

Policy Review: Community Areas and Low-Rise Residential Areas Study and Policy Review

Community Consultation Summary Report – What We Heard

Introduction

Prepared for the City of Vaughan, this document summarizes the feedback obtained from residents of the City of Vaughan at three open houses regarding the proposed changes to the municipal policy framework informing the Community Areas and Low-Rise Residential Areas identified in the Vaughan Official Plan 2010.

Overview of Community Consultation

On October 20, 2015, Vaughan City Council initiated a policy review of the Low-Rise Residential policies in the Vaughan Official Plan (VOP 2010) in response to an increase in the number of recent development proposals for infill townhouse developments and other forms of intensification within established low-rise residential neighbourhoods. Specifically, Council requested that an examination of the policies consider the following:

- Clarity of interpretation;
- Ability to ensure compatibility;
- The need to provide more definitive policy and or schedules;
- Such criteria as may emerge as a result of the study;
- Recommended policy amendments or schedules as required;
- Best practices in other jurisdictions.

On March 1, 2016, City of Vaughan staff brought forward implementation options to the Committee of the Whole for direction on how to proceed with the study process and received instructions to proceed with the process to amend the policies of the VOP 2010 and to adopt urban design guidelines speaking to both infill housing and townhouse development based on the recommendations made by Urban Strategies Inc. in their report entitled *Draft Community Area Policy Review for Low-Rise Residential Designations Report* dated January 2016.

Following the Committee of the Whole meeting on March 1, on March 22, 2016, Vaughan City Council directed City staff to “distribute to stakeholders [Urban Strategies’ report] for comment and that such comment is requested no later than May 31, 2016, and that community meetings, if required, be organized in all wards.”

Based on Council’s direction, three public open houses were held across the city to gather feedback from Vaughan’s residents and stakeholders – including developers, community groups, residents, and city staff – were invited to submit comments electronically. The public open houses were held on the following dates:

April 19, 2016 – Maple Public Consultation Event – Vaughan City Hall

May 10, 2016 – Concord/Thornhill Public Consultation Event – North Thornhill Community Centre

May 11, 2016 – Woodbridge/Kleinburg Public Consultation Event – Vellore Village Community Centre

Each of the public consultation events began with an open house component during which attendees were invited to review a series of informative panels describing the project's background and proposed policy amendments and urban design guidelines. City staff and members of Urban Strategies were available to answer questions during the open house component. Once attendees had finished circulating, a summary presentation was delivered that described the project's background, methodology, rationale, and recommendations. Following the presentation, attendees were invited to ask questions of the presenter and share their thoughts. Feedback forms were also made available at the open house events. In addition to the three open houses, a conference call was also held with the Kleinburg Area Ratepayers Association on June 2, 2016.

What We Heard

Over one hundred residents of Vaughan attended one of the three open house events and over thirty individual letters, feedback forms, and e-mails were submitted to the City of Vaughan regarding the Low-Rise Residential Policy Review. Five of the letters received were drafted by urban planners retained by local developers in the City of Vaughan and the remaining twenty-eight were written by residents. In addition, attendees' questions and comments were recorded at each open house meeting. Verbal and written comments from residents generally expressed support for policy recommendations and design guidelines. Submissions from developers' representatives generally conveyed concern that the proposed policy amendments and design guidelines were too prescriptive and should not be adopted.

Feedback was reviewed and organized into seven topic areas. The suggestions and other comments related to each topic area are summarized below and will be used to inform refinements to the proposed policy amendments and urban design guidelines speaking to infill and townhouse development in Vaughan's Community Areas and Low-Rise Residential Areas.

General Built Form

Vaughan residents were consistently supportive of the proposed design guidelines and policy amendments which clarified and reinforced existing compatibility requirements for townhouse and other infill development to "respect and reinforce" the existing character of the city's low-rise residential neighbourhoods. Many comments submitted spoke to concerns that townhouse developments and other forms of low-rise intensification were creating adverse privacy impacts and were generally inconsistent with the character of the existing neighbourhood. Several residents indicated that in their opinion, townhouse developments were simply incompatible with areas comprised predominantly of single-detached homes

while others were more flexible, supporting the proposal to limit townhouse development to arterial roads. However, comments submitted by urban planners representing local developers in the City of Vaughan indicated that they believed the proposed design guidelines and policy amendments were too restrictive and should, instead, be made more flexible to permit stacked, back-to-back, and low-rise apartment buildings in low-rise neighbourhoods fronting an arterial road.

Sample Comments

- New townhouses should not be permitted adjacent to existing single-family detached homes.
- Perhaps the compatibility policies can be clarified to state that new development “shall not exceed the average height and massing of buildings in the neighbourhood”.
- The existing townhouse permissions for Community Areas should be preserved.
- The proposal to require an Official Plan Amendment to permit townhouses where none currently exist is inappropriate.

Neighbourhood Character

Several comments submitted by email and via the feedback forms provided at the open houses indicated that the proposed urban design guidelines could benefit from greater clarity with respect to defining and/or identifying the character of a low-rise residential neighbourhood. Some residents requested that a definition of “older” be provided with respect to identifying “older, established neighbourhoods” in the VOP 2010’s policy language while others pointed to architectural elements and the definition of “context” as urban design guideline elements that needed further explanation.

Sample Comments

- Larger homes with existing large lots should not be mixed with future infill and townhouses.
- We need more definitive guidelines for new development in established/mature neighbourhoods.
- Architectural characteristics of existing homes should be emulated by new development.

Environmental

There was near-unanimous support among residents that the proposed policy amendments and urban design guidelines speaking to the need to preserve mature trees during infill development should be retained or even strengthened. Other environmentally-focused comments indicated that residents are concerned that ongoing intensification is negatively impacting existing natural heritage features and locations and that larger and denser development proposals are not providing the required amount of parkland, instead opting for cash-in-lieu payments. The need for urban design guidelines and/or policies speaking to the importance of stormwater management and other green infrastructure was also mentioned.

Sample Comments

- Existing natural green spaces should not be changed and developed.
- Protections for mature trees during development should be strengthened.
- Stronger language about stormwater and run-off mitigation requirements should be in the guidelines.

