

opportunities and challenges

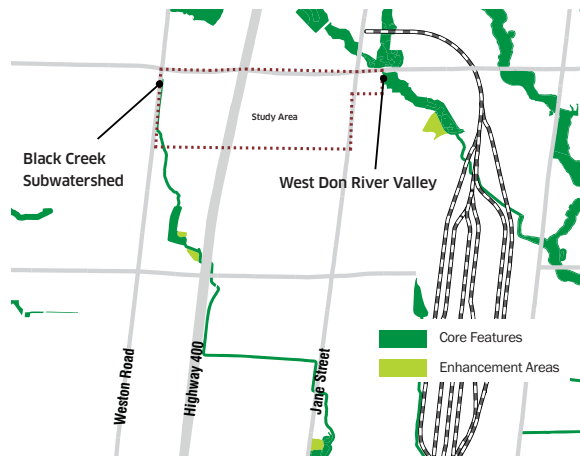
natural heritage and open space

Natural Heritage

Although the Vaughan Mills Centre Secondary Plan area is completely within the built-up area of the city, it is part of a regional ecosystem that includes natural features including the Black Creek Subwatershed and the West Don River Valley. Both of these environmental features are designated as **Core Features** within the Vaughan Official Plan 2010.

requires special consideration Maintaining the health of natural features will be a major objective for the Vaughan Mills Centre Secondary Plan. Consideration for managing post-development water recharge to pre-development conditions will be necessary in order to maintain the function of the groundwater system and other natural features (e.g. streams, wetlands, and forests). Future development will need to consider natural features and functions, towards providing suitable environmental protection measures that maintains the integrity of existing ecosystems and flood zones.

Existing natural features such as the Black Creek and the West Don River Valley provide opportunities for maintaining wildlife corridors as well as providing new green links to open spaces within and surrounding the Study Area.



Natural Heritage Features within Vaughan Mills Centre, Vaughan Official Plan 2010

Stormwater Management

The West Don River Watershed forms part of the city's larger Natural Heritage network that encompass forests, rivers, streams, and wetlands. The West Don River Watershed flanks the northeast portion of the Study Area and includes mature tree stands, steep slopes, and a watercourse that defines a unique natural heritage character. The watershed provides an important ecological function for the health and quality of the natural environment and wildlife habitat.

The Black Creek Subwatershed extends 36 km, with its headwaters in Vellore Village near Weston Road and Major Mackenzie Drive. The Black Creek and a number of storm sewers drain into two existing online stormwater management ponds just outside of the study area north of Rutherford Road.



Existing stormwater management facility near the northwest intersection of Weston Road and Rutherford Road



Existing woodlot near the southeast intersection of Jane Street and Rutherford Road

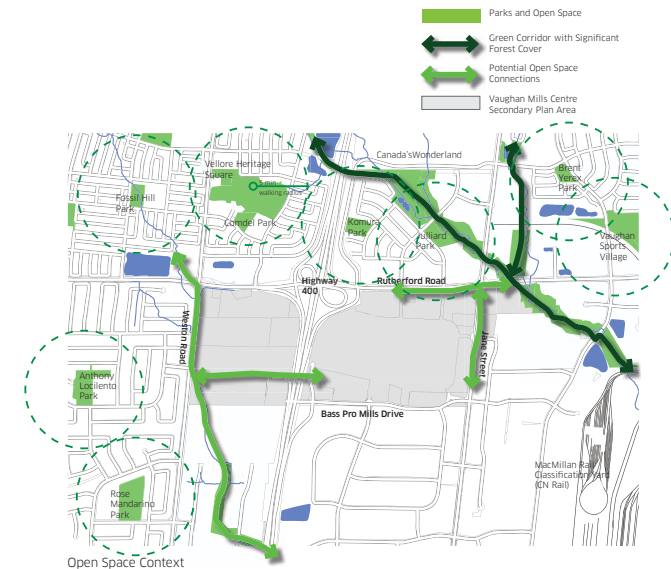
Open Space

One of the objectives of the Secondary Plan will be to assess and recommend the open space needs for Vaughan Mills Centre in response to the recommendations brought forward in the City's Active Together Master Plan, 2008, while taking into consideration the future demands that growth and intensification will have on the demand for new parks.

The Official Plan suggests that neighbourhood scale parks are to be provided within 500-metres of residential development and the distribution of such parks should be uninterrupted by major thoroughfares (e.g. arterials or the 400 series highways, and rail lines), which are major physical barriers. Given the number of arterial roadways and Highway 400 surrounding the Study Area, there will be a need for parks planning in conjunction with residential development within Vaughan Mills Centre.

