

# HOUSING ANALYSIS AND EMPLOYMENT LAND NEEDS Addendum to the April 2010 Report

Prepared for:

Vaughan Tomorrow

O U R C I T Y . O U R V O I C E .

**HEMSON**  
Consulting Ltd.

September 2011

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## I BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION

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The City of Vaughan recently prepared a new official plan that was adopted by Council on September 7, 2010. As input to the preparation of the new plan Hemson Consulting Ltd. in conjunction with Urban Strategies Inc., undertook an analysis of the City's long-term residential and employment land needs, including a municipal comprehensive review of employment land conversions.

The results of that analysis are set out in the *Housing Analysis and Employment Land Needs* report which was completed in April 2010 (the "April 2010 report"). In the April 2010 report, a total of seven employment land sites were recommended for a change in designation. These sites are proposed to be designated in the new official plan for either residential or retail use, as the case may be.

Since the completion of the April 2010 report, City staff have received requests for further employment land conversions. The Region of York has also requested that additional justification be provided for some changes in employment land designations that are proposed in the new official plan but were not addressed in the Hemson report. Accordingly, the purpose of this report is to present a follow-up evaluation of these lands.

Most of the additional employment lands requiring evaluation comprise those for which a *Commercial Mixed-Use* designation is being proposed. As shown on the following map, these lands include:

- The Jane Street corridor from Portage Parkway north to Rutherford Road;
- Two sections of the north side of Steeles Avenue; one between Islington Avenue and Jane Street and the other between Keele and Dufferin streets;
- An area at the southwest corner of Langstaff Road and Highway 27;
- The west side of the Highway 7 and Highway 27 intersection;
- An area at the southeast corner of Langstaff Road and Weston Road;
- An area on the north side of Rutherford Road below the CN rail line "tail track", east of Jane Street;
- An area on the north side of Major Mackenzie Drive, generally east of Keele Street and south of McNaughton Road; and
- An area just south of Highway 407, east of Dufferin Street along Caraway Drive and Racco Parkway.



Not to Scale

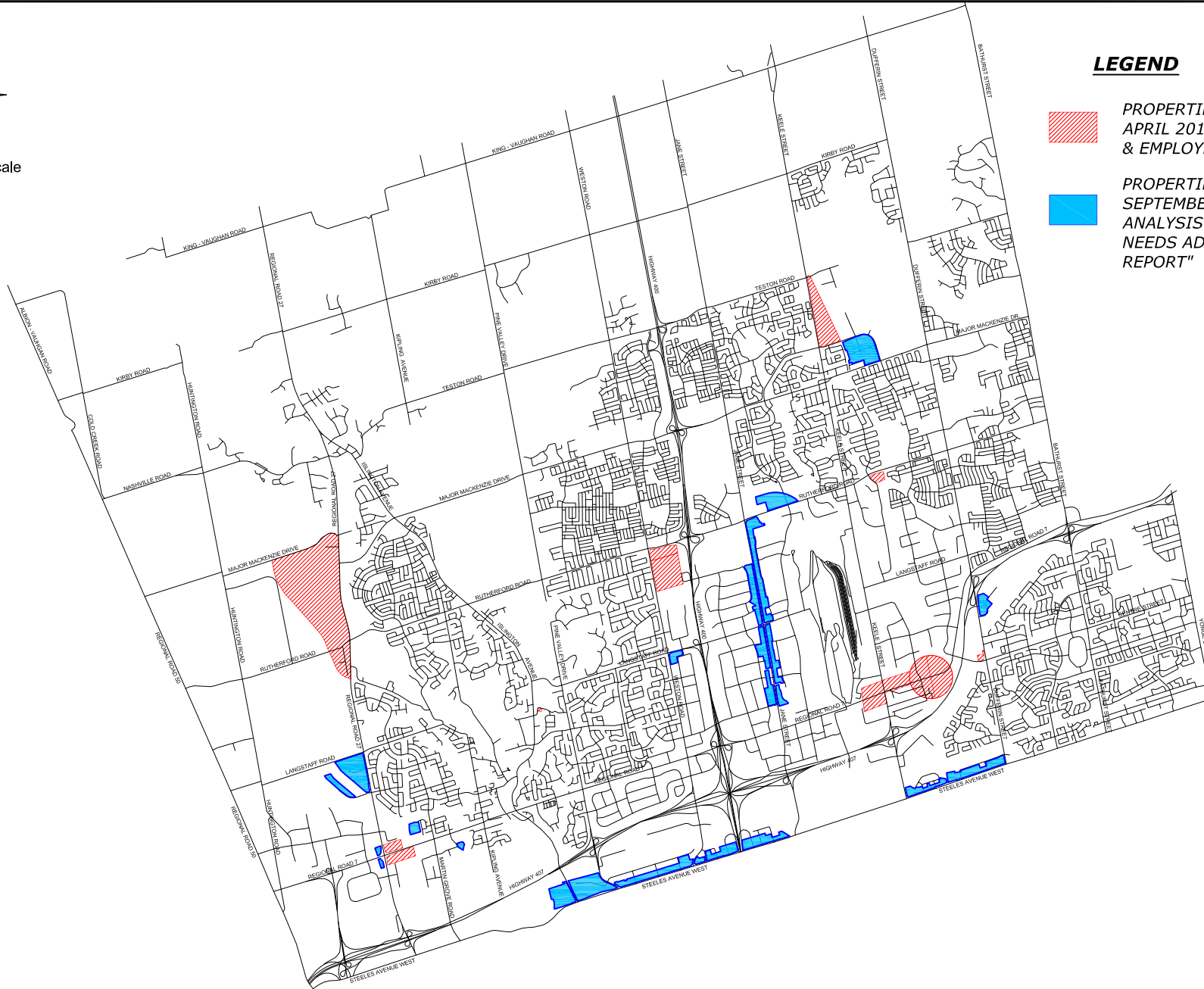
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PROPERTIES EXAMINED THROUGH APRIL 2010 "HOUSING ANALYSIS & EMPLOYMENT NEEDS STUDY"



PROPERTIES EXAMINED THROUGH SEPTEMBER 2011 "HOUSING ANALYSIS & EMPLOYMENT LAND NEEDS ADDENDUM TO APRIL 2010 REPORT"



# Lands Under Evaluation

Location:  
City Wide

Applicant:  
City of Vaughan



Policy Planning Department

# Attachment

File: 25.5.3

Date:  
September 13, 2011

# 2

The remaining lands comprise two smaller parcels in the Highway 7 corridor in the general vicinity of Martin Grove Road, as well as a small parcel located north of Steeles Avenue West, west of Islington Avenue. All three parcels are being proposed for a *Mid-Rise Mixed-Use* designation, which permits commercial and residential uses.

A follow up evaluation of the additional lands is necessary because they are considered by the Region of York to be conversions of employment land to non-employment uses within the meaning of the 2006 *Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe* (the *Growth Plan*). The additional lands have therefore been analyzed using the *Growth Plan* conversion tests in order to provide the Region with the requested justification and to maintain consistency with the approach taken in the April 2010 report.

Notwithstanding this approach, there remains some question as to whether or not all the City's proposed land use changes represent a conversion within the meaning of the *Growth Plan*. The two parcels proposed for a mixed-use designation, which permits residential use, are clearly conversions. It is less clear that the lands proposed for a *Commercial Mixed-Use* designation are conversions. In our view, these lands are not considered to be conversions within the meaning of the *Growth Plan*. Our reasons are set out below.

#### 1. Issue of Conversion Must be Considered Within the Context of Existing Official Plan Policy

The *Growth Plan* and *Provincial Policy Statement* (PPS) are broad policy documents that provide general direction on matters of Provincial interest. As such, both the *Growth Plan* and PPS maintain a broad definition of employment areas in order to allow municipalities the discretion and flexibility to establish land use designations that best meet the needs of the community.

Specifically, an "employment area" is defined in both the *Growth Plan* and the PPS as :

Areas designated in an official plan for clusters of business and economic activities including, but not limited to, manufacturing, warehousing, offices, and associated retail and ancillary facilities.

In our view, neither the *Growth Plan* nor the PPS requires that *all* employment areas be designated to include *all* of the listed uses, only that those uses are provided for in some location within the community. Specific areas within the City's employment areas may be planned, at the discretion of the municipality, to include one, some or all of the uses listed in the above definition.

The matter of which uses should be permitted in which locations is a local and regional land use planning matter. Therefore, the issue of employment land conversion and non-employment uses must be considered within the context of local and regional official plans, in this case those of the Region of York and City of Vaughan.

## 2. The New Official Plan Takes a More Restrictive Approach to Retail in Employment Areas

The City of Vaughan’s existing official plan permits a wide range of non-residential uses within employment areas, including large-scale retail under certain circumstances. The effects of existing retail permissions are clearly apparent in the pattern of development, either in the form of stand-alone sites or along major arterial frontages.

As a result, under the existing official plan retail uses are at a minimum contemplated within current employment land designations. To implement the *Growth Plan* and new Regional policies, however, the City’s new official plan is proposing a more restrictive set of land use designations with respect to retail uses within employment areas. It is made up of two key elements

- the *General* and *Prestige Employment* designations; and
- the *Commercial Mixed-Use* designation.

Within the employment designations, *Retail Warehouses*<sup>1</sup> are not permitted. Within the meaning of the Plan, retail warehouses are what are commonly referred to as “large-format” or “big box” retail.

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<sup>1</sup> A Retail Warehouse is defined in Chapter 10 of the new official plan as “A building or part of a building in which goods and merchandise are displayed, stored and sold in a warehouse format in accordance with the City of Vaughan Zoning By-Law.”

Retail uses are permitted within the *Commercial Mixed-Use* designation. The designation does not permit the industrial-type uses, which are allowed in both the *General* and *Prestige Employment* designations, but is not intended to be purely retail in nature in respect of new development. A minimum of 30% of the gross floor area of all new uses on the lot must consist of uses other than retail, including offices, hotels and gas stations under certain circumstances.

The purpose of the *Commercial Mixed-Use* designation is to distinguish between the major existing or planned retail concentrations within employment areas from the more general-industrial areas, which themselves will continue to contain scattered retail uses. Over time, one of the intended outcomes is to focus new retail and other more intensive non-residential development at strategic nodes and along the edges of major employment areas where higher-order transit either exists or is being planned.

## 3. Proposed Changes Are Not a Conversion within the Meaning of the Growth Plan

In our view, under the *Growth Plan* definition of an employment area, if a use within an employment area is already permitted or has been established under the local and regional official plan, then no conversion would be required to permit that use under a new designation. If a new or proposed use is not so permitted or established under current plans, then a conversion would be required.