Transportation, Streets, and Parking

A number of the comments provided by contributors spoke to a widespread concern that infill development, and townhouse development in particular, was contributing to increased traffic and congestion not only on busy arterial roads, but on the narrower residential streets within low-rise residential neighbourhoods. In a similar vein, some residents were concerned that investment in public transit serving Vaughan's low-rise residential neighbourhoods was not keeping up with the pace of intensification, further exacerbating the concerns about congestion and traffic. Other comments provided by urban planners representing local developers in the City of Vaughan suggested that townhouse developments should be permitted to front onto private streets or laneways where appropriate. Some residents also suggested that proposed parking requirements were too limited for townhouse developments; townhouse developments should be required to provide more parking.

Sample Comments

- Prohibit development proposals which include a new road through an estate lot to allow smaller homes or townhouses.
- We recommend adding language such that new dwellings adjacent to a public street be required to front the existing public street "where appropriate and achievable".
- All development proposals should be frozen until traffic issues in Vaughan are addressed.
- More attention needs to be paid to the transportation impacts of new development in the proposed guidelines/policy amendments.

Development Standards

The majority of the feedback addressing development standards specifically were provided by urban planners representing local developers. In general, their recommendations favoured the current policy framework and indicated that they were concerned that the proposed urban design guidelines and policy amendments were too restrictive. For example, several comment suggested that numeric measurements, such as the requirement for townhouses to be set back from the front lot line by 4.5 metres, were inappropriate for Official Plan policies and were better suited as zoning by-law amendments or urban design guidelines. Greater flexibility for the design of townhouse developments, such as by removing the proposed requirement that all townhouses possess a fenced rear yard, was also requested. Several submissions from both urban planners and residents indicated that

they would support the inclusion of lot coverage requirements in the proposed urban design guidelines.

Sample Comments

- Townhouse developments should be required to be “buffered” from existing neighbourhoods.
- Specific numeral requirements with regard to setbacks should not be prescribed in Official Plan policy.
- A lot coverage requirement should be included in the urban design guidelines.
- Less prescriptive language should be used with regard to the requirement that new lots be equal to or exceed the frontage of adjoining or facing lots. I suggest an average of the two.

Implementation

A number of contributors submitted feedback which spoke directly to concerns about how the proposed urban design guidelines and policy amendments will be implemented. Many residents want the urban design guidelines and policy amendments to be adopted immediately and in tandem, but are worried that they will be appealed at the Ontario Municipal Board or ignored post-adoption. Other comments requested clarification with regard to where the guidelines would apply and how the City of Vaughan would use them in the development review process. Comments received by urban planners representing local developers in Vaughan instead suggested that the proposed urban design guidelines and policy amendments were too prescriptive and inflexible and, as such, should not be adopted.

Sample Comments

- Amend the VOP 2010 now, do not wait until 2018.
- How will these guidelines be enforced if developers choose not to follow them?
- Policies should be assessed on a site-specific basis rather than blanket policy prescriptions.

Public Consultation

Although not directly related to the proposed urban design guidelines and policy amendments, several residents provided feedback about the nature of the public consultation process itself. Some residents were displeased that ratepayers’ groups were not engaged directly or proactively prior to the development of the *Draft Community Area Policy Review for Low-Rise Residential Designations Report* while others suggested that ratepayers’ groups should be consulted directly as part of the current engagement process.

Next Steps

Using the feedback summarized above, Urban Strategies and the City of Vaughan will consider refinements to the *Draft Community Area Policy Review for Low-Rise Residential*

Designations Report including the proposed urban design guidelines and policy amendments. In particular, clarification is required with regard to where the proposed guidelines will apply. Other important topics to address include the protection of natural heritage features and stormwater management. Finally, the stark contrast between developers' and residents' response to the proposed urban design guidelines and policy amendments with the former generally critical and the latter almost uniformly supportive, illustrates a broader tension within Vaughan that the final recommended policy amendments and urban design guidelines cannot fully resolve.

1 Welcome!

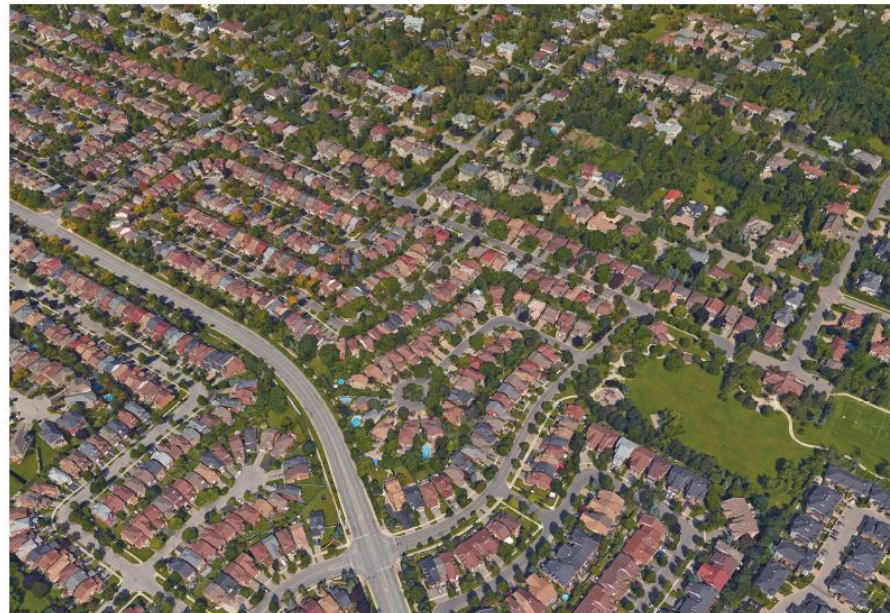
Vaughan’s established low-rise residential neighbourhoods are undergoing physical changes and we need your help crafting tools to guide new development.

The purpose of this open house is to share the findings and recommendations of the Community Area Policy Review for Low-Rise Residential Designations.

Please review the information on display and direct any questions or comments to the consultants or City staff in attendance.