The Secondary Plan will recommend ways to:

- Integrate the open space framework throughout Vaughan Mills Centre, and with surrounding neighbourhoods;
- Create new amenities to support emerging uses;
- Incorporate stormwater management features in the public realm; and
- Enhance the health of natural environmental features.



opportunities and challenges

mobility

Streets

The Vaughan Mills Centre Secondary Plan area is surrounded by some of the busiest arterial streets in the city, and is connected by two interchanges with Highway 400. The grand majority of traffic in the area originates from western parts of the city, accounting for over 41% of internal trips. Most of the high traffic problem areas occur along Weston Road, and west of Highway 400, along Rutherford Road.

Future street network improvements in Vaughan Mills Centre will focus on creating a connected street network, and a more pedestrian-oriented environment. New connections through Vaughan Mills Centre will also provide opportunities to alleviate some of the traffic pressures along existing parallel roads such as Rutherford Road and Weston Road.

Challenges that will be addressed through the Secondary Plan process include:

- Managing traffic conditions at critical locations.
- Providing opportunities for enhanced circulation within the Vaughan Mills Mall and adjacent areas.
- Looking at ways to reduce traffic infiltration into surrounding neighbourhoods.
- Exploring opportunities for additional crossings over Highway 400 to enhance overall connectivity of the Vaughan Mills Centre Secondary Plan area.

Transit & Active Transportation

The Vaughan Mills Transit Terminal is a key transit hub in the city and region. According to York Region's Transportation Master Plan (2009), the Vaughan Mills Terminal is planned to become one of the key transit gateways in the area. In the future, the Spadina Subway extension to the Vaughan Metropolitan Centre (VMC) at Jane Street and Highway 7 will provide opportunities for new connections between the VMC and Vaughan Mills Centre. This will have positive impacts for overall transit service and pedestrian movement for the Study Area.



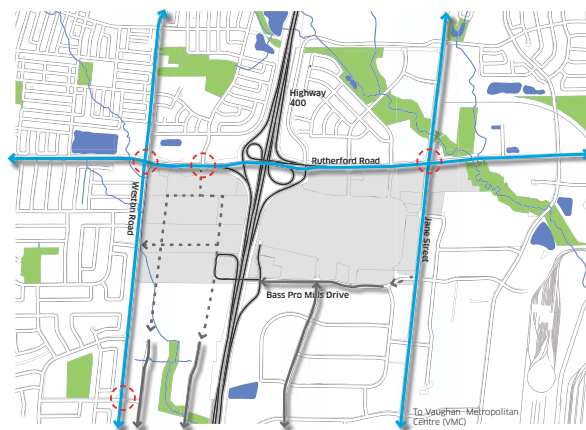
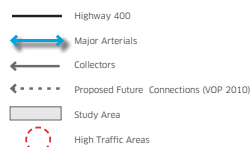
Barriers

Some of the immediate physical barriers such as Highway 400, and the surrounding busy arterial streets will need to be addressed in establishing efficient vehicular circulation, and safe cycling and pedestrian movement within the Vaughan Mills Centre area.

The Secondary Plan will recommend options for integrating cycling and pedestrian facilities in creating an enhanced and more comfortable pedestrian and cycling network in Vaughan Mills Centre.



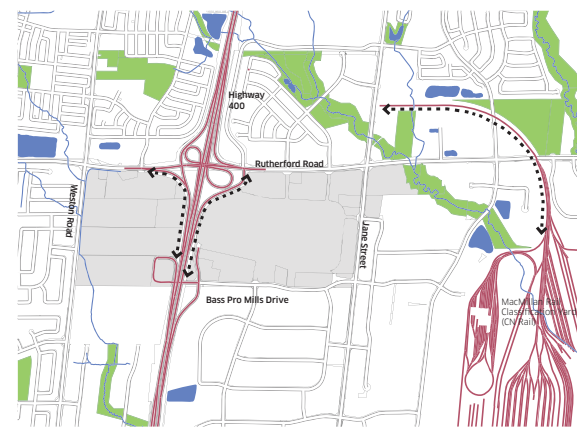
As Vaughan Mills Centre develops as an urban centre in the city, enhanced active transportation facilities such as trails, side-walks, and cycling facilities will need to accommodate a growing residential community.



Vaughan Mills Centre Streets Network



Vaughan Mills Centre Transit and Active Transportation Network



Vaughan Mills Centre Physical Barriers