

VAUGHAN METROPOLITAN CENTRE

STREETSCAPE AND OPEN SPACE PLAN

DRAFT PHASE 2 REPORT: VISION, PRINCIPLES AND OBJECTIVES

May 2012

Table of Contents

	Page No.		Page No.
1.0 Vision Statement	1		
2.0 Placemaking, Identity and Design	3		
2.1 Principle: Ensure a Strong “Green Infrastructure” Framework	3		
Objective 1: Develop Streetscape Hierarchy	3		
Objective 2: Ensure Streets, Parks and Open Spaces are “Place Makers”	3		
Objective 3: Develop Integrated Wayfinding System	3		
2.2 Principle: Promote High Quality Design	4		
Objective 1: Express a Sophisticated Quality of Design	4		
Objective 2: Ensure Highest Level of Achievement in Vaughan	4		
Objective 3: Utilize High Quality Materials	4		
Objective 4: Create Strong Street Interface	4		
2.3 Principle: Create an Identity for the VMC	5		
Objective 1: Build on Natural and Human History	5		
Objective 2: Promote Strong Gateways	5		
Objective 3: Develop Distinct Neighbourhoods	5		
Objective 4: Ensure Complete Neighbourhoods	5		
Objective 5: Include Unique and Distinctive Street Furnishings	6		
Objective 6: Create Character Defining Spaces	6		
3.0 Spatial System and Hierarchy	7		
3.1 Principle: Develop a Strong Public Realm Framework	7		
Objective 1: Provide the Armature for Future Development	7		
Objective 2: Synchronize Public Spaces with Development	7		
Objective 3: Utilize Built Form to Create and Shape the Spatial System	7		
3.2 Principle: Develop a Connected Centre	8		
Objective 1: Ensure Connectivity	8		
Objective 2: Ensure Accessible Spaces	8		
3.3 Principle: Create a Hierarchical Series of Spaces	8		
Objective 1: Create New Urban Spaces Hierarchy	8		
Objective 2: Develop Urban Guidelines for Parks and Open Space	8		
3.4 Principle: Accommodate an Evolving Plan	9		
Objective 1: Develop a “Flexible” Plan	9		
Objective 2: Identify Service Requirements	9		
4.0 Community Health and Well-Being	11		
4.1 Promote Pedestrian Priority	11		
Objective 1: Define User Priority Hierarchy	11		
Objective 2: Create Safe Transit Access	11		
		Objective 3: Ensure Active Transportation Facilities	11
		Objective 4: Design Pedestrian Friendly Public Realm	11
		Objective 5: Integrate Transit Infrastructure	12
		4.2 Principle: Develop a Healthy and Safe Community	12
		Objective 1: Active and Vibrant Public Realm	12
		Objective 2: Design Safe and Secure Public Spaces	12
		4.3 Principle: Promote Human Comfort and Seasonality	13
		Objective 1: Create Comfortable and Engaging Spaces	13
		Objective 2: Develop All Season Spaces	13
		Objective 3: Ensure Effective and Efficient Lighting	13
		5.0 Culture and Diversity	15
		5.1 Principle: Express VMC’s Heritage	15
		Objective 1: Develop Thematic Elements	15
		Objective 2: Reflect the Ambitions of Vaughan Residents	15
		5.2 Principle: Recognize Diversity	15
		Objective 1: Design Culturally Significant Spaces	15
		Objective 2: Attract a Dynamic Demographic	15
		5.3 Principle: Ensure a Range of Uses	16
		Objective 1: Create a Destination	16
		Objective 2: Establish a Strong Civic Presence	16
		Objective 3: Incorporate Community Facilities	16
		Objective 4: Promote Unique Programming and Events	16
		6.0 Sustainability	17
		6.1 Principle: Promote a High Quality Green Living Theme	17
		Objective 1: Apply Innovative Solutions	17
		Objective 2: Showcase of Green Technology	17
		Objective 3: Promote District Energy	17
		6.2 Principle: Stormwater Management	18
		Objective 1: Regeneration of Black Creek	18
		Objective 2: Identify Urban vs. Natural Character	18
		6.3 Principle: Apply LID Measures	18
		Objective 1: Create Green Design Standards	18
		6.4 Principle: Develop a Tree and Planting Palette	19
		Objective 1: Select High Performing Species	19
		Objective 2: Create Hierarchy Among Streets	19
		Objective 3: Coordinate Trees and Utilities	19

The Streetscape and Open Space Master Plan for the Vaughan Metropolitan Centre will result in the creation of a public realm framework that is distinctly urban and vibrant; green and sustainable; and achieves a mutually supportive relationship between the public and private realms.