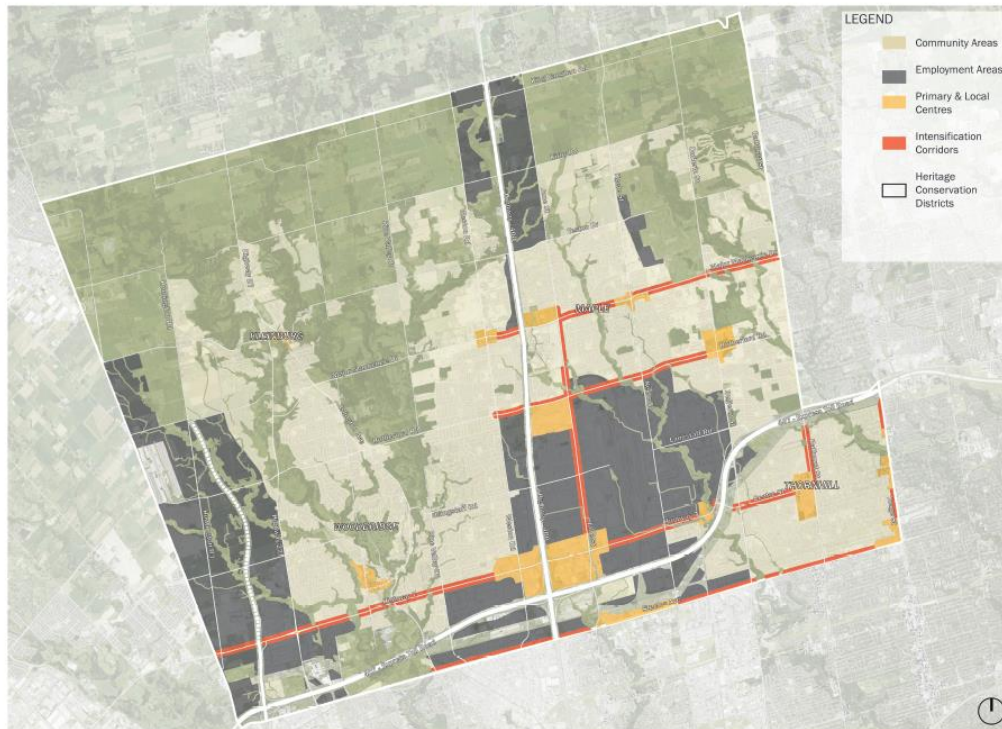
A presentation summarizing the findings and recommendations will be given at 7:30.

Please complete a comment sheet and drop it off before you leave, or take one home to complete and submit later.



2 Background

Some of Vaughan's low-rise residential neighbourhoods within designated **Community Areas** - outside of **Intensification Areas** - are under pressure to change as an increasing number of landowners and developers propose to replace small homes with much larger ones or assemble lands to building multi-unit developments.



Vaughan's Community Areas and Intensification Areas
(Schedule 1 - Urban Structure of the Vaughan Official Plan 2010)

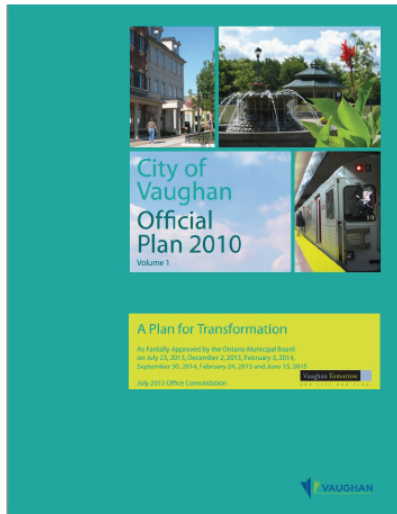
These pressures led City Council to request a review of the City of Vaughan's Official Plan's policies to consider the following:

- Clarity of interpretation
- Ability to ensure compatibility
- The need to provide more definitive policy and/or schedules
- That such criteria as may emerge as a result of the study
- Recommended policy amendments or schedules as required
- Best practices in other jurisdictions

(October 20, 2015 Council Extract)

3 Policy Context

Policies applicable to established Community Areas can be found in different chapters of the Vaughan Official Plan 2010. Key policies are summarized below.



Community Area Policies

Chapter 2 of the Official Plan contains policies that address the degree of change planned in Community Areas. **Policy 2.2.3.2 and Policy 2.2.3.3** state that “Community Areas with existing development are not intended to experience significant physical change” although “limited intensification may be permitted” if development is “sensitive to and compatible with the character, form, and planned function of the surrounding context”.

Urban Design Policies

With regard to Community Areas, the Policies 9.1.2.1 to 9.1.2.3 state that new development “will be designed to respect and reinforce the physical character of the established neighbourhood within which it is located”. The physical character is described by the size and configuration of lots; the heights and scale of nearby residential properties; front, side and rear yard setbacks; and other elements. A more prescriptive policy applies to Vaughan’s “older, established” neighbourhoods.

Low-Rise Residential Policies

The Official Plan generally permits detached houses, semi-detached houses and townhouses in Low-Rise Residential Areas and requires that these housing types “respect and reinforce the scale, massing, setback and orientation of other built and approved” housing of the same type in the immediate area.

Heritage Policies

The City of Vaughan contains several Heritage Conservation Districts, each with their own design policies and guidelines. The VOP 2010’s heritage policies in Section 6.2.2 state that new development proposals must be compatible with the heritage conservation district and that they “will be designed to respect and complement the identified heritage character of the district as described in the Heritage Conservation District Plan”. Policies contained in these HCD plans prevail over those in the VOP 2010 where there is overlap.

4 Analysis

Vaughan's low-rise neighbourhoods are architecturally diverse, but common elements can be found among them. The analysis of Community Areas (areas not intended for intensification) using detailed aerial imagery and mapping provided by the City of Vaughan identified three distinct neighbourhood types, described in the panels that follow.



Methodology

Lot frontage (the width of a property where it meets a public street) was used as the primary determinant of neighbourhood type, since the width of a lot typically has a direct relationship to:

- The sizes of houses
- The setbacks of houses from the street and neighbouring properties
- The extent of land used for tree planting and other green landscaping
- The relationship of garages to houses

Other defining elements of neighbourhood character include architecture, tree size and canopy, and private landscaping. Since these elements vary from neighbourhood to neighbourhood, they were not criteria used to categorize neighbourhoods. These elements were, however, considered in assessing the need for policy refinements and guidelines for all neighbourhoods.