In the case of the City's proposed *Commercial Mixed-Use* areas, the pre-existing official plan designations for these areas allowed for both general employment and retail uses, as the case may be. The change, therefore, is not generally to add retail permissions but rather to recognize existing or planned retail concentrations. It may be argued that in some areas retail permission are in fact being reduced by way of the 30% non-retail use requirement.

Therefore, although the City's new official plan is proposing to shift some permissions on lands within employment areas to a primary retail form, this does not constitute a conversion within the meaning of the *Growth Plan*. The *Commercial Mixed-Use* areas should remain as part of the employment areas, as currently proposed in the new official plan. However, in order to ensure that these areas function as intended, it is recommended that new policies be added to the plan which clarify that:

- The lands designated *General Employment*, *Prestige Employment* and *Commercial Mixed-Use* together constitute the City's employment area land supply as defined in the *Growth Plan* and PPS;
- The City's employment area land supply is subject to the conversion policies of the *Growth Plan* and PPS; and, therefore
- Any proposal to permit additional retail permissions that would exceed the 70/30 mix — or the addition of residential use — would be considered a conversion under the *Growth Plan* and could only be permitted through a municipal comprehensive review conducted by the City in coordination with the Region.

These new policies could be contained in the Urban Structure or Land Use Designation chapter in order to strengthen the protection for these areas and address the Region's concerns. Within this context, the conclusions of our evaluation of the additional employment lands is provided in the next section. It has been prepared to read as a continuation of Chapter IV: *Employment Land Conversion* of the April 2010 report.

It is important to reiterate that in our opinion the change from the existing official plan employment land designations to *Commercial Mixed-Use* does not constitute a conversion under the *Growth Plan*. However, for the purposes of analysis, the tests set out in Section 2.2.6.5 of the *Growth Plan* are used to discuss the appropriateness of the change from the existing land use designation.

## II FOLLOW-UP EVALUATION OF ADDITIONAL EMPLOYMENT LAND CHANGES

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Consistent with the method used in the April 2010 report, and in response to York Region’s request for additional justification, the proposed additional employment land changes are considered within the context of the City’s long-range land requirements and the tests set out in Section 2.2.6.5 of the *Growth Plan*, which states that:

Municipalities may permit conversion of lands within employment areas, to non-employment uses, only through a municipal comprehensive review where it has been demonstrated that –

- a) there is a need for the conversion
- b) the municipality will meet the employment forecasts allocated to the municipality pursuant to this Plan
- c) the conversion will not adversely affect the overall viability of the employment area, and achievement of the intensification target, density targets, and other policies of this Plan
- d) there is existing or planned infrastructure to accommodate the proposed conversion
- e) the lands are not required over the long term for the employment purposes for which they are designated
- f) cross-jurisdictional issues have been considered.

For the purposes of this policy, major retail uses are considered non-employment uses.

It remains our view that the vast majority of the City’s employment land supply should be retained for continued employment use for the reasons set out in the April 2010 report. Changes in designation are only appropriate for compelling site-specific reasons and it is within this context that the additional lands have been evaluated. Conclusions are provided below, organized into three groups:

- *Commercial Mixed-Use* corridors, which includes Jane Street and the two sections fronting on the north side of Steeles Avenue West;
- *Commercial Mixed-Use* areas, which include;
  - The area at the southwest corner of Langstaff Road and Highway 27;
  - The area at the southeast corner of Langstaff Road and Weston Road;
  - The west side of the Highway 7 and Highway 27 intersection;
  - The area on the north side of Rutherford Road below the CN rail line “tail track” east of Jane Street;



- The area on the north side of Major Mackenzie Drive, generally east of Keele Street and south of McNaughton Road; and
- The area just south of Highway 407, east of Dufferin Street along Caraway Drive and Racco Parkway.
- And the *Mid-Rise Mixed-Use* parcels, which include;
  - The northerly portion of lands northwest of Martin Grove Road and Highway 7, referred to as “5770 & 5732 Highway 7”;
  - The parcel south of Highway 7 on Woodstream Boulevard, referred to as “77&87 Woodstream Boulevard” as well as the parcel to the north; and
  - The parcel located west of Islington Avenue north of Steeles Avenue West.

#### A. COMMERCIAL MIXED-USE CORRIDORS

There are two corridors in Vaughan that have been identified for a change in designation: the Jane Street corridor from Rutherford Road to Portage Parkway; and two sections fronting on the north side of Steeles Avenue West. The proposed change for the lands in the Jane Street corridor is not appropriate. The lands are not currently in significant retail use and they occupy a central, accessible and highly competitive location within a major industrial area.

In our view, the corridor lands are more appropriately designated *Prestige Employment* in the new official plan.

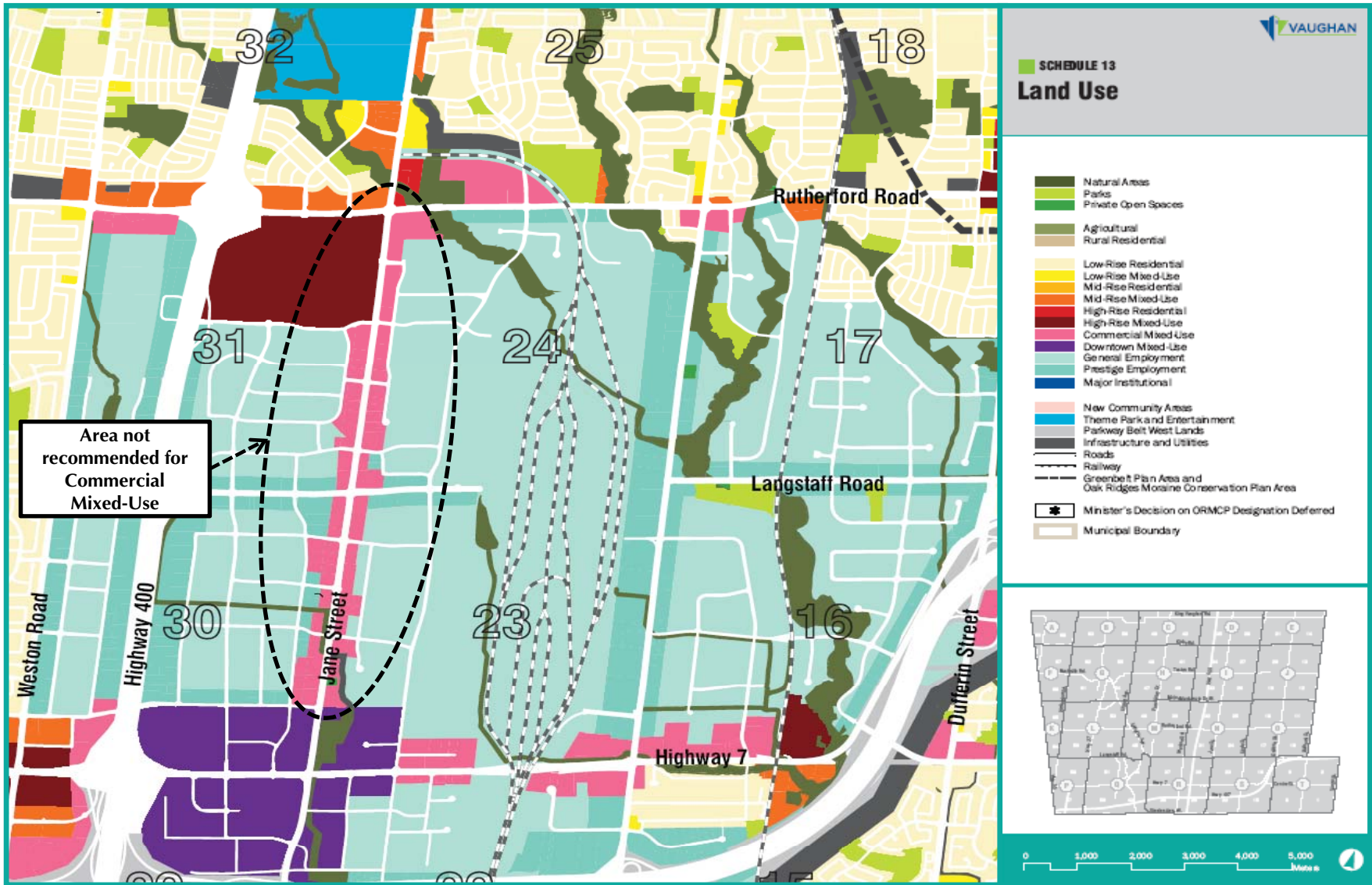
The proposed changes for the two sections fronting on the north side of Steeles Avenue West, on the other hand, are considered to be appropriate. The proposed designation recognizes the pattern of existing retail uses and will support a more intensive pattern of non-residential development along a major transit corridor.

##### 1. Jane Street Corridor Lands

The lands proposed for change to *Commercial Mixed-Use* are shown on the map on the following page. They are located generally along Jane Street north from Portage Parkway to Rutherford Road. In our view, the lands are not appropriate for the proposed *Commercial Mixed-Use* designation for a number of reasons:

- The lands are located within a larger and almost fully developed employment area around the CN Concord Yard. As noted in the April 2010 report, this area contains a major concentration of economic activity and is healthy and competitive for continued employment land use.
- The lands occupy a central position within the larger area, traversing both the Vaughan 400 and Vaughan 400 North Employment Areas. As also noted in the April 2010 report, no change is recommended for interior portions of the major employment areas due to the risk of area destabilization.

# MAP 1: JANE STREET CORRIDOR



- The predominant pattern of development along the Jane Street corridor lands is in the form of new, large scale industrial facilities. The lands are not currently developed with significant retail uses, notwithstanding the major retail concentration at the southwest corner of Jane Street and Rutherford Road.
- It is possible that the Jane Street corridor lands could function as a long-term structural element of the City, evolving to link the retail and residential areas to the north with future high density residential and office development in the Vaughan Metropolitan Centre (VMC) to the south.
- This possibility, however, is a long-term proposition and in our view would not be advanced by the proposed change in land use designation for the current planning period. Land use designations in the Jane Street Corridor are better reviewed at the time of next 5-year official plan review and in the context of the performance of the VMC relative to the City's goals and objectives for the area.
- As a result, and within the context of the City's overall employment land requirements, there is no need to designate the lands for commercial uses. For the current planning period, the lands should remain in an employment land designation. A *Prestige Employment* designation is recommended to reflect their industrial locational and competitive advantages.