Urban and Vibrant

The public realm spaces - its streets, parks and open spaces - will distinguish the VMC from its surrounding suburban context through the development of a new contemporary expression of bold, high quality design for public spaces.



Green and Sustainable

The public realm spaces will showcase sustainable design innovation and green infrastructure that encompass the natural environment, social environment and the economic environment.



Mutually Supportive Implementation

The implementation strategy focuses on achieving the long term design intent for the streetscapes, parks and open spaces through a consistent, cooperative and seamless blend of public and private investment.



2.0 Placemaking, Identity and Design

2.1 Principle: Ensure a Strong “Green Infrastructure” Framework

Objective 1: Develop Streetscape Hierarchy

Establish a hierarchy for streetscapes within the Vaughan Metropolitan Centre, determined by proposed street type, transportation priority, built form, land use and related activities, and natural and / or cultural features or significance.



Objective 3: Develop Integrated Wayfinding System

Develop an integrated wayfinding system that is bold, clear, easy to navigate and accessible to ensure public awareness of destinations, facilities and transit options. This system shall provide direction and orientation for pedestrians, cyclists, transit users and private vehicles users.



Objective 2: Ensure Streets, Parks and Open Spaces are “Place Makers”

Ensure that all public realm elements within the VMC are designed to create “a memorable place”. Streets, pedestrian walkways, pathways, parks, open spaces and natural areas are envisioned to become destinations and provide residents with a feeling of mutual ownership.



2.0 Placemaking, Identity and Design

2.2 Principle: Promote High Quality Design

Objective 1: Express a Sophisticated Quality of Design

Ensure that the design quality of public and semi-private areas is contemporary, modern, simple and elegant, consistent with the overall vision for VMC. The inclusion of quality public amenities, such as parks, squares, laneways, public art, etc. will play an integral role in city building and shaping the VMC.



Objective 3: Utilize High Quality Materials

Encourage the use of high quality materials to harmonize architectural design and reduce long-term maintenance and life-cycle costs. Using high quality materials for the design of the streetscapes, parks and open spaces will set the precedence for the quality of the built form within the VMC.



Objective 2: Ensure Highest Level of Achievement in Vaughan

The VMC shall strive for the highest level of design excellence; environmental and economic sustainability; and cultural and social success to ensure the area will develop to be an iconic “downtown” within the City of Vaughan, creating a new definition of a metropolitan centre.



Objective 4: Create Strong Street Interface

Reinforce a strong relationship between the built form (private and public) and the streetscape. Main entrances to buildings, human scaled built form, streetscape edge transition, setbacks, parking, etc. shall contribute to developing a strong street interface.



2.0 Placemaking, Identity and Design

2.3 Principle: Create an Identity for the VMC

Objective 1: Build on Natural and Human History

Each place has unique qualities that are rooted in the natural and human history of the place. Building upon the attributes identified within the VMC, develop an overall identity for the area that differentiates it from the surrounding areas and the City overall.



Objective 3: Develop Distinct Neighbourhoods

Create distinct identities for each of the neighbourhoods within the VMC. Land use, built form, density, and natural character, among other factors, shall be considered when developing the identity and overall character theme for each neighbourhood.



Objective 2: Promote Strong Gateways

Develop strong gateway at the boundaries of the VMC for iconic identification and wayfinding of the VMC. Gateways may be expressed through a number of components, including public art, signage, building design and orientation, lighting paving, and plantings, among others.



Objective 4: Ensure Complete Neighbourhoods

Design for complete and livable neighbourhoods that are compact, walkable, and have a mix of uses, a variety of housing types, non-residential job generating uses, services and public facilities. The neighbourhoods within VMC shall be well served by parks, playgrounds, plazas and greenways; have integrated street design; and be well connected by all modes of active transportation.



Objective 5: Include Unique and Distinctive Street Furnishings

Develop a coordinated and exceptional suite of street furniture for use within the VMC. Distinctions and variations may be developed to identify the neighbourhoods and provide for further expression of individual neighbourhood identity.



Objective 6: Create Character Defining Spaces

Design spaces in the public realm that define the distinctiveness and character of the place. These spaces shall become important civic places within the Vaughan Metropolitan Centre and the City in general, serving as places of inspiration, contemplation and creativity.



3.1 Principle: Develop a Strong Public Realm Framework

Objective 1: Provide the Armature for Future Development

Develop a consistent armature for the future development within the VMC that will allow for potential evolution as the area develops. This framework will ensure that development respects and compliments the overall vision for the public realm.



Objective 3: Utilize Built Form to Create and Shape the Spatial System

Built form shall be strategically sited to define and shape the spatial public realm system. Street and park walls shall be defined to provide a sense of enclosure and bring the scale of development to a pedestrian-scale.