The analysis also considered the recent redevelopment occurring in many of Vaughan's low-rise neighbourhoods and revealed areas with unique lot characteristics not in keeping with the established pattern of adjacent neighbourhoods.

5 Large-Lot Neighbourhoods

Vaughan's large-lot neighbourhoods include the city's oldest subdivisions near the historic villages of Thornhill, Maple, Kleinburg, and Woodbridge but also include newer estate lot subdivisions.

Shared Characteristics

- Lot frontages of 21 metres (65 feet) or more
- Deep front and rear yard setbacks
- Large 1 or 2 storey detached houses
- Wide and/or circular driveways
- Extensive landscaped yards
- Garages that are not dominant features



Large-Lot Neighbourhoods

6 Medium-Lot Neighbourhoods

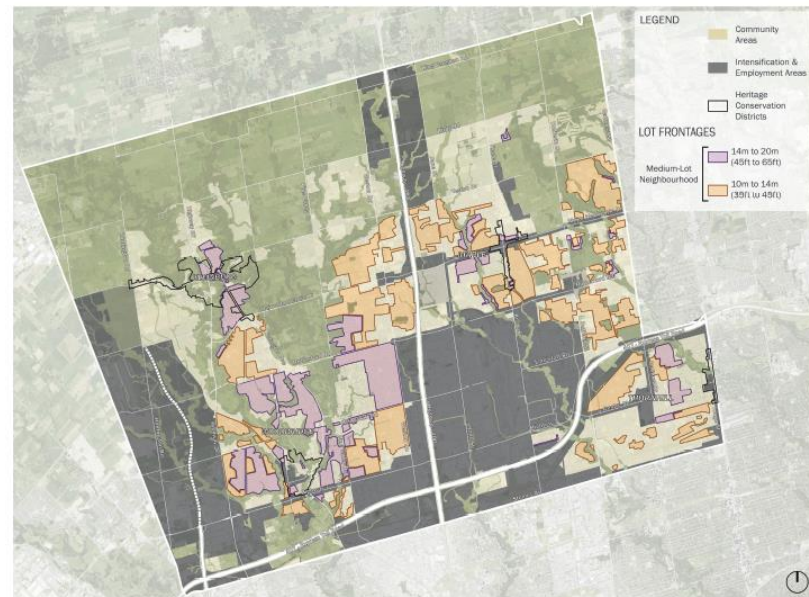
Much of the housing stock built in Vaughan since the 1980s falls into the category of medium-lot.

Shared Characteristics

- Lot frontages of 10-20 metres (33-65 feet)
- Front setbacks of 6-15 metres (20-50 feet)
- Rear setbacks of 7.5-10 metres (25-33 feet)
- Interior side yard setback of 1.5m (5 feet)
- Wide driveways and two-car garages
- Landscaping is generally less than 50% of yard
- Generally two-storey detached houses

Development Pressures

Development pressure within these neighbourhoods is less acute than in the large-lot neighbourhoods since the housing stock is generally newer, and site and zoning restrictions prevent significantly larger homes from being built. There is a trend in some older medium-lot neighbourhoods to replace bungalows with two-storey homes and rear yard additions.



Medium-Lot Neighbourhoods

7 Small-Lot Neighbourhoods

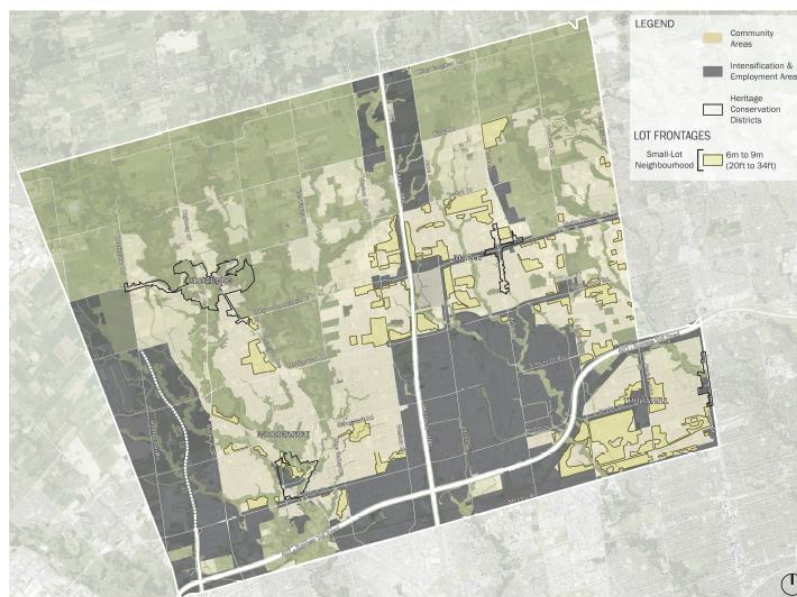
Small lot neighbourhoods are more common today and can be found in pockets of Woodbridge, Thornhill and Maple.

Shared Characteristics

- Lot frontages of 6-9 metres (20-30 feet)
- Front setbacks of 5-12 metres (16-40 feet)
- Rear setbacks of 6-10 metres (20-33 feet)
- Single or double integrated garages
- Limited landscaping
- Mix of detached, semi-detached, and townhouses

Development Pressures

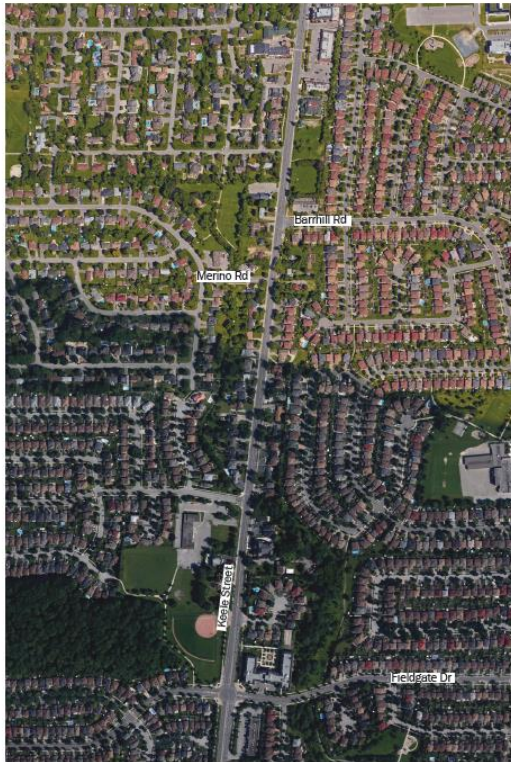
Development pressure within these neighbourhoods is also less acute due to the age of the homes and site and zoning restrictions. In small-lot neighbourhoods, the lots are too narrow for subdivisions to be considered.



