



Staff Report for Special Council Meeting

Date of Meeting: November 29, 2023

Report Number: SRPBS.23.044

Department: Planning and Building Services

Division: Policy Planning

Subject: SRPBS.23.044 Request for Approval – OPA 18.5
Yonge and Carrville/16th Avenue Key
Development Area (City File MOPA-22-0001)

Purpose:

A request for approval concerning a municipally-initiated Official Plan Amendment (OPA) to the City's Official Plan for the Yonge and Carrville/16th Avenue Key Development Area. The OPA seeks to update the City's Official Plan with area-specific policies to guide future development in the Key Development Area.

Recommendation(s):

- a) That Staff Report SRPBS.23.044 be received;
- b) That Council adopt Official Plan Amendment 18.5 (attached to SRPBS.23.044 as Appendix A), and that the City's Official Plan be amended in accordance with the policy changes and modifications set out in OPA 18.5; and
- c) That following adoption of Official Plan Amendment 18.5 by City Council, a copy of the amendment be forwarded to York Region as the approval authority for consideration and approval.

Contact Person:

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Report Approval:

Submitted by: Gus Galanis, Acting Commissioner of Planning and Building Services

Approved by: Darlene Joslin, City Manager

All reports are electronically reviewed and/or approved by the Division Director, Treasurer (as required), City Solicitor (as required), Commissioner, and City Manager. Details of the reports approval are attached.

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Update since the November 1st, 2023 Committee of the Whole and November 8th, 2023 Council Meetings

On November 1st, 2023, OPA 18.5 was brought forward to Committee of the Whole for consideration with a recommendation that Council adopt the amendment at the subsequent November 8th, 2023 Council meeting. Council supported Staff's recommendation at the Committee of the Whole meeting to consider the amendment and refer it for adoption at the November 8th Council meeting. However, leading up to the Council meeting, Staff requested that the OPA be removed from the agenda to allow City Staff additional time to consult with the two major landowners and stakeholder who raised concerns about OPA 18.5 and to report back to Council at the November 29, 2023 Special Council meeting. Oxford Properties had expressed a desire for more density along Yonge Street in order to meet their master plan vision for the northwest quadrant of the KDA; SmartCentres gave delegation on a few matters related to stratified streets, transit, active street frontage and the density schedule; and Mr. John Li provided delegation about the number of jobs in the KDA.

Subsequently, Staff undertook additional consultation with Oxford Properties, SmartCentres and Mr. Li with respect to OPA 18.5. As a result of the feedback received, Staff reassessed the forecast and reviewed the density allocation for the KDA. Staff also assessed the request for additional density in the northwest quadrant. Lastly, Staff reviewed a number of policies related to the Hillcrest Mall site, animation of parks and open space, and stratified streets. Staff also considered comments raised by Council at the Committee of the Whole meeting, and a "Questions and Answers" table is provided in Appendix G to help clarify certain matters.

As a result of the feedback received, changes are proposed to OPA 18.5 from the previous draft version that was released for consultation in May 2023 and which was presented to Council at the statutory Council Public Meeting on June 20, 2023 and recommended for adoption on November 1st, 2023. A summary of these changes are discussed in more detail in this staff report and a summary is shown in Appendix E of this report.

Overall, the majority of the recommended changes described herein are technical and minor in nature and do not propose substantial modifications to what was presented in the draft OPA to Council at the June 20th CPM. The main difference is an adjustment to the redistribution of density in the northwest quadrant in an effort to maintain the 7:3 ratio of people and jobs through a mixed-use format. Accordingly, these changes are intended to provide additional clarity and certainty to land use planning for the Yonge and Carrville/16th Avenue Key Development Area to guide development within the KDA to 2051 and beyond.