Objective 2: Synchronize Public Spaces with Development

Coordinate the development of the public realm in synchronization with the private development. Public spaces shall be implemented as development occurs around it, providing outdoor spaces for residents, visitors and employees to enjoy. Local streets will be developed by the private sector and therefore shall occur as various blocks develop to create a consistent, fine grain grid of streets and spaces.



3.2 Principle: Develop a Connected Centre

Objective 1: Ensure Connectivity

Develop the VMC to ensure high connectivity within, through and to the surrounding areas. Create emotional and physical connections to the place to provide residents, visitors, employees and the like, with a sense of common ownership and pride.



3.3 Principle: Create a Hierarchical Series of Spaces

Objective 1: Create New Urban Spaces Hierarchy

Develop a hierarchy for new urban public space typologies. An urban philosophy for parks and open space in terms of context, scale, significance and function shall be developed that represents every level and scale of urban experience. Establish a system of publicly dedicated parks and open spaces, including Black Creek open space system, greenways / linear parks, major district park, central square, local neighbourhood parks, and parkettes. A connected system of private / semi-private accessible open spaces (i.e., pocket parks, plazas, minor squares, courtyards) shall also be developed.



Objective 2: Ensure Accessible Spaces

Create public spaces that are barrier-free to make the built environment safe, accessible and usable by all ages and abilities. All elements within the public realm shall comply with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) standards to ensure streets and parks and open spaces can be enjoyed by all.



Objective 2: Develop Urban Guidelines for Parks and Open Space

Establish guidelines and standards for parks and open spaces that spatially and functionally define their adjacent land use relationships, edges (built form), pedestrian and cycle circulation and potential range of facilities.



3.4 Principle: Accommodate an Evolving Plan

Objective 1: Develop a “Flexible” Plan

Create a plan that is accommodating in order to adapt to a variety of future potential development and growth scenarios. Develop a phasing strategy to inform future develop.



Objective 2: Identify Service Requirements

Identify service requirements for streets, parks and open spaces, as a key part of the development of the plan, including lifecycle, level of maintenance, and capital and operational costs.



4.1 Promote Pedestrian Priority

Objective 1: Define User Priority Hierarchy

Establish a user priority hierarchy for all streets within the VMC, to include pedestrians, cyclists, transit, commercial freight, and private vehicles. Support the development of a hierarchy of streets with streetscape amenities related to the priority user group.



Objective 3: Ensure Active Transportation Facilities

Accommodate active transportation users through the inclusion of related facilities within the public realm. Bicycle parking and storage at transit stations, pedestrian facilities throughout the VMC, and activation of the public realm will encourage transit use by giving priority to pedestrians, cyclists, transit users and persons with disabilities.



Objective 2: Create Safe Transit Access

Facilitate safe and comfortable pedestrian and cyclist access to transit stops and stations, as well as associated components. Integrate transit with other modes of transportation to ensure it is accessible for pedestrians, cyclists, etc. and will promote transit use within the VMC.



Objective 4: Design Pedestrian Friendly Public Realm

Develop a plan that is pedestrian-oriented and enables the safe movement of pedestrians throughout. Raised intersections, clearly marked pedestrian crossings, gathering spaces, streetscape furniture and amenities, and pedestrian lighting, as appropriate within the VMC, shall ensure that pedestrians are given the priority.



4.2 Principle: Develop a Healthy and Safe Community

Objective 5: Integrate Transit Infrastructure

Seamlessly integrate VIVA and TTC infrastructure with streetscape treatments as required. Integration of this infrastructure will provide convenient and accessible transit, encouraging its use.

*Objective 1: Active and Vibrant Public Realm*

Create a comfortable, safe, vibrant and attractive pedestrian environment with appropriate linkages to parks, plazas, public buildings, community facilities and commercial areas. Develop a design that makes people feel empowered, important, and excited to be in the places they inhabit in their daily lives. Promote a high quality of life through the provision of “livable” spaces where pedestrians can flourish.

*Objective 2: Design Safe and Secure Public Spaces*

Design public and private outdoor spaces to be safe, secure and provide natural surveillance. Utilize Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles in the development of the streetscape and open space plan for the VMC.



4.3 Principle: Promote Human Comfort and Seasonality

Objective 1: Create Comfortable and Engaging Spaces

Promote the use of weather protection and pedestrian comforts for outdoor patios and spaces, including shade, shadow, wind etc., to support a comfortable and engaging public realm. Social interactions are important during all seasons in both public and private areas to promote a dynamic VMC.

*Objective 3: Ensure Effective and Efficient Lighting*

Ensure effective and energy efficient street and pedestrian lighting to address various users, applications and context while creating a safe and secure environment.