Based on the *Growth Plan* tests, change of the Jane Street Corridor lands to a *Commercial Mixed-Use* designation is not considered good planning and does not meet the tests set out in Section 2.2.6.5 of the *Growth Plan*:

- a) there is a need for the conversion

The lands are nearly fully developed and are highly competitive and marketable for employment land. They should be retained in that type of designation to maintain the existing industrial base.

- b) the municipality will meet the employment forecasts allocated to the municipality pursuant to this Plan

The Jane Street corridor lands are included as part of the base supply in the April 2010 analysis of employment land need and are therefore required to meet the employment forecasts allocated by York Region to 2031 within the proposed 2031 urban envelope.

- c) the conversion will not adversely affect the overall viability of the employment area, and achievement of the intensification target, density targets, and other policies of this Plan

Considering the scale and central location of the corridor lands, permitting *Commercial Mixed-Use* development would have a destabilizing effect, which could adversely affect the overall viability of the abutting industrial areas.

- d) there is existing or planned infrastructure to accommodate the proposed conversion

There is existing and planned infrastructure to accommodate either residential, retail or employment uses. Transit upgrades are proposed to serve both residential, retail and employment uses in appropriate locations.

- e) the lands are not required over the long term for the employment purposes for which they are designated

The area is included as part of the base supply in the April 2010 analysis of employment land need and is therefore required to meet the allocated employment forecasts.

- f) cross-jurisdictional issues have been considered.

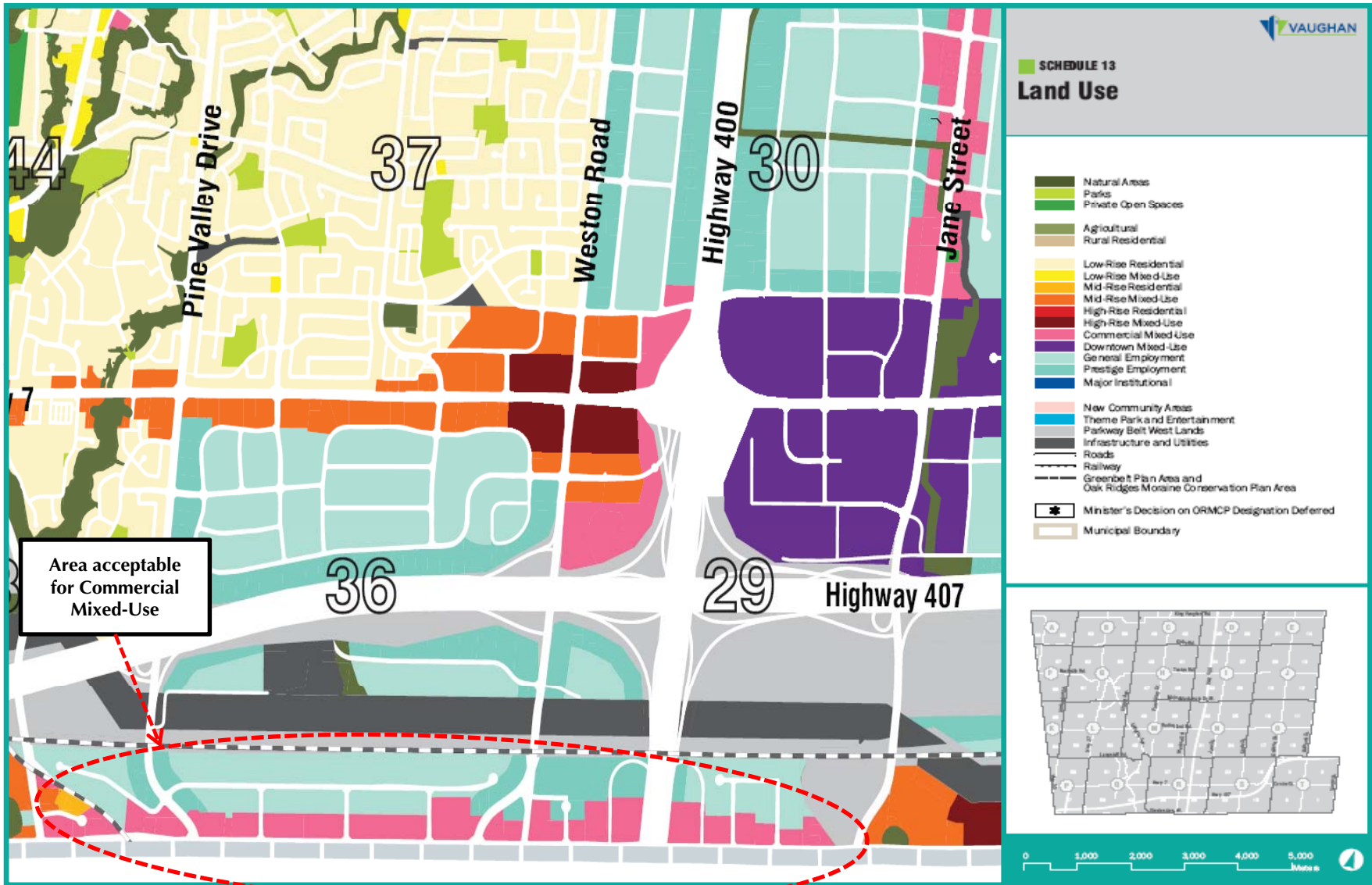
Cross-jurisdictional issues are not relevant.

## 2. Steeles Avenue From Islington Avenue to Jane Street

The lands are located between Islington Avenue to the west and Jane Street to the east on the north side of Steeles Avenue west and are shown on the map on the following page. This section is considered appropriate for the proposed *Commercial Mixed-Use* designation, mainly due to the existing pattern of development:

- The lands are fully developed, mainly with retail and related service commercial uses, including activities catering to the wedding industry such as banquet halls, dress makers, caterers and others.
- Two notable exceptions include: a large stand-alone manufacturing facility and showroom (Ganz Toys) at Pearce Road and a small pocket of mainly industrial uses to the west of Pine Valley Drive, south of the railway tracks along Vinyl Court.
- The pattern of development is otherwise mainly commercial in nature and mirrors the types of uses found on the south side of Steeles Avenue West in the City of Toronto. The proposed designation reflects this pattern of development.
- The new designation is a recognition of the existing uses on these lands which are predominantly retail and service commercial. Neither the *General* or *Prestige Employment* designations in the new official plan would be appropriate because, among other matters, they seek to be much more restrictive to retail uses than current official plan designations.
- While there is a change in use permissions associated with the new designation — mainly the removal of industrial-type permissions — this is not considered to be a conversion from the perspective that the lands are already in almost entirely retail and service commercial use. Retail uses also tend to be of higher value, making redevelopment of the frontage lands for industrial-type use unlikely from a market perspective.

# MAP 2: STEELES AVENUE WEST CORRIDOR (ISLINGTON AVENUE TO JANE STREET)



The Steeles Avenue West lands are considered appropriate for the proposed change, not only because of the existing pattern of mainly retail use, but also because they form an important urban structure element within the community. In other words, the presence of an existing retail use, in and of itself, is not a justification for land use change.

Unlike a stand-alone retail development site, the Steeles Avenue West lands form part of a major arterial corridor at the edge of an established employment area where more intensive non-residential development is being encouraged to, among other goals, support transit. Within this context, and based on the *Growth Plan* tests, the proposed change for the employment land on the north side of Steeles Avenue from Islington Avenue to Jane Street satisfies the tests set out in Section 2.2.6.5 of the *Growth Plan*:

- a) there is a need for the conversion

There is a need for the change from a site-specific planning perspective to recognize the existing use. Most of the lands are occupied with existing retail uses. The lands form part of an existing corridor and mirror the pattern of development on the south side of Steeles Avenue West in the City of Toronto.

- b) the municipality will meet the employment forecasts allocated to the municipality pursuant to this Plan

Change to *Commercial Mixed-Use* in this location will not impair the City's ability to achieve its economic objectives. The proposed designation reflects the existing pattern of development. Redevelopment with new industrial facilities is extremely unlikely.

- c) the conversion will not adversely affect the overall viability of the employment area, and achievement of the intensification target, density targets, and other policies of this Plan

The frontage lands are already in primarily retail use. Change in designation for the frontage lands will primarily serve to solidify the existing pattern of retail uses. Buffering of the employment uses to the north, however, will need to be a priority.

- d) there is existing or planned infrastructure to accommodate the proposed conversion

Existing and planned transportation infrastructure is in place to accommodate either residential, retail or employment uses, including planned rapid transit. A more intensive form of non-residential development will support the planned transit upgrades.

- e) the lands are not required over the long term for the employment purposes for which they are designated

Most of the existing development is already in retail use. As such, the frontage lands have already been effectively removed from employment land use. A sufficient supply of employment land is being provided to accommodate long-term growth, particularly the Highway 400 north lands.

- f) cross-jurisdictional issues have been considered.

A similar pattern of mainly retail development can be observed in the City of Toronto. Solidifying the mixed commercial use pattern in the corridor therefore has regard to cross-jurisdictional issues.

### 3. Steeles Avenue From Keele Street to Dufferin Street

The second section of the Steeles Avenue West lands are located between Keele Street to the west and Dufferin Street to the East and are shown on the map on the following page. Like the lands above, this section of Steeles Avenue West is also considered appropriate for the proposed *Commercial Mixed-Use* designation:

- The lands are developed mainly with commercial uses, including gas stations, restaurants banks and other population serving activities.
- The proposed designation reflects the primarily commercial character of the frontage lands; and
- The nature of the land use mirrors the pattern of use on the Steeles Avenue West in the City of Toronto which, in this case, is characterized by relatively newer and large-scale retail development. Relatively higher retail land values also limit the likelihood of redevelopment with industrial-type uses.

Based on the *Growth Plan* tests, change for the employment land along Steeles Avenue West from Keele to Dufferin satisfies the tests set out in Section 2.2.6.5 of the *Growth Plan*:

- a) there is a need for the conversion

There is a need for the change from a site-specific planning perspective. Most of the lands are occupied with existing retail uses. The lands also form part of an existing corridor.