In summary, the changes for OPA 18.5 regarding the Yonge and Carrville/16th Avenue Key Development Area (KDA) consist of:

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- Some redistribution and increase to density allocations in the northern quadrants of the KDA, in response to landowner feedback;
- Updates to the street network in the southwest quadrant of the KDA;
- Minor changes to the location of the Market Promenade;
- Added flexibility for active at-grade street frontage;
- Flexibility for uses that front onto parks while animating the pedestrian realm;
- Additional flexibility for Hillcrest Mall to adjust the building size when there are changes to tenants;
- Flexibility for the City to determine when a planning and transportation study is required if part of Hillcrest Mall is demolished for space reconfiguration;
- Added flexibility for the provision of public art; and
- Minor technical matters, such as:
 - Clarifying how density is calculated;
 - Clarifying that stratified streets are to be considered on a case-by-case basis;
 - Minor relocating of street and trail in the southeast quadrant;
 - Enabling interim development as an to expansion of existing uses;
 - Providing some added flexibility for the location of planned parks and urban open space; and
 - Adding a new sidebar to describe interconnections, which supplement the planned street network.

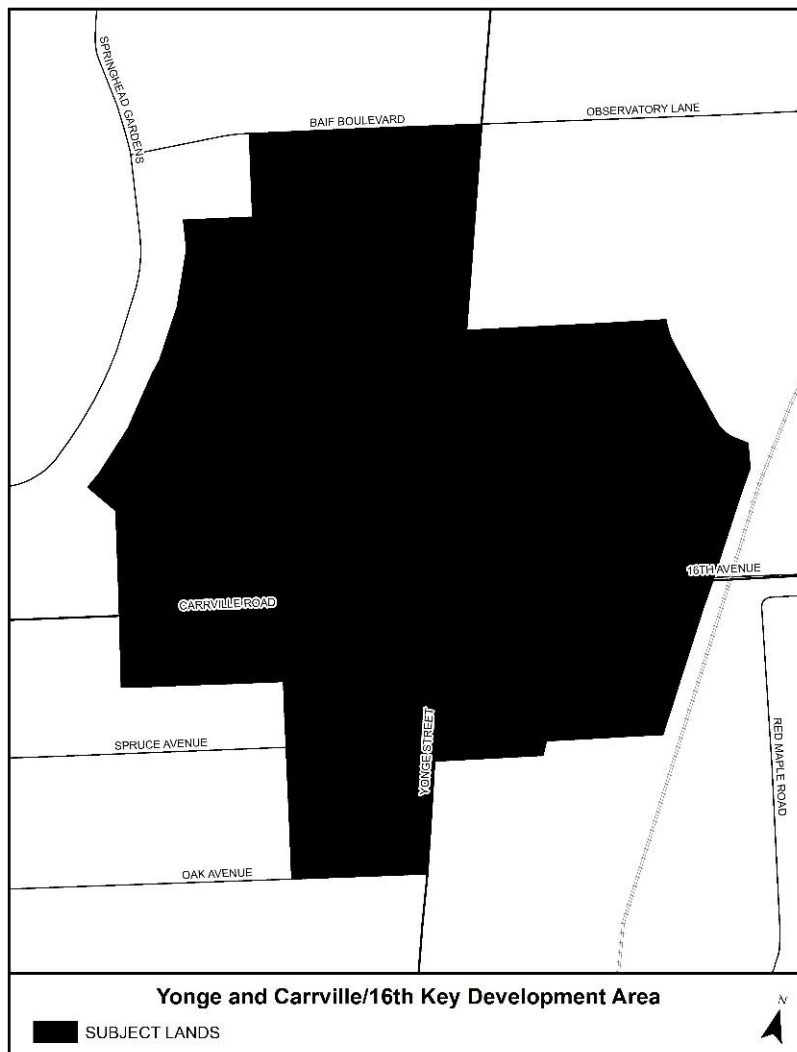
The aforementioned modifications amend the land use and urban design policies of the Official Plan for the Yonge and Carrville/16th Avenue Key Development Area which are being recommended to Council for adoption. Overall, OPA 18.5 is consistent with the policies of the Provincial Policy Statement 2020, and conforms to the relevant Provincial plans. The amendment also conforms to the York Region 2022 Official Plan which was approved by the Province in November 2022.

The subsequent sections of this report elaborate on the aforementioned updates and changes to OPA 18.5 which are recommended to Council for adoption in response to the input and feedback received from the public and other stakeholders. In addition, the staff report also responds to the comments that were raised respecting certain policies and themes in OPA 18.5 but which did not result in the need for further changes to the policies. In this regard, City Staff have provided a summary of the issues raised, followed by a response with supporting rationale.