Small-Lot Neighbourhoods

8 Arterial Areas

Within Vaughan's low-rise residential neighbourhoods, there are areas along arterial roads where development patterns are inconsistent with the rest of the surrounding neighbourhood outside of designated Intensification Areas. These conditions exist in pockets of the city along Centre Street in Thornhill, Keele Street in Maple, and Islington Avenue and Pine Valley Road in Woodbridge.



Keele Street in Maple

In some instances within Community Areas, there are unusually large sites fronting arterial roads which are inconsistent with the surrounding neighbourhood on either side of the road. These areas are outside of designated Intensification Areas yet there is pressure to build more intense forms of housing including townhouses. In order to respect and reinforce the character of the adjacent low-rise residential neighbourhood, as required in the Vaughan Official Plan 2010, townhouse proposals need to:

- Orient units towards the public street to maintain the rhythm of the neighbourhood frontage
- Avoid the use of private streets to create additional frontages, as the resulting front-to-back condition would result in a significant loss of privacy for the units fronting the arterial street
- Maintain front and rear yards that are consistent with those in the adjacent established neighbourhood
- Maintain and protect existing mature trees to help maintain the streetscape and landscape character and protect the urban forest



9 Precedent Tools

Municipalities across Ontario are experiencing similar pressures as Vaughan in their low-rise neighbourhoods. Many have adopted detailed guidelines to better manage change in these areas.

Toronto



Toronto is currently in the process of updating its townhouse guidelines to reflect a more sensitive approach to development within low-rise neighbourhoods.

The new draft guidelines take a contextual approach to provide both flexibility for developers and certainty for residents that new development will be compatible with the existing character of the neighbourhood.

Sample guidelines

- Match the front yard setback so it is equivalent to the existing adjacent properties
- Provide appropriate design treatment to both street facades when the building is on a corner
- Preserve and protect existing healthy trees and green space.

Mississauga



Mississauga has two sets of urban design guidelines - one for infill housing and one for townhouses - that provide detail to homeowners and developers on how to ensure development is compatible with the character of existing low-rise neighbourhoods.

Sample guidelines

- The massing of the dwelling should be consistent with the adjacent homes
- Garages should be located behind or in line with the front door of the dwelling to ensure visibility to the street.
- Site buildings with the front facade facing the public street. Avoid rear yards fronting the public street.
- Where the proposed building is taller or larger than adjacent buildings, create a transition in building height and form.

Brampton



Brampton recently adopted a “Guide for Infill Housing in Mature Neighbourhoods” that provides guidance on development within low-rise residential areas. It is primarily designed for homeowners and architects to inform design choices.

Sample guidelines

- The architectural style of new houses and substantial remodeling should be compatible with the architectural styles found in the surrounding neighbourhood.
- Main entrances should be prominent, oriented to the street and in appropriate scale to the block as well as the house.
- Avoid privacy fencing anywhere in front of the house.
- Preserve mature trees wherever possible.

Oakville



The Town of Oakville Design Guidelines for Stable Residential Communities are intended to serve as a framework to inform the design of new detached dwellings within stable residential communities. Its primary focus is to help achieve compatibility and maintain the character of neighbourhoods.

Sample guidelines

- New development should maintain the setback or average of setbacks from the street frontage as the existing dwellings in the immediate area.
- New development with an attached garage should make every effort to incorporate this feature into the design of the building.
- New development should be designed to mitigate potential impacts of overshadowing on adjacent properties.

10 Policy Recommendations

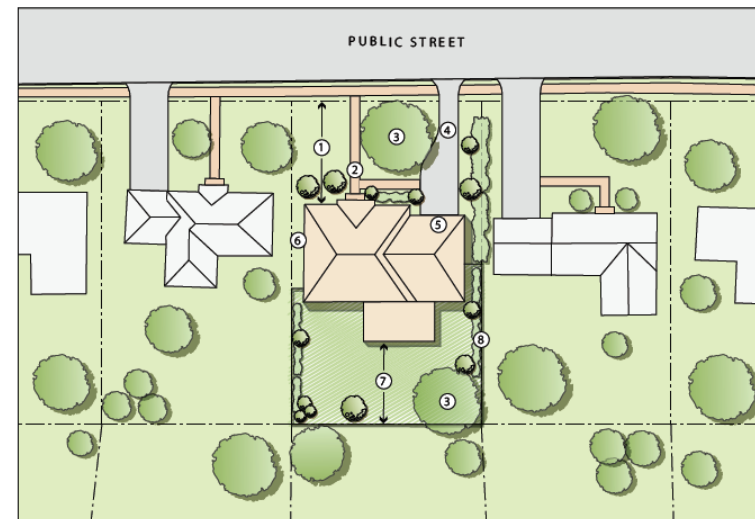
Although the policies of the Official Plan addressing low-rise neighbourhoods are comprehensive, a number of minor amendments are proposed to mainly clarify the intent of the existing policies, specifically those that affect applications for more intense forms of development.