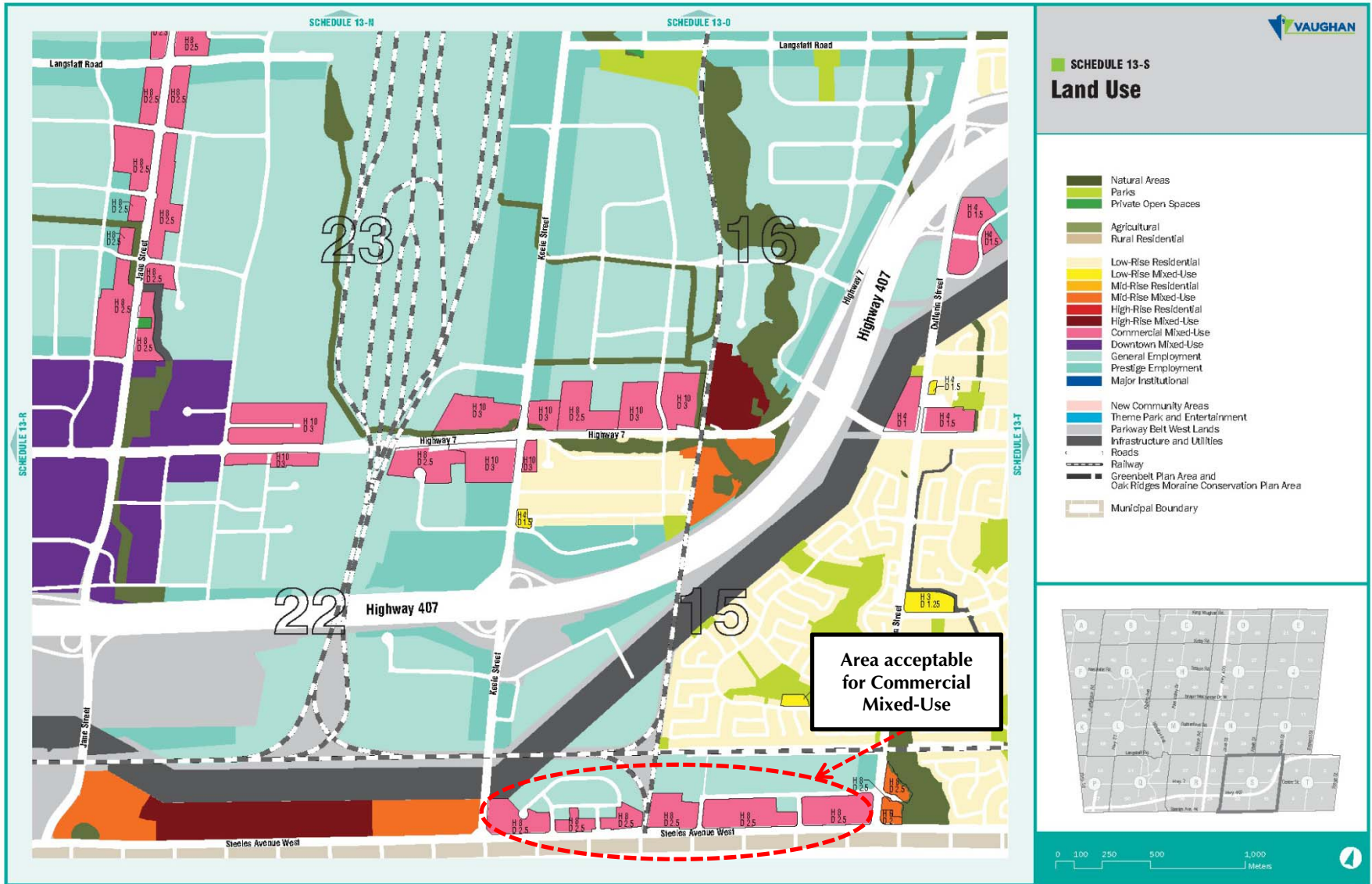
- b) the municipality will meet the employment forecasts allocated to the municipality pursuant to this Plan

Change to the employment land in this location will not impair the City's ability to achieve its economic objectives. The proposed designation reflects the existing pattern of development. Redevelopment with new industrial facilities is unlikely.

- c) the conversion will not adversely affect the overall viability of the employment area, and achievement of the intensification target, density targets, and other policies of this Plan

The frontage lands are already in primarily retail use. Change in designation for the frontage lands will primarily serve to solidify the existing pattern of retail uses already. Buffering of the employment uses to the north will need to be a priority.

# MAP 3: STEELES AVENUE WEST CORRIDOR (KEELE STREET TO DUFFERIN STREET)





- d) there is existing or planned infrastructure to accommodate the proposed conversion

Existing and planned transportation infrastructure is in place to accommodate either residential, retail or employment uses, including planned rapid transit. A more intensive form of non-residential development will support the planned transit upgrades.

- e) the lands are not required over the long term for the employment purposes for which they are designated

Most of the existing development is already in retail use. As such, the frontage lands have already been effectively removed from employment land use.

- f) cross-jurisdictional issues have been considered.

A similar pattern of mainly retail development can be observed in the City of Toronto. Solidifying the mixed commercial use pattern in the corridor therefore has regard to cross-jurisdictional issues.

Unlike the Jane Street corridor lands, both sections fronting on the north side of Steeles Avenue West are largely commercial, especially for the western area. The proposed designation recognizes the existing pattern of development and is therefore considered to be appropriate and good planning in the context of existing land uses within both the City of Vaughan and City of Toronto.

## B. COMMERCIAL MIXED USE AREAS

With regard to the proposed area changes to a *Commercial Mixed-Use* designation;

- The area at the southwest corner of Langstaff Road and Highway 27 is partially appropriate to recognize existing uses;
- The area at the southeast corner of Langstaff Road and Weston Road is appropriate to recognize currently permitted uses;
- The west side of the Highway 7 and Highway 27 intersection is appropriate to correct a mapping error in the new official plan;
- The area on the north side of Rutherford Road below the CN rail line “tail track” is not appropriate for change;
- The area on the north side of Major Mackenzie Drive, generally east of Keele Street and south of McNaughton Road is appropriate for change. Further study, however, is required to determine the specific land uses; and
- The area just south of Highway 407, east of Dufferin Street along Caraway Drive and Racco Parkway is appropriate for change.

1. The Area at the Southwest corner of Langstaff Road and Highway 27

The lands in question are made up of a large triangular parcel at the southwest corner of Langstaff Road and Highway 27; and a smaller narrow parcel located south of the hydro-electric corridor and north of Milani Boulevard. Both parcels are proposed for a *Commercial Mixed-Use* designation.

In our view, the proposed change is only appropriate for the lands located along the Highway 27 frontage to recognize the existing and planned pattern of development, which includes gas stations, a banquet hall, a Wal Mart and other uses such as banks and restaurants.

The balance of the lands are largely vacant and should be assigned a *Prestige* or *General Employment* designation. These lands are located within the Highway 427 East Employment Area, which is one of the City's most successful business parks. The lands also form part of a relatively limited supply of vacant parcels in west Vaughan that are not dependent on the Highway 427 extension to provide the transportation access necessary for short-term development.

A *Prestige Employment* designation is recommended for the lands within the large triangular parcel that are not occupied by retail uses including the lands along Innovation Drive that have recently been developed with new industrial facilities. A *General Employment* designation is recommended for the smaller narrow parcel south of the hydro-electric corridor.

The lands in question are shown on the map on the following page, distinguishing between the area that is considered acceptable for *Commercial Mixed-Use* and the areas that should be *Prestige* or *General Employment*. In our view, the proposed change to recognize existing retail is appropriate, and satisfies the tests set out in Section 2.2.6.5 of the *Growth Plan*:

- a) there is a need for the conversion

There is a need for the change from a site-specific planning perspective. The lands are occupied with existing retail uses.

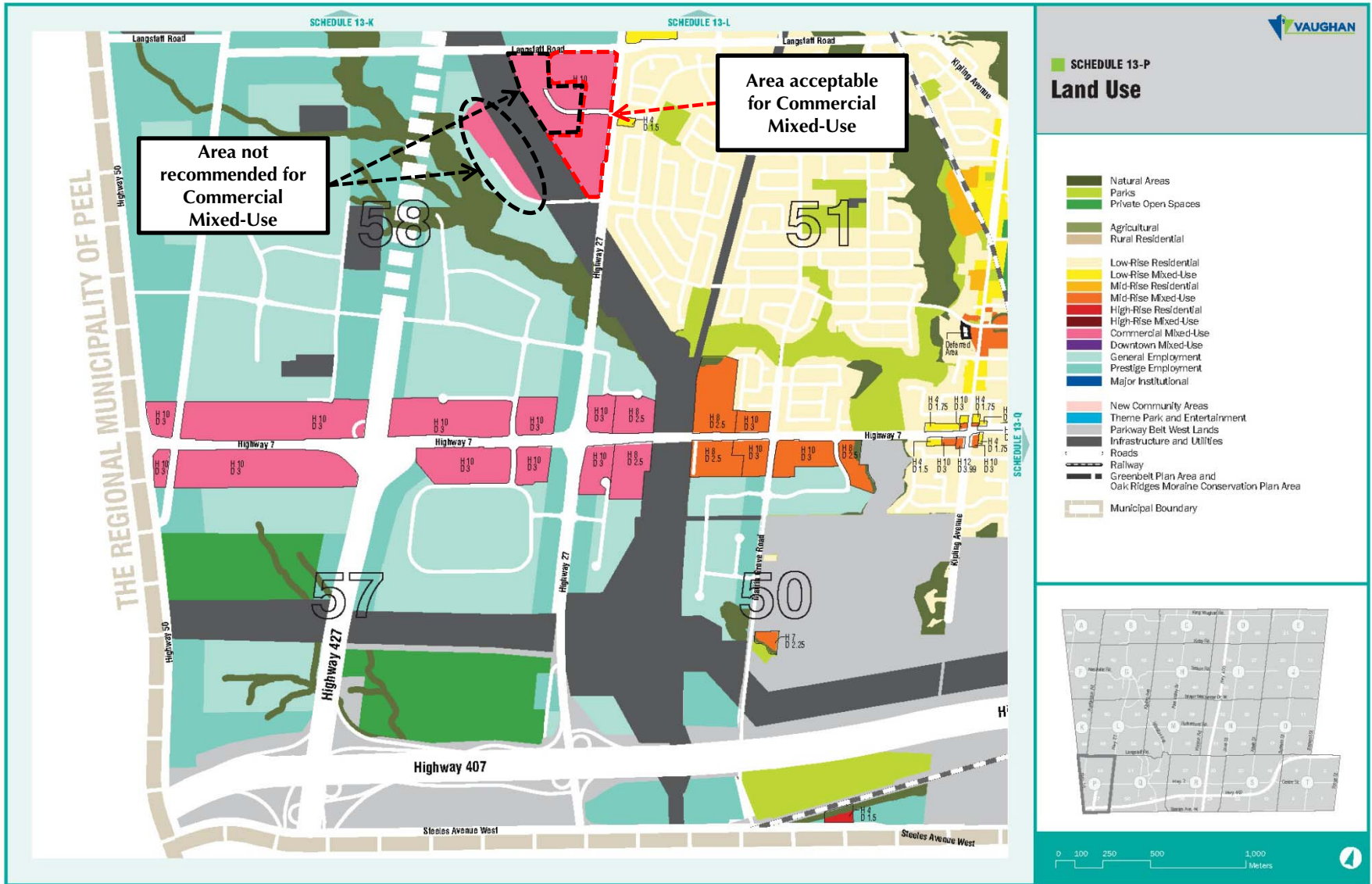
- b) the municipality will meet the employment forecasts allocated to the municipality pursuant to this Plan

Change of employment land in this location will not impair the City's ability to achieve its economic objectives. The proposed designation reflects the existing pattern of development. Redevelopment with new industrial facilities is unlikely.