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Location Map:

Below is a map displaying the lands subject to Official Plan Amendment 18.5 (“OPA 18.5”). Should you require an alternative format, please call the contact person listed in this document.



Background:

In accordance with the Official Plan Update [Key Directions Report](#) (the “Key Directions Report”), Official Plan Amendment (OPA) 18.5 is one of four centre-specific official plan amendments that have been developed as part of the City’s Official Plan Update (OP Update). The three other centre-specific OPAs include: OPA 18.6 Village Local Centre (see SRPI.23.067), OPA 18.7 Newkirk Local Centre (see SRPI.23.068), and OPA 18.8 Oak Ridges Local Centre (see SRPI.23.069). Together, these four centre-specific OPAs

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form the series of Batch 2 amendments to the City's Official Plan Update¹ and focus on providing area-specific policies to guide future development in emerging growth centres in the City.

In June 2022, Council adopted OPA 18.3 which updated the City Structure in the Official Plan. The City Structure continues to recognize the Yonge and Carrville/16th Avenue Key Development Area (KDA) as the second most intensified location in the City, following the Richmond Hill Centre.

On June 20, 2023, a statutory Council Public Meeting took place wherein Council considered the draft OPA 18.5 in accordance with the requirements of the *Planning Act*. At that meeting, Council received [Staff Report SRPI.23.066](#) for information purposes and directed that all comments on the proposed amendment be referred back to Staff for consideration. The extract of this meeting is attached to this report as Appendix F.

Impetus for the OPA:

OPA 18.5 aims to address matters that are important to the long-term planning of the KDA, including the vision for the area, permitted land uses, design elements, public realm, mix of land use, density of development, and adjustments to the boundaries of the KDA in order to conform with the York Region Official Plan (2022) (ROP) and Provincial policies. The OPA implements the City Plan Key Directions endorsed by Council in February 2022, and supports the City's [Investment Attraction Strategy](#), [Affordable Housing Strategy](#), and [Parks Plan](#) which all have been endorsed by Council, and the Urban Master Environmental Servicing Plan and [Transportation Master Plan](#) which are currently in process. This proposed amendment intends to support economic development and job creation in the City. Furthermore, it also incorporates direction from the ROP regarding the delineation of protected major transit station areas in relation to the KDA.

The [Key Directions Report](#) identified several key policy considerations applicable to the KDA and which were considered through the development of OPA 18.5. These directions relate to building on the 2018 draft secondary plan, adjusting the boundary of the KDA, connecting to the David Dunlap Observatory and Park, protecting lands for future transit stations and for a future temporary subway train storage and maintenance facility west of the railway track. In addition, the Key Directions Report also directed that policy and mapping updates to the City's Official Plan address the four pillars of the OP Update process. The four pillars include: Growing our Economy, Design Excellence, Green and Sustainable, Protect and Enhance. A full description of the proposed OPA and how the four pillars are addressed is described in the corresponding staff report that was presented to Council for information at the June 20, 2023 Council Public Meeting (See [Staff Report SRPI.23.066](#)).

¹ For more details regarding the City's Official Plan Update, including copies of past staff reports, please see the city's webpage: www.RichmondHill.ca/OPUpdate.

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Summary of Comments Received:

Leading up to this Council meeting, OPAs 18.5, 18.6, 18.7 and 18.8 have been available for review and public comment for over 120 days. During that time, the City received written and verbal comments regarding the proposed modifications under OPA 18.5. At the time of writing this staff report, numerous written submissions have been received from the public, stakeholders, and public agencies. The correspondence was submitted to the City's Official Plan Update e-mail address and also through the City's Clerk, forming part of the public record on the November 1, 2023 Council Meeting agenda (refer to Appendix C - Engagement Summary Report).

City Staff have reviewed, synthesized and assessed the written and verbal comments received on the OPA and have summarized this feedback below. A more fulsome overview of the feedback on OPA 18.5 is set out in Appendix C to this staff report. Through this review, Staff are recommending additional modifications to the draft OPA in response to some of the feedback received.