- The Community Area policies should clarify that significant physical change means development that would alter the general character of a stable neighbourhood. The orientation of buildings should also be included as a neighbourhood characteristic to be respected and reinforced. (Amending Policy 2.2.3.2)
- The Urban Design policies should also be amended to include “orientation of buildings”, as well as the presence of mature trees, landscape character, existing topography and drainage patterns, as neighbourhood elements to be respected and reinforced. (Amending Policy 9.1.2.2)
- The policy respecting “older, established residential neighbourhoods” should apply to all large-lot neighbourhoods, regardless of their age, and the Official Plan Schedules should include a map of these neighbourhoods. (Amending Policy 9.1.2.3 and adding New Schedule to VOP 2010)
- The same policy should be clarified to prescribe that new lots in large-lot neighbourhoods should be equal to or exceed the frontages of adjoining or facing lots. It should also be amended to permit semi-detached houses and townhouses only on arterial roads. (Amending Policy 9.1.2.3)
- A new policy should be added to the plan to clarify that semi-detached and townhouse dwellings are generally permitted in all established low-rise neighbourhoods on lots fronting an arterial road. Townhouse developments should be required to orient dwellings to the street (not to a private lane), locate parking underground or at the rear of units, maintain the pattern of setbacks in the adjacent neighbourhood, and respect the scale and massing of adjacent development. (Adding New Policy 9.1.2.4 and amending Policy 9.2.3.2 (d))
- A new policy should be added to clarify that a Block Plan may be required where a new street network is required to service development on deep, formerly rural lots in Community Areas. (Adding New Policy 9.1.2.5)

11 General Infill Housing Guidelines

To aid the interpretation of the Official Plan policies applicable to low-rise neighbourhoods and the review of development applications, the key urban design guidelines for infill development (replacement housing that is at a higher density than the existing house) below and on the next panel are proposed. These guidelines would be used by the City when reviewing proposals that require an Official Plan amendment, a rezoning, minor variances, a severance or site plan approval.

- 1 Place new dwelling to be consistent with adjacent front yard setbacks.
- 2 Front entrance of new dwelling should face a public street and incorporate a barrier-free walkway leading to a clear front entrance with a porch or a stoop.
- 3 Retain and protect healthy, mature trees.
- 4 Driveways should be minimized and should never be wider than 6m.
- 5 Integrate the garage and recess it from the front wall of the house.
- 6 Provide side yard setbacks consistent with the pattern of side yard setbacks in the surrounding residential area.
- 7 Provide a minimum rear yard setback of 7.5 metres.
- 8 Incorporate fencing, screening and/or landscaping to maintain the privacy of adjacent dwellings.



12 General Infill Housing Guidelines

The form and character of infill development should be in keeping with the general form and character of existing development and streetscapes in the surrounding neighbourhood:

1. Infill development should reflect the existing neighbourhood pattern of development in terms of front, rear and side yard setbacks, building height and the location and treatment of primary entrances, to both the dwelling and the street. (Policy 9.1.2.2 / 9.1.2.3)

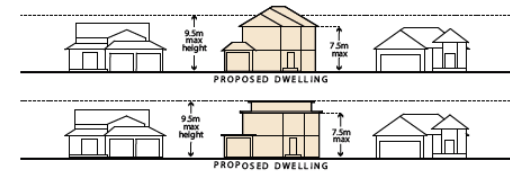


2. Development should reflect the desirable aspects of the established streetscape character. Where the streetscape needs improvement, infill development should contribute through high-quality building design, landscape architecture, and tree planting. (Policy 9.1.1.2 / 9.1.1.3)



3. The prevailing pattern of lot widths, lot depths and lot area in a neighbourhood should be maintained. The subdivision of a lot to create two or more lots should only occur if the width of the resulting lots is the same as or greater than the narrowest lot fronting the same street on the same block or the narrowest lot fronting the same street on the block across the street. (Policy 9.1.2.2 / 9.1.2.3)
4. An existing dwelling should only be replaced by a dwelling, or dwellings, of the same type (detached or semi-detached house or townhouse). (Policy 9.1.2.2 / 9.1.2.3)
5. Consistent with the City's zoning standard for Vaughan's neighbourhoods of single-detached houses, the height of new dwelling should not exceed 9.5 metres. To ensure an appropriate

transition to houses on adjacent lots, the roof line of houses with a height greater than 9.5 metres should slope or step down to a maximum



height of 7.5 metres at the eaves at the side of the house (Policy 9.1.2.2/ 9.1.2.3/ 9.2.3.1)

6. Front entrances should be prominent and well detailed and incorporate a porch or stoop that is at least twice as wide as the front door. (Policy 9.2.3.1)
7. Development on corner lots should front both edges with articulated facades and windows that



12 General Infill Housing Guidelines

provide views of the street and/or open space from living areas. Blank walls visible from streets, parks or other public spaces generally should be avoided. (Policy 9.1.1.3)

8. Second-storey additions to a house should have architectural details that are uniformly expressed over the entire facade. (Policy 6.2.2.9 / 9.2.3.1)
9. Building finishes should be durable and consistent with materials used for dwellings in the immediately surround area. The use of vinyl siding is discouraged. (Policy 9.2.3.1)
10. Dwellings should be oriented to the street with their front entrance visible from a public street. (Policy 9.1.1.3)

Infill development should have relationships to the public realm and adjacent properties that are consistent with the relationships of existing development in the immediate surroundings:

11. Front yard setbacks should be consistent with the front yard setbacks of adjacent houses and houses immediately across the street. Where there is a uniform setback along a street, it should be matched by the new dwelling(s). Where there is variation in setbacks, the front yard setback of the new dwelling(s) should be the average of that of adjacent development. In no

neighbourhoods, should the front yard setback be less than 4.5 metres. (Policy 9.1.2.2 / 9.1.2.3 / 9.2.3.1)

12. Side yard and rear yard setbacks should be consistent with the prevailing pattern of setbacks in the immediately surrounding residential area. A minimum rear yard setback of 7.5 metres should be maintained. The rear portion of the house should not create adverse shadow or overlook conditions on the adjacent properties. (Policy 9.1.2.2 / 9.1.2.3 / 9.2.3.1)
13. New development should not include second storey decks or balconies that would create adverse overlook impacts on adjacent properties. (Policy 9.1.2.2 / 9.1.2.3 / 9.2.3.1)
14. New development should incorporate fencing, screening and/or landscaping to maintain the privacy of adjacent dwellings and their rear yards. (Policy 9.1.2.2 / 9.1.2.3 / 9.2.3.1)
15. Where there are opportunities, infill development should expand the network of sidewalks, pathways, trails, and crosswalks in the larger neighbourhood. New pathways should be barrier free. (Policy 9.1.1.2 / 9.1.1.3 / 9.1.1.4)

Garages should be treated as accessories to dwellings, located and designed to be complementary to the main building and not a dominant feature of the property:

