with external agencies and other stakeholders, through regular Technical Advisory Committee meetings and other engagement touchpoints. The various VMC plans and studies inform each other and are being closely managed to ensure their collective contribution to the Term of Council Strategic Priority of City Building to “Develop the VMC as a complete community, with emphasis on cultural development”.

Broader Regional Impacts/Considerations

Collaboration continues with regional stakeholders which is an important factor in realizing the success of the VMC.

Conclusion

Building a downtown is an ambitious goal. The average density of development projects continues to increase with new applications, a factor which must be balanced with measured delivery of community services, social and hard infrastructure.

As a result of this growth, studies have been initiated and coordinated to ensure that the downtown continues to develop as a complete and balanced community that is transit supportive and pedestrian friendly, with a vibrant sense of place, a high-quality public realm, and environmentally sustainable design approaches.

The VMC team continues to collaborate across internal departments and with residents, landowners, and other stakeholders to deliver a complete community.

For more information, please contact Christina Bruce, Director of Policy Planning & Special Programs, Ext. 8231.

Attachments

N/A

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