Key Feedback Received from the Public and Stakeholders

The City received the following comments and feedback on OPA 18.5 respecting the Yonge and Carrville/16th Avenue KDA:

- It is important to coordinate transit improvements with development;
- Public transit is critical for reducing traffic congestion, but the switch to transit as an alternative mode of travel may be less than anticipated;
- There is a mix of support and opposition for higher/lower density and building heights;
- Affordable housing is needed in this area and in the City in general;
- There is a desire to protect the David Dunlap Observatory from light pollution;
- Hillcrest Mall draws in people and visitors across the Region, and there is a desire to continue its function and role as a regional retail destination;
- Residents want to preserve the local grocery store and other shops and amenities in the area;
- There is a desire for more parks and urban open space, as well as better connectivity of these spaces to serve the planned growth in population in the KDA;
- Privately-Owned Publicly Accessible Spaces (POPS) such as urban plazas and private streets should be recognized;
- Planning for growth should consider walkability and low-impact development; and
- Planning for the KDA should include more jobs.

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Key Feedback from External Agencies and Prescribed Bodies

OPA 18.5 was circulated to external agencies and prescribed bodies as required by the *Planning Act* on May 11, 2023. Key messages from these agencies received on the Yonge and Carrville/16th Avenue KDA are as follows:

- The City did not receive objections to OPA 18.5 from the prescribed bodies. These organizations are: York Region, Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA), Metrolinx, York Region District School Board, York District School Board, Alectra, Bell Canada, Canadian National Railway Company, and TransCanada PipeLines Limited.
- It should be noted that the City did not receive comments from the Indigenous communities, nor did it receive comments from energy companies and neighbouring municipalities regarding OPA 18.5.
- The two York Region school boards provided comments and feedback on the proposed OPA. In meeting with representatives, the York Catholic District Schoolboard (YCDSB) did not raise any specific concerns with the amendment and noted that there is generally sufficient capacity in nearby schools to accommodate the proposed increase in population in the KDA. However, the York Region District School Board (YRDSB) has identified a need for a new school site in the KDA to serve increases in student and pupil enrolment in this catchment area over the long-term. With respect to the Conseil Scolaire Viamonde, the City did not receive feedback from the French School board;
- York Region provided technical comments on OPA 18.5 regarding protected major transit station areas (PMTSAs), affordable housing, water and wastewater servicing, public health, transportation, and water resources. City Staff met with York Region Staff and worked closely with Regional Planning Staff through subsequent meetings to address the comments raised by the Region;
- The TRCA noted that future visit/staking and/or technical studies would be required to confirm the limits of the hazardous lands and wetlands located east of the KDA, and that a subsequent redesignation of the lands containing the feature limit and an appropriate buffer may be required.
- Metrolinx provided the following comments regarding potential future transit service and infrastructure in the KDA:
 - The Yonge North Subway Extension to Yonge and 16th Avenue will be assessed after the agency undertakes a feasibility analysis for alternative locations for future permanent train maintenance and storage facilities for Line 1.
 - The agency has not committed to a future GO Transit station at Yonge and 16th Avenue, but the City may advance an Initial Business Case analysis as a part of the Transit-Oriented Communities Program.

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- The agency provided more refined mapping and description of the planned TTC Temporary Train Storage Facility in the KDA.

In addition to the foregoing, the following sections of this staff report highlight thematic comments received on OPA 18.5, as well as proposed changes to the amendment with supporting rationale, and areas where no policy changes are warranted/recommended.

Detailed Response to Comments Received and Proposed Changes to OPA:

The following feedback and key themes were raised during public consultation on OPA 18.5. These themes represent important aspects of the proposed policy framework that are expected to have the most notable and lasting impacts on the future vision and planning for the KDA over the long-term planning horizon. In that regard, and based on a fulsome review of the feedback received, City Staff are recommending that additional modifications to the policies and associated schedules of OPA 18.5 be approved by Council in response to the themes as follows. A full list of recommended modifications to OPA 18.5 is attached to this report as Appendix E.