16. On lots with a minimum width of 15 metres, the garage should be recessed from the front wall of the house, and the width of the garage should not be greater than the width of the house. On such lots, consideration should be given to locating the garage behind the house, accessed from a driveway at the side or on a flanking street. On a lot with a minimum width of 30 metres, the garage may face the side yard, provided the side of the garage is designed to blend with the façade of the house and has at least one window. Projecting garages should be avoided. (Policy 9.2.3.1)



12 General Infill Housing Guidelines

17. Attached and detached garages should have materials and design elements consistent with the architecture of the dwelling and should not be a dominant feature. (Policy 9.2.3.1)
18. On corner lots, access to the garage should be from the flanking street. (Policy 9.1.1.3 / 9.2.3.1)
19. No portion of a garage should be located below the lowest grade of the lot at the street. Reverse slope driveways are not permitted as per zoning by-law 1-88 and the City of Vaughan's Engineering Design Criteria and Standard Documents (Section 4.1.4 (g)) (Policy 9.2.3.1)
20. Double garages should have two overhead doors. (Policy 9.2.3.1)
21. The width of driveways at the street should be minimized and no greater than 6 metres. The maximum width of a driveway should not exceed the width of the garage. (Policy 9.1.1.3 / 9.2.3.1)



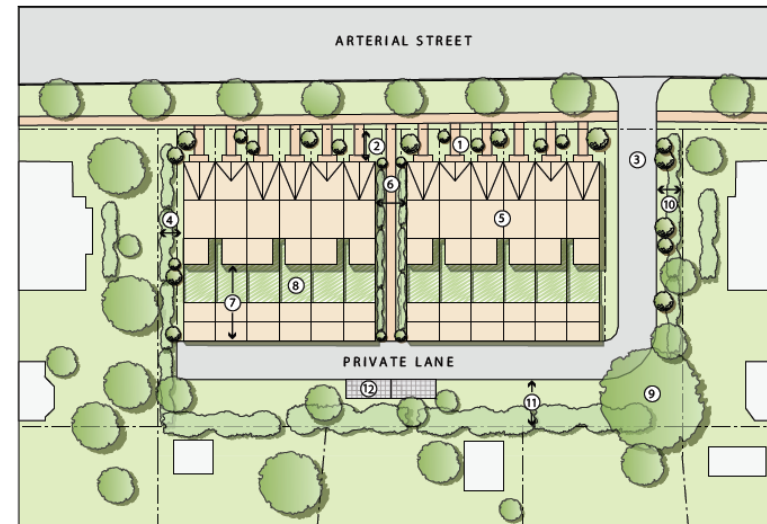
Front yards should be designed to contribute to an attractive, green streetscape in which trees are a dominant feature:

22. Circular driveways should only be considered on lots with a minimum width of 30 metres. (Policy 9.1.1.3 / 9.2.3.1)
23. Existing healthy, mature trees should be retained and protected. To ensure their survival, trenching for services and foundations should avoid the critical root zone of existing trees, generally defined by the tree's drip line. If the removal of any mature trees is justifiable, they should be replaced with new ones as per the provisions of a tree compensation plan. (Policy 9.1.1.2)
24. Other than the permitted driveway width, paving in the front yard should be limited to walkways and small areas leading to the front entrance. Walkways should be barrier-free. (Policy 9.1.1.2 / 9.1.1.3)
25. On lots with a width between 14 and 20 metres, at least 50% of the front yard should comprise soft landscaping, and a pathway should connect the front entrance to the sidewalk, where one exists. On lots with a width between 20 and 30 metres, this proportion should be 67%, and on 30-metre or wider lots, the proportion should be 80%. (Policy 9.1.1.3 / 9.2.3.1)
26. Fencing and/or perimeter landscaping, such as hedges, that obscures views of the front of a house from the street is discouraged. (Policy 9.1.1.2 / 9.1.1.3)
27. Manage rainwater and snowmelt on-site with best practices in Low Impact Development that encourage infiltration, evapo-transpiration and water re-use through such measures as: planting trees, shrubs and other landscaping; creating bio-retention areas such as swales; and incorporating opportunities to harvest rainwater from rooftops and other hard surfaces for landscape irrigation.
28. Impermeable surfaces in landscaped open spaces should be minimized. Where hard surfaces are planned, the use of permeable materials are encouraged to manage stormwater run-off and reduce heat build-up

13 Townhouse Infill Guidelines

The recommended key urban design guidelines below and on the next panel would apply to proposals for townhouse developments on arterial roads in established Low-Rise Residential Areas.

- 1 Orient townhouses to have their front entrance on a public street.
- 2 Provide front yard setbacks consistent across the site and of a minimum of 5 metres.
- 3 Provide parking and servicing areas for townhouses at the rear of the units or underground, accessed from a laneway or driveway.
- 4 Provide an interior side yard setbacks of 1.5 metres minimum.
- 5 Build townhouses with a minimum width of 6 metres and a minimum depth of 12 metres. Blocks of townhouses shall consist of no more than 6 units.
- 6 Separate townhouse blocks by a minimum of 3 metres to allow for landscaping. Where provided with pedestrian circulation, the separation should generally be 6 metres.
- 7 Provide a minimum setback of 12 metres from the rear of the townhouse to a rear lane way.
- 8 Give each townhouse a private backyard that is fenced or screened with landscaping for privacy.
- 9 Retain and protect existing healthy, mature trees.
- 10 Create a landscape strip with a minimum width of 1.5 metres to buffer laneways and driveways from side property lines.
- 11 Create a landscape strip with a minimum width of 3 metres to buffer laneways and driveways from rear property lines.
- 12 Place visitor parking in a central location at the rear of units with pathway(s) to allow visitors access to the front entrances.



14 Townhouse Design Guidelines

Orientation, Setbacks and Character (Policy 9.2.3.2)

1. Townhouse dwellings should be oriented to and have their front entrance on a public street; alternatively, they may front a public park. Private driveways or laneways should not be used to provide frontage for townhouses either flanking the street or located at the rear of dwellings fronting the street. Such a condition would create a front-to-side or front-to-back condition that would adversely affect the rear privacy of adjacent dwellings or dwellings on the same lot that front the street.