- c) the conversion will not adversely affect the overall viability of the employment area, and achievement of the intensification target, density targets, and other policies of this Plan

The frontage lands are already in primarily retail use. Change in designation for the frontage lands will serve to recognize the existing pattern of use. Buffering between other categories of employment land uses will need to be a priority.

# MAP 4: SOUTHWEST CORNER OF LANGSTAFF ROAD & HIGHWAY 27



- d) there is existing or planned infrastructure to accommodate the proposed conversion

There is existing and planned transportation infrastructure to accommodate either residential, retail or employment uses, including access to York Region transit.

- e) the lands are not required over the long term for the employment purposes for which they are designated

The frontage lands are already in retail use. As such, the lands have been effectively removed from an employment land designation.

- f) cross-jurisdictional issues have been considered.

Cross-jurisdictional issues are not relevant.

In our view, the proposed change for the remaining lands along Innovation Drive, south of the hydro-electric corridor and north of Milani Boulevard is not appropriate, and does not satisfy the tests set out in Section 2.2.6.5 of the *Growth Plan*:

- a) there is a need for the conversion

The remaining lands are highly competitive and marketable for industrial-type uses and should be retained in that designation to maintain the existing industrial employment base and potential in this location.

- b) the municipality will meet the employment forecasts allocated to the municipality pursuant to this Plan

The lands are included as part of the base supply in the April 2010 analysis of employment land need and required to meet the allocated employment forecasts.

- c) the conversion will not adversely affect the overall viability of the employment area, and achievement of the intensification target, density targets, and other policies of this Plan

Permitting *Commercial Mixed-Use* development on the interior lands could produce a destabilizing effect, which could adversely affect the overall viability of the remaining and abutting industrial areas.

- d) there is existing or planned infrastructure to accommodate the proposed conversion

There is existing and planned infrastructure to accommodate either retail or employment uses. Recent industrial development is an indication of the market attraction of the employment lands.

- e) the lands are not required over the long term for the employment purposes for which they are designated

The area is included as part of the base supply in the April 2010 analysis of employment land need and required to meet the allocated employment forecasts.

- f) cross-jurisdictional issues have been considered.

Cross-jurisdictional issues are not relevant

2. The Area at the Southeast Corner of Langstaff Road and Weston Road

The lands are subject to a site-specific designation in Official Plan Amendment (OPA) 374 permitting a *Neighbourhood Commercial Centre*. In our view, the proposed *General Employment* designation in the new official plan would not be appropriate as it seeks to be restrictive to retail uses. The proposed change is therefore considered appropriate as a “housekeeping” matter in the new plan so that the new designation in the plan reflects the current designation as closely as possible.

3. The West Side of the Highway 7 and Highway 27 Interchange

The lands are within the Official Plan Amendment (OPA) 660 area, which forms part of the broader Highway 7 amendments adopted by the City in 2007 and approved by York Region, in part, in 2008.

As explained in the April 2010 report, the intent of the Highway 7 amendments is to encourage a shift towards a more mixed-use, pedestrian friendly and transit-supportive pattern of development within the Highway 7 corridor, including the lands in question. The lands are part of the continuous *Commercial Mixed-Use* frontage along Highway 7 east and west of the site. Since the site is currently approved for mixed use commercial development, the *Prestige Employment* designation shown in the new official plan is a mapping error and should be corrected.

4. The Area North of Rutherford Road below the CN Rail Line “Tail Track”

The lands in question abut the Jane North Employment Area and are bounded by the CN Rail line to the north, Rutherford Road to the south and lands designated *Natural Area* in the new official plan to the west.

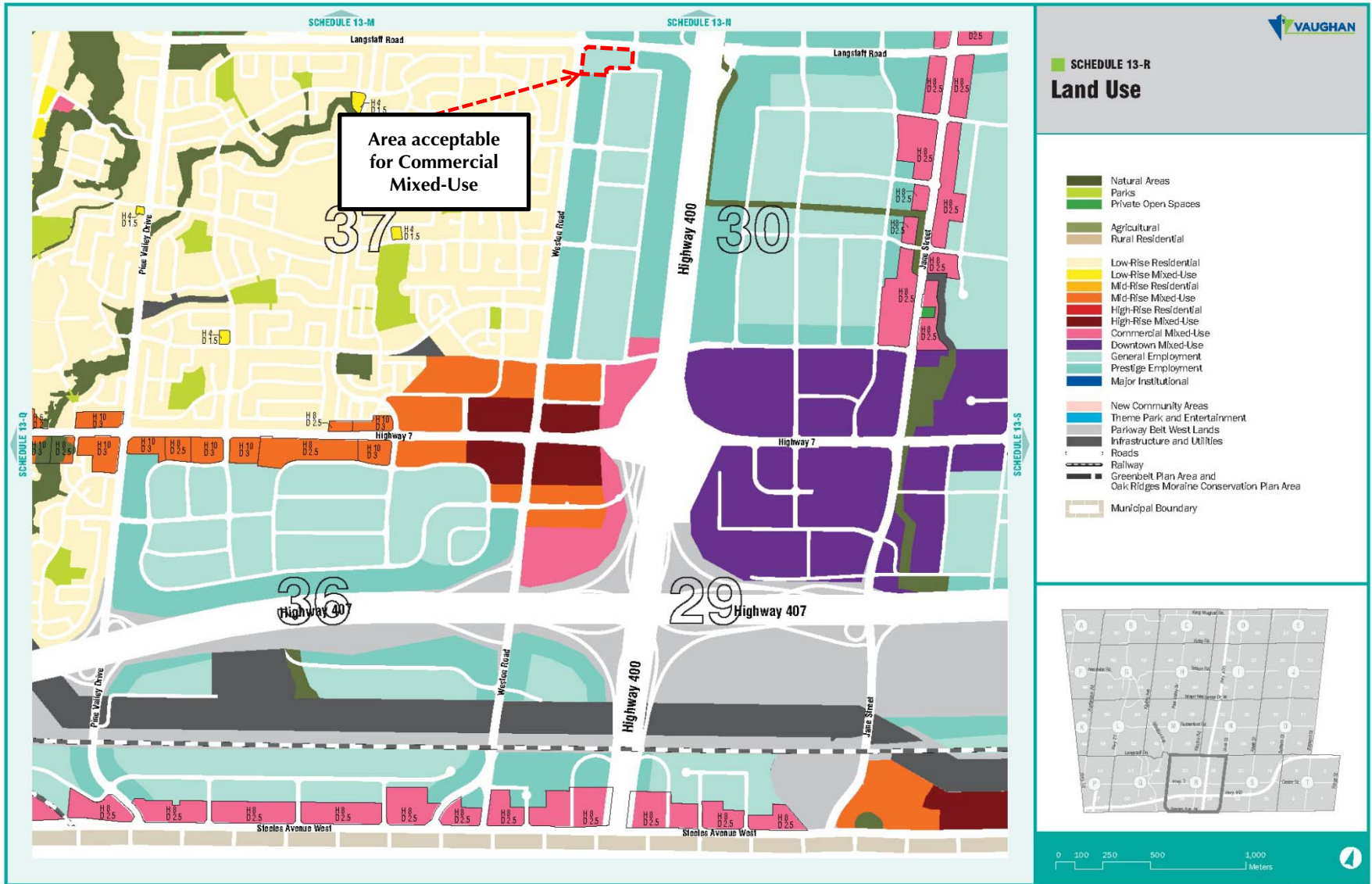
The area is characterized predominantly by municipal uses, including the York Region Police District 4 Headquarters, the Vaughan Household Hazardous Waste Depot and a municipal works yard. A small portion of the area east of Melville Avenue is developed with a gas station and the balance of the lands in this location is vacant.

The lands were not included in the base supply for the employment land analysis undertaken in the April 2010 report. However, upon further review and analysis it has been determined that the lands are designated for employment use and should have been included in the inventory, especially given that the lands abut a major employment area and most are in industrial-type municipal use, including a works yard and waste transfer station.