Forecast for People and Jobs

At the November 1st Committee of the Whole Meeting, Mr. Li pointed out that there should have been more jobs forecasted in the KDA due to the 2.0 FSI at the Hillcrest Mall development block. In the review of the forecast model for OPA 18.5, Staff acknowledge that the forecast undercounted the number of jobs at the Hillcrest Mall development block. While the May 10th version of the OPA had shown a 2.0 FSI at the Hillcrest Mall development block in the density Schedule C1, the forecasted number of jobs for that area assumed in the model applied a 1.0 FSI. Consequently, the number of jobs forecasted and identified in the May 10 version of OPA 18.5 was less than what would have theoretically been yielded had the model correctly assumed a density of 2.0 FSI on the Hillcrest Mall site.

At the same time, Oxford Properties had informed Staff that they cannot fully utilize the 2.0 FSI density allotment at the mall block, and so the 2.0 FSI as shown in the May 10 version of the OPA was subsequently reduced to a 1.0 FSI in the November 1st version brought forward to Committee of the Whole.

With the decrease of density for the Hillcrest Mall development block from 2.0 FSI to 1.0 FSI, it is assumed that there would have been 1.0 FSI to deploy elsewhere in the KDA. That deployment is reflected in the increases in density in various development blocks in the KDA. However, these density increases cumulatively only make up about 50% of the 1.0 FSI from the Hillcrest Mall. The reason for this is because the density transfer from the Hillcrest Mall development block is not a 1:1 transfer since the density that was intended for the Hillcrest Mall block was assumed to be mostly non-residential gross floor area (GFA) to support jobs. In contrast, all other areas in the KDA are assumed to

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be mostly residential development with some mixed uses. It is important to note that the overall forecast maintains the 7 people to 3 jobs target ratio.

Mr. Li also suggested that the KDA should be planned with substantially less people and significantly more jobs. In that regard, he requested that Staff reconsider the recommended target ratio of 7 residents to 3 jobs as proposed in the OPA. Mr. Li also recommended a much lower total forecast in the number of people and jobs for the KDA. Staff has considered Mr. Li's recommendations and believe that these suggestions do not take into account the planning context in terms of the City Structure and the vision for this KDA. More specifically, they do not align with the Intensification Hierarchy approved by Council in chapter 3 of the Official Plan, which identifies the KDA as the second densest location in the City.

In terms of employment, Mr. Li's suggested ratio of 3 residents to 2 jobs is more aggressive than the Region's planned ratio of residents to jobs for the City overall (5 to 2), and, in Staff's opinion, this aggressive ratio is unlikely to be achievable over the horizon of this plan. It should be noted that OPA 18.5 supports economic development and jobs in the KDA, and it sets a target of 7 people to 3 jobs for the long-term. This ratio of jobs is higher compared to ratios forecasted for the Yonge and Bernard Key Development Area Secondary Plan and the Richmond Hill Centre Secondary Plan. In order to support jobs, the OPA continues to have policies that require the maintenance or expansion of the existing amount of non-residential gross floor area in the KDA.

Staff commends the time and effort Mr. Li has put into thinking about the KDA. As in many situations in land use planning, there are wide and divergent perspectives and interests and this is an emblem of a good democratic system and civic involvement. The forecasted number of people and jobs is further elaborated in the next section; Appendix H also provides a summary of the changes in the forecast.

Height and Density

The City received requests from three landowners in the KDA to increase and/or re-distribute densities in the KDA, as identified on Schedule C1 (Density) to OPA 18.5. Density is a quantitative measure of a specific land use over an assigned area of land, and in regards to the KDA, it is expressed in the Official Plan using a floor space index. In reviewing the requests, City Staff assessed the impacts of the requested changes in density based on four criteria:

1. The built form meets the urban design principles for the KDA;
2. Where the development blocks abut a Neighbourhood designation, the resulting built form respects appropriate transition to low and medium density buildings;
3. The resulting potential building heights have minimal shadow impacts; and
4. The forecasted people and jobs generated by the increase or redistribution in density can be accommodated by the planned water and sewage capacity as per the City's Urban Master Environmental Servicing Plan (UMESP).