2. Front paths should provide direct access to each unit from the sidewalk.

3. Front entrances should be prominent and well detailed and incorporate a porch or stoop.
4. The front entrance should be level with the first floor and raised 0.6-1.2 metres above the level of the front path. Policy Review: Vaughan's Community Areas and Low-Rise Residential Areas 47
5. Front yard setbacks for units fronting the arterial street should be a minimum of 5.0 metres and should be consistent across the site.
6. Interior side yard setbacks should be a minimum of 1.5 metres, and units flanking a public street should be setback a minimum of 4.5 metres from the street.



7. The end unit in a townhouse block flanking a street should address both streets with a side elevation that includes windows and details consistent with the front elevation.
8. The height and massing of townhouse blocks should be compatible with the character of the adjacent or surrounding neighbourhood. Blocks of townhouses shall consist of no more than 6 units consistent with VOP 2010 Policy 9.2.3.2 (a).
9. The separation between townhouse blocks on the same site should be a minimum of 3 metres to allow for landscaping. Where the separation will provide pedestrian circulation, the separation between townhouse blocks on the same site should generally be 6 metres.
10. The rear of the townhouse unit should be setback by 12 metres from the rear laneway. A minimum of 3 metres landscaped buffer from the rear property line to the rear laneways should be provided.
11. Each townhouse dwelling should have a private backyard, fenced or screened with landscaping for privacy.
12. Where common outdoor amenity area is proposed in addition to private amenity space, the common space should be in a prominent location, visible and easily accessed from all units, and with plenty of exposure to sunlight.

14 Townhouse Design Guidelines

13. A minimum of 50% of the area at the rear of townhouses should consist of soft landscaping, including high-branching deciduous trees.
14. The architecture and materials of new townhouses should respect and complement the character of the surrounding residential area.
15. Townhouses should have a minimum width of 6 metres and a minimum depth of 12 metres.
16. Existing healthy, mature trees should be retained and protected. To ensure their survival, trenching for services and foundations should avoid the critical root zone of existing trees. If the removal of any mature trees is justifiable, they should be replaced with new ones as per the provisions of a tree compensation plan.
17. Landscaping plans for front yards should incorporate the public boulevard and include street trees.



18. Parking and servicing areas for townhouses fronting an arterial street should be located at the rear of the units or underground, accessed from a laneway or driveway.
19. On corner sites, access to parking and servicing areas should be from the flanking street.

Access, Parking and Service Areas (Policies 9.1.1.2 / 9.1.1.3 / 9.1.1.4)

20. Laneways and driveways should be buffered from side property lines by a landscape strip with a minimum width of 1.5 metres and buffered from rear property lines by landscaped areas with a minimum width of 3 metres to soften and improve the transition between adjacent properties.
21. Parking access, servicing areas and utility boxes should be consolidated for efficiency and to minimize adverse impacts on neighbouring properties and the public realm. Waste storage areas and utility boxes should be screened from public views.
22. Accesses to underground parking should be integrated into the design of the building, should not be visible from a public street, and should be sited to prevent negative impacts to neighbouring properties.

23. Where a site is large enough to accommodate a local public street or street network to provide access and frontage for townhouse dwellings in the interior of the site, the street or street network should link to existing streets in the surrounding neighbourhood where possible, and opportunities to extend the street or street network across adjoining sites fronting the arterial in the future should be considered. Dead end streets, cul-de-sacs, streets that appear to be private and gated access points should be avoided.

24. Where townhouse dwellings front a new local street and it is not practical to accommodate parking at the rear of the units, single front garages may be considered provided the townhouses have a minimum width of 6 metres and the garage is flush with or recessed from the front wall of the townhouse so that it does not dominate the façade. In addition, the garage should be set back a minimum of 6 metres from the street to accommodate a parked car in the driveway.



14 Townhouse Design Guidelines

25. Visitor parking should be located close to the site entrance(s). Where multiple townhouse blocks are proposed on a site, the visitor parking may be located in a central location at the rear of the units, provided convenient pathways between blocks of townhouses allow visitors to access the front entrances.
26. Pedestrian circulation areas should be barrier free and landscaped, have pedestrian-scale lighting, and have access to sunlight

Grading (Policies 9.1.1.3 / 9.1.1.2 / 9.1.1.4)

27. Generally, there should be minimal changes to the existing grades on the site, and the existing natural grades at the property lines should be maintained.
28. Artificially raised or lowered grades, or low-lying areas where water collects, should be avoided.



29. The use of retaining walls along street frontages, parks and other open spaces areas should be avoided. Where a retaining wall cannot be avoided and the grade change is greater than one metre, the wall should be terraced.
30. If there is a significant grade difference across a site, townhouse blocks should be stepped to maintain an appropriate relationship to grade.
31. Drainage should have no adverse impacts on adjacent properties or the public realm.
32. Pedestrian routes across grade changes should be universally accessible.
33. Manage rainwater and snowmelt on-site with best practices in Low Impact Development that encourage infiltration, evapo-transpiration and water re-use through such measures as: planting trees, shrubs and other landscaping; creating bio-retention areas such as swales; and incorporating opportunities to harvest rainwater from rooftops and other hard surfaces for landscape irrigation.
34. Impermeable surfaces in landscaped open spaces should be minimized. Where hard surfaces are planned, the use of permeable materials are encouraged to manage stormwater run-off and reduce heat build-up.
35. Townhouse access will be designed in accordance with the City of Vaughan's Waste Collection Design Standard Policy.



15 Next Steps

Your feedback on the findings and recommendations of the Community Area Policy Review for Low-Rise Residential Designations is important.

Public feedback will be compiled and considered through the finalization process of both the Official Plan Amendment and the urban design guideline documents.

The policy amendments will be the subject of a Statutory Public Hearing, as required under the Ontario Planning Act, in Fall 2016. The General Infill and Townhouse Guidelines will be presented to the Committee of the Whole in a separate meeting for endorsement.



Tell us what you think!

Talk to the consultants or City staff in attendance and fill in a comment sheet.



Comments can also be submitted by May 31st to:



Kyle Fearon, Planner
Policy Planning & Environmental Sustainability
City of Vaughan
2141 Major Mackenzie Drive
Vaughan, Ontario, L6A 1T1
kyle.fearon@vaughan.ca

Thank you for attending and helping to shape the future of Vaughan!