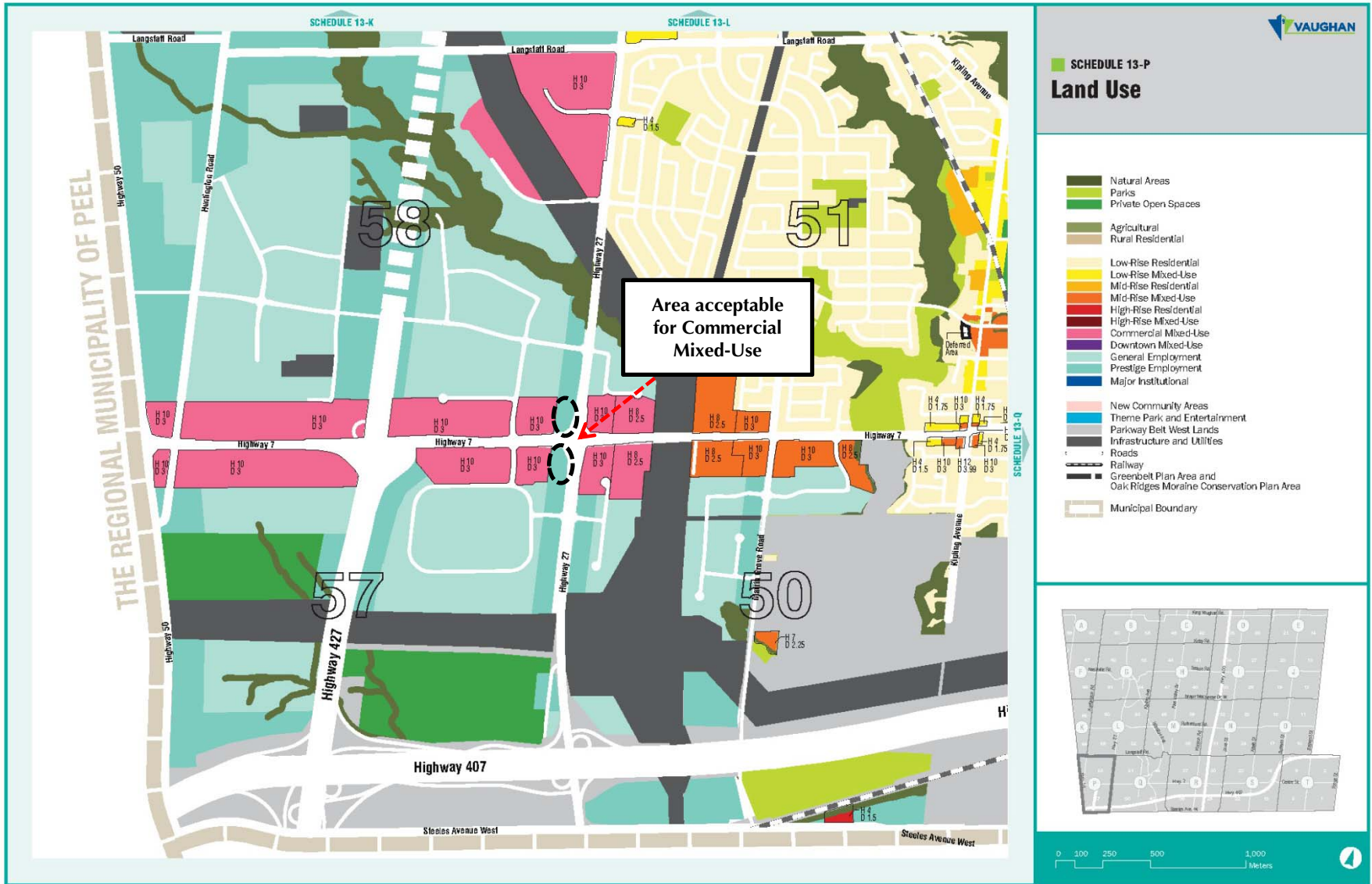
In our view, the proposed change is therefore not appropriate. No change to the existing zoning for the gas station and vacant lands to the east is recommended. The area is competitive and viable for industrial-type use. In our view, the introduction of new retail permissions is not necessary and could produce a destabilizing effect. A *Prestige Employment* designation is recommended.

The location of the above three parcels is illustrated on the series of maps that follows.

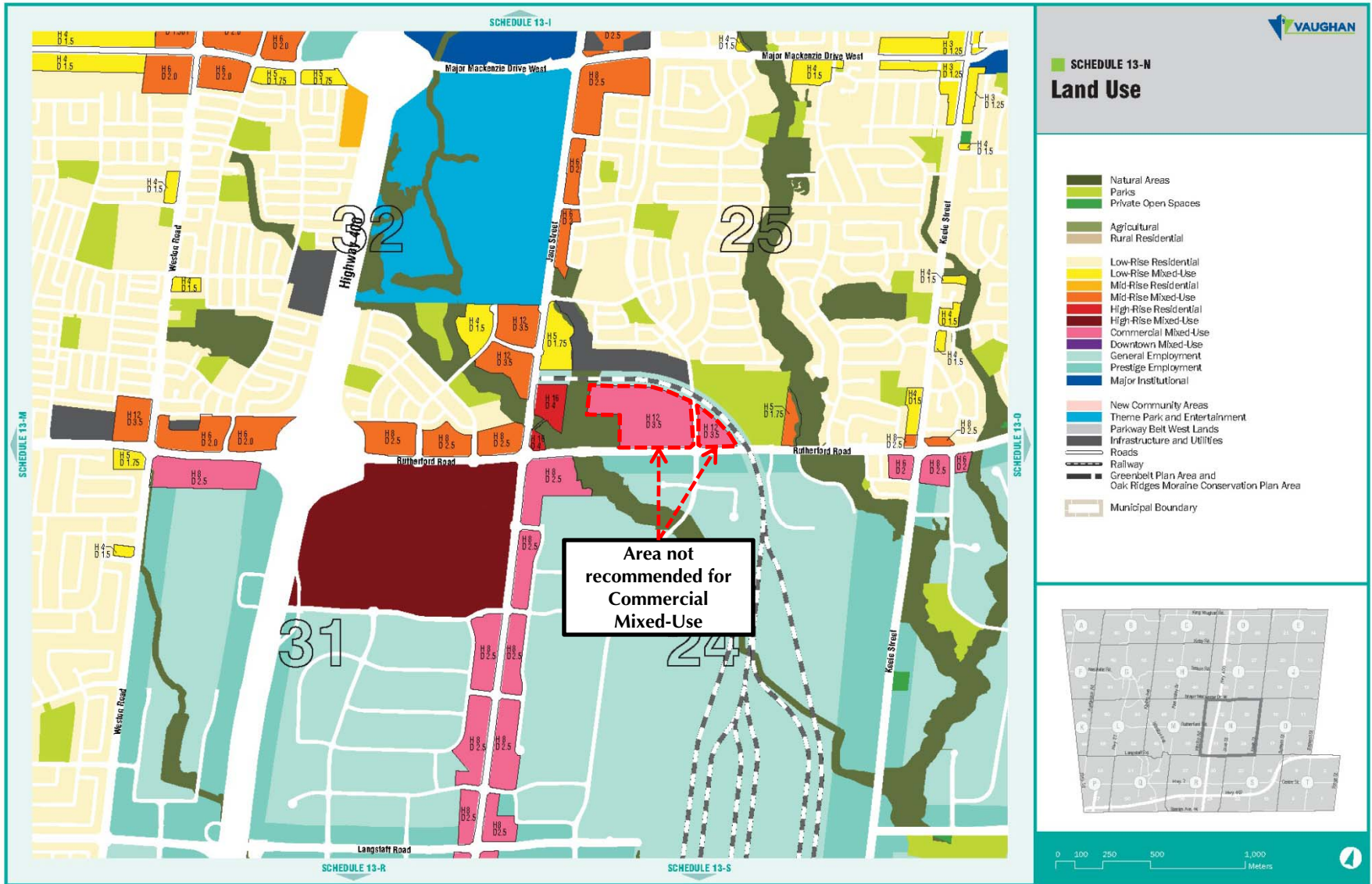
# MAP 5: WESTON ROAD AND LANGSTAFF ROAD



# MAP 6: WEST SIDE OF THE HIGHWAY 7 & HIGHWAY 27 INTERSECTION



# MAP 7: NORTH OF RUTHERFORD ROAD BELOW CN RAIL LINE





Particularly with respect to the lands south of the CN rail line “tail track”, in our view the proposed change is not appropriate and does not satisfy the tests set out in Section 2.2.6.5 of the *Growth Plan*:

- a) there is a need for the conversion

The lands are nearly fully occupied and accommodate largely municipal uses which provide important services to the broader community. The lands should be retained in an employment designation to maintain their current function.

- b) the municipality will meet the employment forecasts allocated to the municipality pursuant to this Plan

The lands should have been included as part of the base supply in the April 2010 analysis of employment land need and therefore required to meet the allocated employment forecasts.

- c) the conversion will not adversely affect the overall viability of the employment area, and achievement of the intensification target, density targets, and other policies of this Plan

Permitting *Commercial Mixed-Use* development on the lands east of Melville Avenue may generate a destabilizing effect in the larger area. This could adversely affect the overall viability of the remaining area and existing functions.

- d) there is existing or planned infrastructure to accommodate the proposed conversion

There is existing and planned infrastructure to accommodate either residential, retail or employment uses as appropriate.

- e) the lands are not required over the long term for the employment purposes for which they are designated

The area should have been included as part of the base supply in the April 2010 analysis of employment land need and is therefore required to meet the allocated employment forecasts.

- f) cross-jurisdictional issues have been considered.

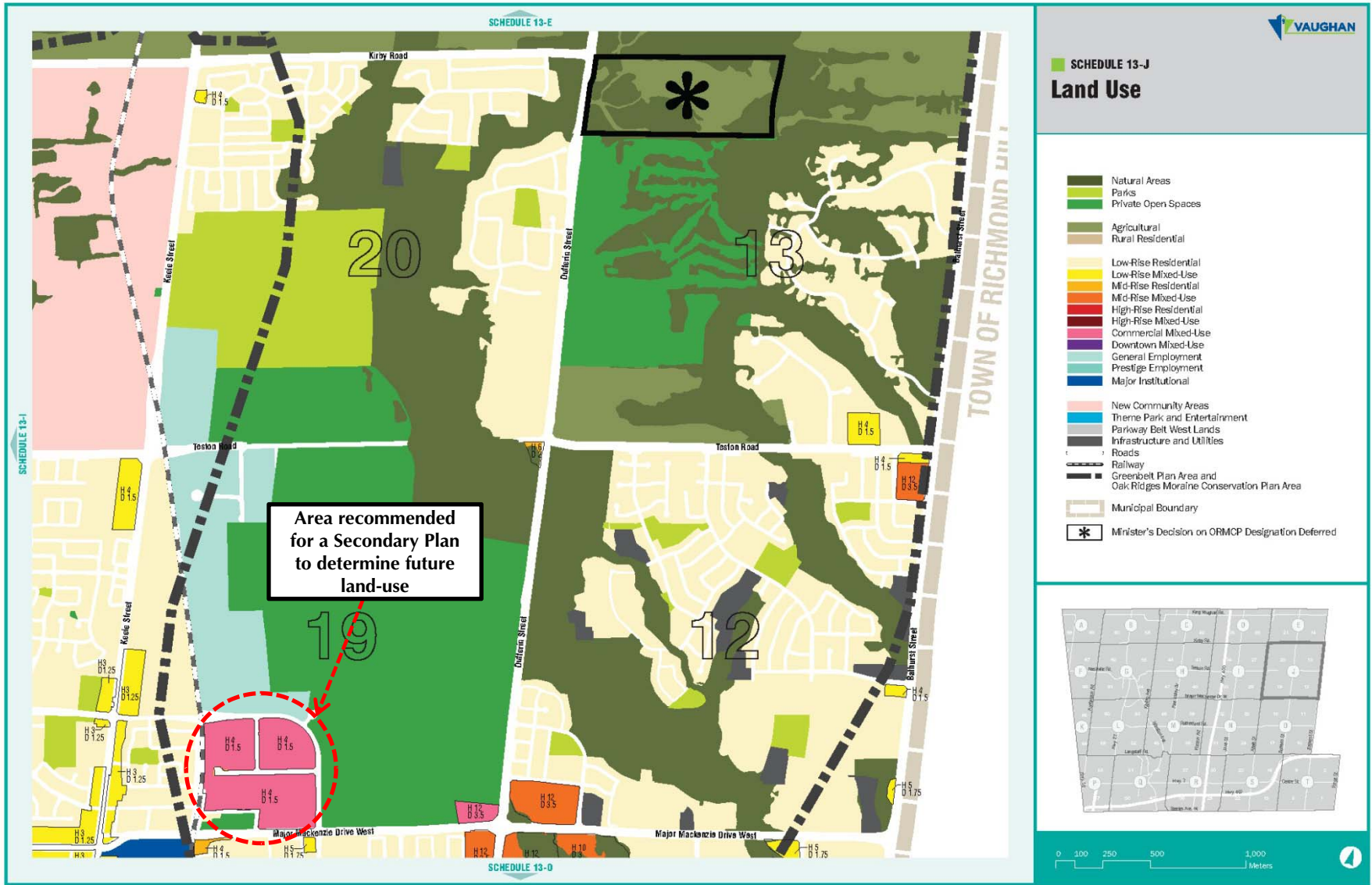
Cross-jurisdictional issues are not relevant