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The proposed impacts of increasing or redistributing density were assessed cumulatively across the KDA. To that end, Staff are recommending that minor changes to the distribution of density in the northwest and northeast quadrants of the KDA be approved and reflected on Schedule C1 (Density) of OPA 18.5 as follows, as these modifications adequately satisfy the four criteria listed above:

Northwest Quadrant

- The Hillcrest Mall development block density is recommended to decrease from 2.0 FSI to 1.0 FSI.
- The northernmost development block that is within Oxford Properties' land holding has a density change from 4.79 FSI to 4.8 FSI to reflect the Ontario Land Tribunal's (OLT) decision for these lands.
- The middle development block fronting onto Yonge Street is recommended to be split into two blocks, with the northern half to be allotted 5.0 FSI given the narrower width of this section and the southern half allotted 6.0 FSI.
- The development block at the northwest corner of Yonge Street and Carrville Road is recommended to be expanded to include the planned urban square in this quadrant.

Northeast Quadrant

- The northernmost development block is recommended to be split into two blocks with a redistribution of density so that the eastern block is allotted 3.0 FSI while the western block fronting onto Yonge Street is allotted 5.0 FSI.
- The development block at the northeast corner of Yonge and 16th Avenue has been expanded easterly, with a recommended density allotment of 7.0 FSI. The development block located immediately east of this area has a minor increase in density from 4.0 FSI to 4.5 FSI.

The density changes made in the northwest and northeast quadrants are appropriate because they are in line with the urban design principles of this KDA whereby the tallest buildings are directed to the intersection of Yonge and Carrville Road / 16th Avenue. Density is also concentrated along Yonge Street where the Regional Corridor and the VIVA Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) are located and currently in operation to serve the KDA and adjoining Regional Corridor. Staff assessed the potential built form impacts using 3D modelling and has determined that the proposed minor changes and redistribution in density with respect to transition to neighbourhoods would produce minimal shadow impacts. From a servicing perspective, the cumulative increase in density in the KDA is minor, and the forecasted growth in people and jobs can be accommodated by the planned water and sewage capacity as per the City's UMESP.

The resulting changes in density means the KDA could accommodate up to 670 residents and jobs per hectare overall, which is an increase from the proposed 640 people and jobs per hectare proposed in the May 11th, 2023 draft OPA and the 650 people and jobs per hectare recommended in the OPA that was brought forward for

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adoption on November 1st. This translates to approximately 24,000 residents in the KDA (up from 23,000 in the May 11th draft OPA, and up from 23,300 in the November 1st OPA) and 8,770 estimated jobs (up from 8,600 in the May 11th draft OPA and in the November 1st OPA). In addition, the KDA would continue to be planned as the second most intensified area of the City, behind the Richmond Hill Centre in accordance with the City Structure. The increase in density and population recommended for OPA 18.5 will help contribute to Richmond Hill's achievement of the Province's municipal housing target for the City, which was announced in October 2022^{2 & 3} in support of Bill 23: the *More Homes Built Faster Act*⁴. This legislation seeks to increase housing supply across the Province and provide attainable housing options.

It is also noted that Staff do not propose to add more density to the southeast quadrant of the KDA for the lands owned by Parioli Peak Estates Inc. Despite the request by this landowner to increase the density applicable to its lands from 4.0 FSI to 5.5 FSI, Staff has determined that the current 4.0 FSI prescribed for the development block in the southeast corner of the KDA, as shown in OPA 18.5, continues to be appropriate and provides almost the same amount of gross floor area as what is proposed by the landowner for a development application at 77 and 89 – 16th Avenue.

East-West Connection in the Southwest Quadrant

When the draft OPA 18.5 was released for public consultation in May 2023, the OPA's Schedules C2 (Public Realm) and C3 (Active Transportation) conceptually showed a planned local east-west public street in the southwest quadrant of the KDA. At the time of the draft, Staff was exploring various options to continue to provide for a connection in the southwest quadrant as a street had been originally identified in the 2018 draft secondary plan.

In 2019, a Council motion was passed to remove the east-west local street as a public connection⁵. Subsequently, a revised development proposal was submitted for the lands at 39-97 Carrville Road (City Files D01-17001 and D02-17003) reflecting modifications to the proposal that received approval in principle at the former Local Planning Appeal Tribunal (now OLT). Among other revisions, an 8 metre wide continuous easement for vehicular connectivity along the southern boundary of the property was proposed in lieu of an east-west local road.

