

Regional Official Plan – Policy 5.2.3 Urban Area Expansion Criteria

Policy	Updated Comments
5.2.3. To require an amendment to this Plan for any expansion of the urban areas identified on Map 5. Such amendments shall be adopted by Regional Council only if they are consistent with the following:	
a) regional population and employment forecasts;	• Table 1 in the Regional Official Plan (ROP) forecasts 696,000 jobs Region wide for 2026. • Table 1 in the ROP identifies 215,000 jobs for Vaughan by 2026. • Council adopted a preferred growth scenario of a minimum of 40% intensification in June 2008 • Updated forecasts were presented to Council on September 18, 2008 which called for employment growth in Vaughan of 113,700 jobs with the fastest growth rate occurring between 2006 and 2021 • The Places to Grow 2031 forecasts have been revised for the Region to 798,700 jobs by 2031 – these lands still remain an essential component in meeting this target • Vaughan is forecast to accommodate 34% of the Region’s entire employment growth • An approved Environmental Assessment remains outstanding for the Highway 427 employment lands (ROPA 19) with no commitment to construction funding or a timeframe
b) the need for expansion relative to other lands available for development in	• Development within the existing urban area, excluding the ROPA 19 area, is limited to small parcels that cannot meet the City’s long term needs for large parcels for employment land employment.

the area municipality;	• There is a need to secure the strategically located lands along the Highway 400 corridor for long-term for employment purposes. • ROPA 52 lands are essential in meeting the Regional employment needs prior to 2031 • The ROPA 19 employment area is currently constrained and may fall short of anticipated employment projections due to low intensity/density transportation uses being approved in the vicinity of the intermodal facility. • The subject site's proximity to Highway 400, ready access to a future interchange with Highway 400, close proximity to the Toronto market, and an available labour force, makes the ROPA 52 lands suitable for employment purposes. • Designation of the ROPA 52 lands facilitates a second large future employment area for the City of Vaughan, and creates an additional area of supply, adding security to supply and permitting greater competition and price stability for employment land. • While a preferred scenario has emerged in the Environmental Assessment process for Highway 427, an approved EA remains outstanding for the Highway 427 employment lands (ROPA 19) with no commitment to construction funding or a timeframe
c) the role of the new development lands identified in area municipal growth management strategies;	• The ROPA 52 employment area will be accounted for as employment land in the City's recently initiated Official Plan review. • The City adopted OPA 637 for the subject lands and envisions the site to be used primarily for employment purposes. • On a City-wide basis the Employment Needs Study prepared by Hemson Consulting Ltd. concludes that these lands should be designated for employment purposes. • An employment designation for the ROPA 52 lands takes advantage of existing Provincial infrastructure.
d) the capability of the area municipality to provide growth within the urban area;	• The refined Region's Planning for Tomorrow exercise has identified a preliminary estimated need for 1,220 ha of employment land within the Region's whitebelt lands prior to 2031, over and above that which can be accommodated by intensification or vacant parcels within the existing urban area. • With respect to Vaughan, development of employment uses within the ROPA 19 area is constrained pending the final alignment of the Highway 427 extension.

	• The ROPA 19 employment area may not achieve its anticipated employment target. • Other intensification sites within existing employment parks generally have only small parcels of land available. • Historically Vaughan has provided a large percentage of the Region's Greenfield employment growth and it is forecast to accommodate 34% of the Region's employment growth between 2006 and 2031 with an average annual growth rate of 2.1% • Based on the preferred growth scenario, employment growth occurs most rapidly between 2006 and 2021 with slower growth in subsequent years. • Other areas do not offer the strategic locational advantage that the subject lands possess. The ROPA 52 area is located adjacent to a 400 series highway with a planned future interchange. • These lands with large contiguous parcels next to an existing 400 series highway remain as a key strategic area to achieve new employment growth in both the short term and long term
e) an analysis of options for growth direction and sequencing with respect to environment, agriculture and the implications on the availability of servicing including water, sewer, road and transit networks and human services;	• The City's only option for "greenfield" growth is northward within the "white belt" area. • A Feasibility Study for transportation, water supply, sanitary sewer servicing, and transit provided by landowners concludes these lands can be serviced and developed provided a number of improvements are implemented. • Sanitary sewer servicing will require the Duffin Creek Treatment Plant expansion and the South East Regional trunk sewer. • Any of the agricultural activities being carried out on the subject lands are being done so in anticipation of future urban development as a result of the "white belt" designation in the Growth Plan. Agricultural activities on the subject lands are viewed as interim, until the site is developed with urban uses. • A portion of the subject site is located in Regional Greenlands System and will be subject to the Regional Greenlands policies requiring an Environmental Impact Study be carried out and appropriate land use designations and setbacks being applied to protect the environment at the secondary plan stage. • A significant portion of the site that is located on the west side of Highway 400 is located in the Greenbelt Natural Heritage System and will be subject to applicable policies of Greenbelt Plan. Ongoing work regarding the servicing of these lands shows it is feasible to provide servicing to these lands • The expansion of this area is being considered within the current update to the Master Plans for Water & Wastewater, and Transportation

f) the protection of and integration with the Regional Greenlands System;	• Land use designations, policies and setbacks established both at the Regional OPA and at the secondary plan stage will provide for integration of the proposed development with the Regional Greenlands System. • The proposed ROPA has been further revised to include the Greenbelt Plan: Natural Heritage designation on the lands on the west side of Highway 400 as part of the Regional Greenlands System in order to further protect these lands.
g) the amendment is large enough (i.e. a concession block) with clear and identifiable boundaries, such as concession roads, major natural features, rail or major utility corridors, to assess the creation of new communities at the regional level;	• The planning area comprises approximately 800 hectares (2,000 acres) of land, which is the equivalent of two concession blocks, and is bounded by Regional arterial roads and the King/Vaughan municipality boundary. It is large enough to be comprehensively planned. • The area has been modified slightly to exclude the lands immediately north of the existing rural residential subdivision in the southwest quadrant of the amendment area as they were not part of the “Regionally Significant Employment Lands” • The parcels remain a significant size with approximately 500 ha of developable land
h) the role of the development lands is supportive of an urban structure of centres and corridors with transit-supportive densities,	• The site is to be used for employment purposes consisting of manufacturing and other industrial activities requiring large parcels of land. Development is not expected to consist of high density residential or major institutional uses. The planned function of the area will not detract from the City’s urban structure. • The role remains focused on land parcel employment uses