5. The Area on the North side of Major Mackenzie Drive east of Keele Street.

The lands in question are located north of Major Mackenzie Drive, East of Keele Street, and south of the Keele Valley Landfill site and shown on the map on the following page. The lands are partially developed with retail uses, including a home improvement centre located generally in the northeast quadrant of the parcel.

In our view, the area is appropriate for change to a wider range of uses, however further study is recommended to determine the specific land uses, particularly whether a *Commercial Mixed-Use* designation or a mixed use residential designation is appropriate.

# MAP 8: NORTH OF MAJOR MACKENZIE DRIVE, EAST OF KEELE STREET



Like the previous parcel, these lands were not included within the base employment land supply for the April 2010 report but it has now been determined that they are in an underlying employment designation with site-specific permission for the recently built retail. However, unlike the previous parcel, these lands are considered appropriate for a wider range of uses for a number of reasons:

- The lands are well-bounded, somewhat removed from the City's major concentrations of employment land and abutted by residential uses to the south and west, creating the potential for land use conflicts;
- As noted, the lands are also located within a broader area where a wider range of use was recommended in the April 2010 report to address conflicts between existing industrial uses and abutting neighbourhoods.
- On the parcel itself, the permission for large-format retail is already in place. The likelihood of new industrial development occurring on the remaining vacant lands is considered to be limited; and
- As a result of these conditions, a wider range of uses, including potentially residential, may be appropriate. The lands are also in close proximity to the Maple GO Station, which presents an opportunity to make more efficient use of the existing urban land supply at this location.

- A more detailed planning study, however, should be undertaken to determine the specific land use because residential may or may not be appropriate for a number of reasons, particularly due to environmental regulations respecting the former Keele Valley Landfill site. Consideration of appropriate land uses will require further detailed study in this regard.

In our view, the proposed change of these lands to a *Commercial Mixed-Use* designation satisfies the tests set out in Section 2.2.6.5 of the *Growth Plan*:

- a) there is a need for the conversion

There is a need for the change to recognize existing retail uses and minimize the potential for land use conflicts with abutting residential areas.

- b) the municipality will meet the employment forecasts allocated to the municipality pursuant to this Plan

Change to the employment land designation in this location will not impair the City's ability to achieve its economic objectives. The parcel is already partially developed with retail uses and considered unlikely to develop with industrial-type uses.

- c) the conversion will not adversely affect the overall viability of the employment area, and achievement of the intensification target, density targets, and other policies of this Plan

The lands are already partially in retail use. Change in designation for the balance of the parcel will primarily serve to recognize the existing pattern of use and take advantage of higher-order transit in this location.

- d) there is existing or planned infrastructure to accommodate the proposed conversion

There is existing and planned transportation infrastructure to accommodate either residential, retail or employment uses, including GO Transit.

- e) the lands are not required over the long term for the employment purposes for which they are designated

A portion of the lands are already in retail use. Given their location, relatively small size and well-defined boundaries, the lands have been effectively removed from an employment land use.

- f) cross-jurisdictional issues have been considered.

Cross-jurisdictional issues are not relevant.

6. The Area South of Highway 407 East of Dufferin Street Along Caraway Drive and Racco Parkway

The lands are shown on the map on the following page. Similar to the lands located at the southwest corner of Langstaff Road and Highway 27, the lands fronting on to Dufferin Street are developed primarily with retail commercial use, including a health club and a Canadian. The area also accommodates a York Region Emergency Medical Services (EMS) facility.

In our view, the proposed change is appropriate for the lands fronting on to Dufferin Street, as well as the York Region EMS facility, in order to recognize the current pattern of use. The balance of the area, including the parcel to the west of Dufferin which is currently vacant, should remain in a *Prestige Employment* designation.

In our view, the proposed change is appropriate to recognize existing retail and community uses is appropriate and satisfies the tests set out in Section 2.2.6.5 of the *Growth Plan*:

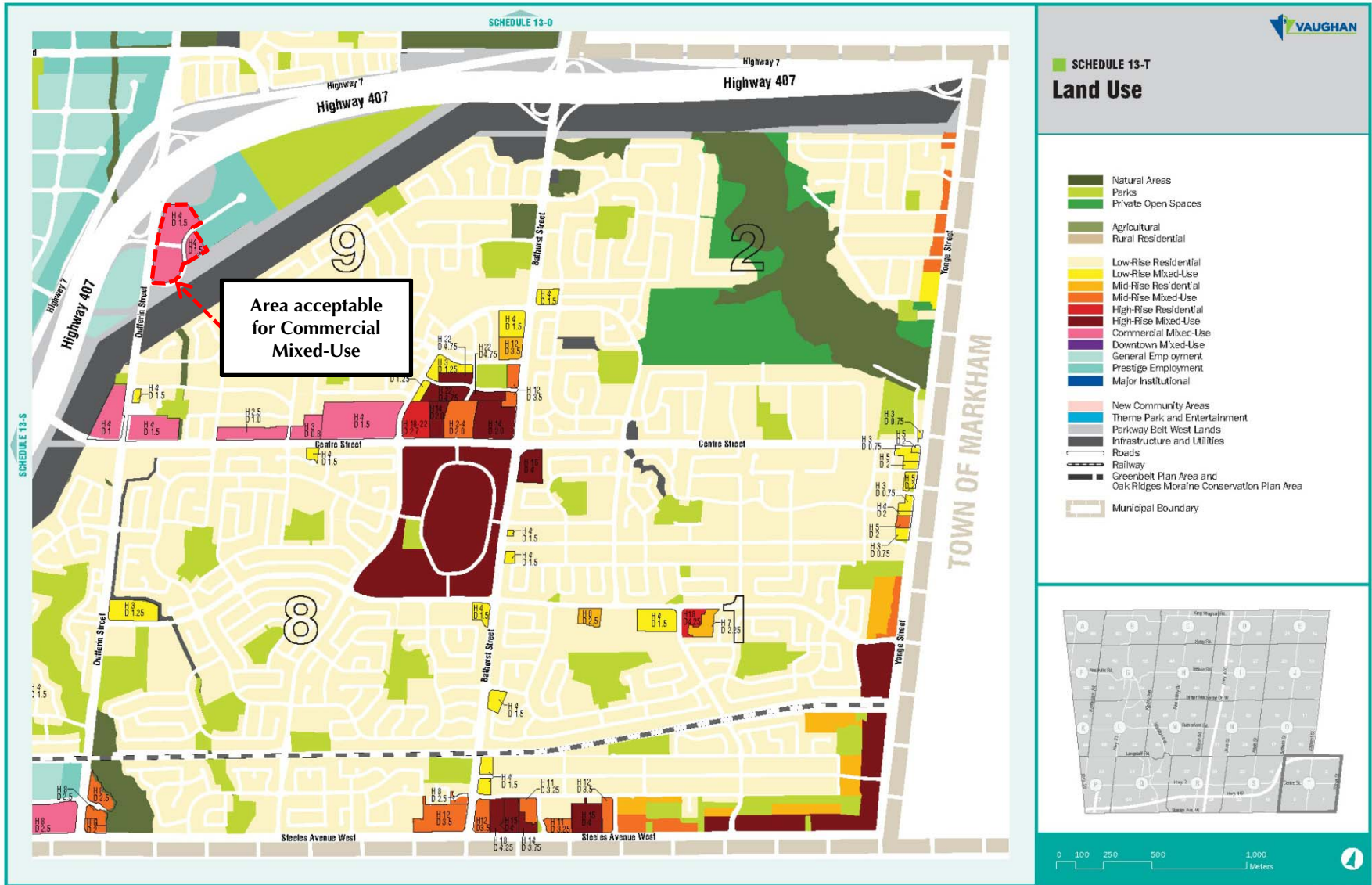
- a) there is a need for the conversion

There is a need for the change from a site-specific planning perspective. The lands are occupied with existing retail uses in a planned retail centre.

- b) the municipality will meet the employment forecasts allocated to the municipality pursuant to this Plan

Change of employment land in this location will not impair the City's ability to achieve its economic objectives. The proposed designation reflects the existing pattern of development, all of which is relatively new. Redevelopment with new industrial facilities is unlikely.

# MAP 9: CARAWAY DRIVE AND RACCO PARKWAY



- c) the conversion will not adversely affect the overall viability of the employment area, and achievement of the intensification target, density targets, and other policies of this Plan

The frontage lands are already in primarily retail use. Change in designation for the frontage lands will primarily serve to recognize the existing pattern of use.

- d) there is existing or planned infrastructure to accommodate the proposed conversion

There is existing and planned transportation infrastructure to accommodate either residential or employment uses.

- e) the lands are not required over the long term for the employment purposes for which they are designated

The lands are already in retail use. As such, the lands have been effectively removed from an employment land use.

- f) cross-jurisdictional issues have been considered.

Cross-jurisdictional issues are not relevant.

The proposed area changes are appropriate to recognize existing or planned retail developments. Others are appropriate to correct mapping errors or as “housekeeping” matters. Areas that contain competitive and viable industrial lands, however, are generally not appropriate for the proposed change within the context of the City’s overall land requirements and *Growth Plan* policies that encourage the designation of an appropriate employment land supply.