Since that time, the review of the applications for the lands at 9218 Yonge Street (City Files D01-21010 and D02-21020) has also advanced. Both the applications at 9218 Yonge Street and 39-97 Carrville Road will be required to provide for a private east-

² <https://ero.ontario.ca/notice/019-6171>

³ <https://prod-environmental-registry.s3.amazonaws.com/2022-10/EN.pdf>

⁴ Bill 23, the *More Homes Built Faster Act* received Royal Assent on November 28, 2022. More information can be found at: <https://www.ola.org/en/legislative-business/bills/parliament-43/session-1/bill-23>

⁵ For details of the member motion, please see [Council Meeting Minutes](#) for July 9, 2019, Item 14.2.

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west connection via reciprocal easements to the benefit of adjacent lands. Staff support this connection through a private driveway for vehicular and pedestrian access.

Although the schedules in OPA 18.5 no longer include an east-west planned local street in the southwest quadrant, functional east-west connections are available. City Staff continue to recognize the importance of this connection and have protected for its critical functions through a private interconnection with reciprocal access easements for vehicular travel, and through an active transportation facility with public access easement.

It should be noted that the southwest quadrant will also be served by a planned collector street that runs north-south and lines up with the driveway for Hillcrest Mall at Carrville Road. This street will connect with Oak Avenue to the south, which links eastwardly to Yonge Street with a signalized intersection. This network essentially creates a “ring road” in the southwest quadrant and helps move local traffic while relieving some of the traffic congestion on Carrville Road and Yonge Street.

Non-Residential Uses at Grade

The City received comments regarding the requirement for commercial, retail, and community uses at grade. Some landowners want greater flexibility so that not all buildings in the KDA would require such uses at grade, and further, that not all sides of future proposed buildings be required to provide active at-grade street frontages.

In response to these comments, Staff are recommending minor edits to Policy 4.4.2.1(2)(b) in OPA 18.5. The recommended modifications would continue to require active at-grade street frontages, however, the updated policy language provides some flexibility to enable the City to determine at the time of development application the most appropriate side(s) of a building for activating at-grade street frontage.

Staff note that OPA 18.5 continues to mandate active at-grade street frontage in the KDA in response to comments received from Council regarding the desire to animate streets in this key area of the City. In particular, commercial, retail, and community uses on the ground floor of buildings can help enhance the public realm and animate streets and parks and open space. With design excellence and desirable tenants, these non-residential uses can help to draw in visitors and improve the pedestrian experience. Such non-residential uses at grade also support jobs and the local economy, thereby contributing to the City's economic vitality. Hence, active at-grade street frontages are critical for achieving both complete communities and creating a more modern urban format in the KDA.

Market Promenade

The City received a request to shift northerly the stretch of the Market Promenade on the west side of Yonge Street so that the promenade aligns with the signalized pedestrian crossing on Yonge Street. In that regard, Staff reviewed this request and found that this proposed change would have little to no material impact on the development of the promenade, and that the objective of establishing a retail spine that connects the two northern quadrants in the KDA could continue to be maintained.

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Accordingly, Staff are recommending that Schedule C3 (Active Transportation) to OPA 18.5 be modified in order to reflect this change and to align the Market Promenade with the signalized intersection on Yonge Street, as this would facilitate pedestrian safety. The remainder of the Market Promenade would continue to run south along Yonge Street and then continue east-west in the northeast quadrant of the KDA.

Flexibility for Hillcrest Mall

Oxford Properties requested flexibility to reconfigure the Hillcrest Mall footprint should there be a need to adjust the space if there is a change in tenants. This request has been accommodated via the inclusion of a policy that requires the mall to retain at minimum 90% of the existing gross leasable floor area. In addition, the City maintains the flexibility to require a planning and transportation study if a demolition is requested as part of adjustments to the mall space.

Higher Order Transit

The City did not receive detailed information from Metrolinx respecting future plans for transit expansion in the KDA. The City sought information about the extension of the subway service north of the Richmond Hill Centre and into the KDA, as well as details regarding the location of a future TTC subway station and GO Transit station. In this regard, the conceptual alignment of the Yonge Subway extension and the precise location of future TTC subway and GO Transit stations in the KDA cannot be confirmed at this time. Accordingly, Staff recommend that the OPA policies and associated Schedule C2 (Public Realm) be modified to indicate that further study and approvals by Metrolinx be required before the alignment of the subway extension and location of stations in the KDA can be determined.