*Objective 2: Develop All Season Spaces*

Provide opportunities for flexible all season use through programming and facilitating user comfort. Ensure that public and private spaces can be utilized all year round is imperative to creating lively and animated spaces. Providing adequate protection from winter winds will add to the vibrancy of the VMC.



5.1 Principle: Express VMC's Heritage

Objective 1: Develop Thematic Elements

Develop and integrate unique thematic elements into the design fundamentals for streetscapes, parks and open spaces, such as wayfinding, public art, seating, paving, lighting, and planting to express the natural and cultural heritage of the VMC.



5.2 Principle: Recognize Diversity

Objective 1: Design Culturally Significant Spaces

Design public spaces to recognize and reflect the cultural diversity of the residents of Vaughan. This could be made manifest through cultural events, seasonal programming and integration of cultural elements into the design of public realm spaces.



Objective 2: Reflect the Ambitions of Vaughan Residents

Create a plan that addresses the ambitions of the residents of Vaughan related to quality of life. High order transit facilities, ease of home ownership through a variety of affordable housing options, and pedestrian friendly environment will aim to create a diverse population.



Objective 2: Attract a Dynamic Demographic

Ensure that the VMC is positioned to attract a dynamic demographic, as related to age, ethnicity, culture, ability, etc. Programming and amenities located within the VMC shall provide for a wide variety of cultural events, community facilities, civic amenities, accessible areas, housing types, commercial uses and so on, to appeal to and accommodate the diverse demographic.



5.3 Principle: Ensure a Range of Uses

Objective 1: Create a Destination

Create a place that becomes a destination for residents and visitors within the City of Vaughan and beyond. Encourage major trip generators to locate in proximity to the subway station.

*Objective 3: Incorporate Community Facilities*

Include community facilities into the overall design of the parks and open space system. Ensure that these public facilities, such as libraries, performing arts centre, community centres, etc., are pedestrian-oriented and address the public realm.

*Objective 2: Establish a Strong Civic Presence*

Establish a strong civic presence within the VMC through the inclusion, design, and strategic siting of civic spaces and buildings. These facilities shall be located in prominent locations throughout the VMC.

*Objective 4: Promote Unique Programming and Events*

Develop unique, year-round and diverse programming and events within the VMC relative to size, type, frequency, etc. Ensure the opportunity for social interaction during all times of the year throughout the VMC will enable to community to thrive as a vibrant place to live, work and recreate.



6.1 Principle: Promote a High Quality Green Living Theme

Objective 1: Apply Innovative Solutions

Infuse every action, every space, and every detail with environmentally responsible, effective and innovative solutions. This shall be accompanied by encouraging compact and complete communities.



Objective 3: Promote District Energy

Strive to locate a district energy system to centralize the heating and cooling for the VMC. Complementary to this, it is important to develop strategies for energy infrastructure within a broader energy and emissions plan, and encourage energy inputs from several sources (i.e. refrigeration-heat from ice-rink, sewer heat, biomass, etc.) providing opportunities for carbon-neutral energy.



Objective 2: Showcase of Green Technology

Promote VMC as a leader of green technology and environmental sustainability. Incorporate state-of-the-art and cutting edge systems to reduce the urban heat island, reduce surface run-off and encourage renewable energy techniques.



6.2 Principle: Stormwater Management

Objective 1: Regeneration of Black Creek

Apply principles of localized and integrated stormwater management through the consideration of a range of techniques to drive the ecological regeneration of the Black Creek and associated watershed.



6.3 Principle: Apply LID Measures

Objective 1: Create Green Design Standards

Develop green design standards as part of the public realm system, for streets, parks and open spaces. A key aspect of this is how the public and private realm harmoniously work together to ensure low impact development measures are implemented successfully throughout the VMC.



Objective 2: Identify Urban vs. Natural Character

Identify the characteristics of stormwater management measures that will be undertaken within the VMC. There will be the opportunity to provide both urban and natural typologies of stormwater management techniques into the streetscapes, parks and open spaces throughout the VMC.



6.4 Principle: Develop a Tree and Planting Palette

Objective 1: Select High Performing Species

Develop a palette of high performing tree species to create a consistent approach to tree canopy within the VMC, while acknowledging the need for species diversity. Select hardy, salt and drought tolerant street trees that can meet the performance and canopy cover targets established for the VMC.



Objective 3: Coordinate Trees and Utilities

Organize street tree planting with above and below grade utilities and services, to provide optimum soil volume, quality, drainage and irrigation. Street tree planting shall be coordinated with built for and overhead utilities to ensure sufficient space is provided above grade.



Objective 2: Create Hierarchy Among Streets

Develop a hierarchy of street trees that reflects the street typology, this shall be supported by green walls, species selection and other sustainable planting strategies. Street trees selected for Avenue 7 and Jane Street will be carefully chosen according to York Region Forestry criteria.