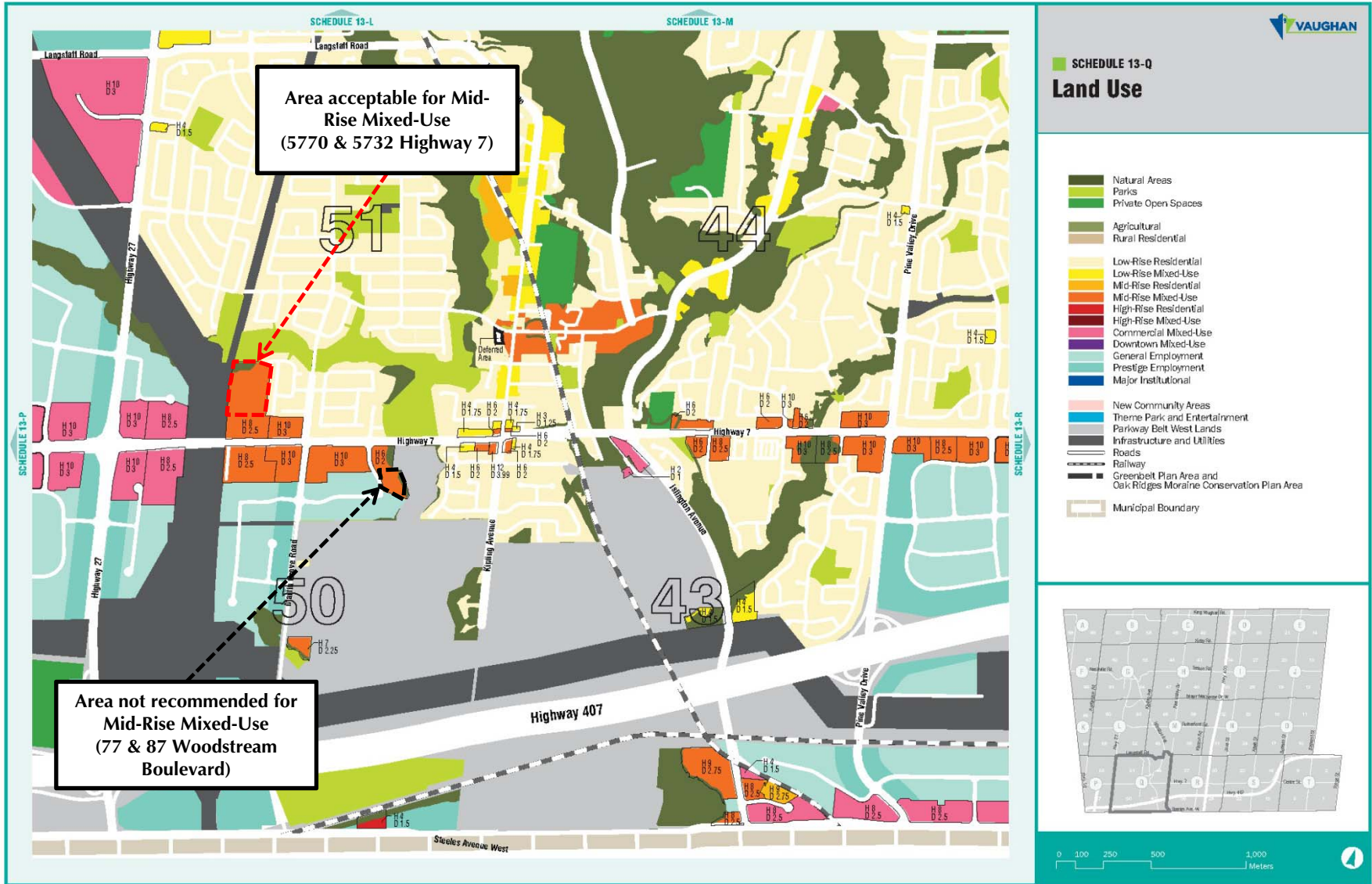
### C. MID-RISE MIXED-USE PARCELS

The proposed conversions to *Mid-Rise Mixed-Use* in the general vicinity of Martin Grove Road and Highway 7 are shown in the map on the following page:

- The proposed conversion of the northern portion of the lands northwest of Martin Grove and Highway 7 is appropriate as a housekeeping correction.
- The proposed conversion of the lands at the southerly end of Woodstream Boulevard, however, is not considered to be appropriate. It is not consistent with OPA 661 and could set a precedent for more widespread conversions in the area and along the Highway 7 corridor in general.

The proposed conversion of the parcel located west of Islington Avenue north of Steeles Avenue West is considered to be appropriate to recognize existing uses and current permissions for mixed use development.

# MAP 10: MID-RISE MIXED-USE PARCELS



1. The Northern Portion of the Lands Northwest of Martin Grove and Highway 7

The lands comprise a parcel occupied with a banquet hall and two relatively new industrial facilities. To the east are additional retail uses, and together with the lands in question, the area is firmly bounded by major roads, parks and a hydro-electric corridor.

The parcel has been identified as having potential for long-term intensification as part of the Highway 7 amendments. Technically, the Highway 7 amendments would only apply to the front portion of the lands — generally to a maximum depth of 200 metres, subject to local conditions including land use compatibility and transportation impacts.

From a site-specific planning perspective, however, the entire parcel should be included. Including only the frontage lands would isolate the rear portion of the site from direct public road access and over time could potentially result in land use conflicts between residential and industrial employment use. As such, the proposed conversion as identified in OPA 661 is appropriate as a housekeeping correction to encompass the complete property.

2. The Southern Portion of the Woodstream Boulevard Property

On the east side of Woodstream south of Highway 7 there is an existing retail centre fronting Highway 7 that extends approximately 200 metres in depth. To the south of that is an existing industrial multiple building and, south of that, a third parcel known as 77&87 Woodstream Boulevard. This parcel is occupied by a banquet hall.

It is on this southerly parcel that the owner has requested the change in designation to *Mid-Rise Mixed-Use*. The middle parcel was included for continuity. In our view, the proposed conversion of these lands is not appropriate. The northerly parcel is appropriately designated for *Commercial Mixed-Use* in accordance with OPA 661. The subjects of the conversion discussion are the southerly two parcels, 77&87 Woodstream Boulevard. .

These parcels are located within an Employment Area which is nearly fully developed and characterized by a range of older but stable industrial uses. There is no clear boundary between the lands in question and the abutting employment land areas, suggesting that the potential for destabilization would be particularly high. The depth of the proposed conversion also runs afoul of the intent of OPA 661, which is to broaden the range of permitted uses only for the frontage lands within the Highway 7 corridor.

For these reasons, in our view, the proposed conversion of the two parcels is not appropriate. A *General Employment* designation is recommended for both.



In their comments regarding the proposed redesignation of the parcel to *Mid-Rise Mixed-Use*, City of Vaughan staff indicated that the change was considered appropriate for a number of reasons, including:

- The location of the lands abutting a valley system and other lands designated for *Mid-Rise Mixed-Use*;
- The current pattern of development, which includes a banquet hall and convention centre; and
- The proximity of the lands to transit along Highway 7 and Martin Grove Road.<sup>1</sup>

While the presence of the valley lands may indeed be a residential amenity, in our view it is not in and of itself a sufficient justification for the proposed change in land use designation. The existing use also does not justify the conversion and, while proximate to Highway 7, both parcels are beyond the 200 metres envisioned for immediate proximity to transit upgrades on Highway 7.

Based on the *Growth Plan* tests for conversion, conversion of this area to non-employment use is not considered to be good planning and does not meet the tests set out in Section 2.2.6.5 and is therefore contrary to the *Growth Plan*:

- a) there is a need for the conversion

The area is competitive and marketable as industrial land and should be retained in that designation to accommodate long-term growth.

- b) the municipality will meet the employment forecasts allocated to the municipality pursuant to this Plan

The lands are included as part of the base supply in the analysis of employment land need and therefore required to meet the allocated employment forecasts.

- c) the conversion will not adversely affect the overall viability of the employment area, and achievement of the intensification target, density targets, and other policies of this Plan

Considering the location of the lands and lack of a clear separation from the abutting area, permitting residential mixed-use development is very likely to have a destabilizing effect, which could adversely affect the overall viability of the abutting employment areas to the west.

Both parcels also extend beyond the maximum depth contemplated by OPA 661. As a result, the proposed conversion would likely set a precedent for other similar conversions not only within the immediate vicinity but more broadly along the Highway 7 corridor.

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<sup>1</sup> Item 164A, Report 39 Special Committee of the Whole on July 28, 2010 as approved by Council September 7, 2011.

- d) there is existing or planned infrastructure to accommodate the proposed conversion

There is existing and planned infrastructure to accommodate either residential, retail or employment uses.

- e) the lands are not required over the long term for the employment purposes for which they are designated

The lands are included as part of the base supply in the analysis of employment land need and is therefore required to meet the allocated employment forecasts.

- f) cross-jurisdictional issues have been considered.

Cross-jurisdictional issues are not relevant.

### 3. The Parcel West of Islington Avenue North of Steeles Avenue

The parcel is shown on the map on the following page and is made up of two components:

- A parcel shown as *Mid-Rise Mixed-Use* in the new official plan, which is currently occupied by a gas station; and
- A parcel shown as *General Employment*, which is proposed to be converted to *Mid-Rise Mixed-Use* through a revision to the official plan. The parcel is currently occupied primarily by a restaurant within a former residential dwelling.

Both parcels were excluded from the base supply in the April 2010 analysis because they were considered to be scattered remnant sites that did not contain any significant amount of the existing base or future growth potential.

The parcels also abut a much larger area to the north, which is already approved for *High Density Residential/Commercial Use* under OPA 650. Given that the lands are currently occupied by retail and residential uses and abut a future high density residential area, the proposed conversions are therefore considered to be appropriate from a site-specific planning perspective.

In conclusion, the proposed additional employment land changes are considered appropriate, primarily as they recognize existing or planned retail concentrations within industrial areas. The major exception is the Jane Street Corridor lands, which in our view should be assigned a *Prestige Employment* designation to reflect their strong industrial locational and competitive advantages.

The proposed residential permissions for parcels in the Highway 7 corridor that extend beyond the maximum depth contemplated by the series of Highway 7 OPAs are not considered to be appropriate. We trust that this addendum report is of assistance to the City as it continues to implement its new official plan.

# MAP 11: NORTH OF STEELES AVE WEST AND WEST OF ISLINGTON AVENUE