Other Technical Matters

In addition to the foregoing, Staff are also recommending that OPA 18.5 be modified to reflect a number of minor technical changes in order to provide greater clarity. The list below highlights the technical updates by theme. Minor edits or wordsmithing are excluded from this list.

Sidebar on Calculation of Density

A new sidebar is recommended to be included next to policy 4.3.3.1(10), to provide an explanation regarding the calculation of density. Staff are proposing modifications to this sidebar in order to provide additional clarity and reduce duplication by referring to terms that are already defined in the OP, where possible. In this case, the two defined terms being referenced are *developable area* and *hazard lands*.

Collector Street and Multi-Use Trail in the Southeast Quadrant

The planned north-south collector road and the multi-use trail in the southeast quadrant of the KDA as identified in the OPA schedules C2 (Public Realm) and C3 (Active Transportation) are shifted slightly west in order to accommodate the proposed location

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of the TTC Temporary Train Storage Facility. The multi-use trail realigns eastwardly along the CN rail as it heads north toward 16th Avenue.

Interim Development

Staff recommend that Policy 4.4.2.1(7) of OPA 18.5 be updated to clarify that interim development that is permitted in accordance with Policy 3.4.1(37)(c) of the Official Plan be limited to 15% of the gross floor area of the existing buildings or structure, and that interim development may also include stand-alone buildings, provided that the total expansion does not exceed 15% of the combined gross floor area of all existing buildings or structures. Flexibility to allow for interim development through pad site developments would allow opportunities for landowners to respond to changing market conditions. Notwithstanding this added permission, the OPA policies also require that interim development be subject to specific criteria, such as not precluding the orderly development of the KDA over the long-term.

Urban Design

With respect to urban design, Staff recommend that Policy 4.4.2.2(1)(b) of the OPA be modified to provide flexibility in the provision of public art. Accordingly, the policy would require public art, where appropriate, to help create streetscape elements with focal points.

Location of Parks and Uses that Front onto Parks

Staff propose a minor modification to Policy 4.4.2.3(11)(f) of the OPA in order to provide some flexibility in the interpretation of the location of parks illustrated on the schedules of the OPA. If approved, the modifications would allow for minor refinements to the location of new parks in the KDA. Additionally, some flexibility is provided for the types of uses that can front onto parks, so long as these uses animate the pedestrian realm.

New Sidebar on Interconnections

Staff also recommend that a new sidebar that describes interconnections be added to the OPA. These interconnections are private driveways / laneways, which may include pedestrian and cycling facilities, as well as other streetscape elements. These private driveways / laneways may be required to supplement the fine-grained street network in the KDA and connect with the surrounding neighbourhoods.

Sidebar on Stratified Streets

A new sidebar clarifies that stratification of streets is considered by the City on a case-by-case basis. It is noted that planning for public streets is important for ensuring the City's standards and amenities are implemented. In many instances, private streets are designed to be narrower than the City's standards and they cannot accommodate many of the complete street elements required to create high quality public spaces.

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Response to Comments resulting in No Additional Policy Changes to the OPA:

The following section provides responses to comments received, but for which no further policy change is proposed.

Water and Wastewater Servicing

Comments were received regarding how water and wastewater servicing will support the estimated build out population and jobs in the KDA. As part of the City's UMESP project, an analysis was undertaken through the master planning process and identifies the water and wastewater improvement projects that are required to accommodate the future growth. The work undertaken through the UMESP project has considered the proposed level of development in this area as part of the analysis and has indicated that planned future improvements to the water and sewage infrastructure in the KDA will accommodate the projected growth for this area.

Traffic

Comments and concerns were received regarding increased traffic in the KDA and across the City resulting from the growth proposed through the centre-specific OPAs. Both York Region and the City are committed to closely monitoring traffic conditions to identify and implement mitigation measures as needed. As growth occurs, an increasing shift towards alternative modes of transportation, such as transit and active transportation, will be encouraged to help accommodate higher volumes of traffic. This approach not only alleviates congestion but also promotes sustainable and environmentally friendly commuting options. In terms of specific traffic safety concerns, residents can contact the City's Traffic Safety and Operations to identify issues and address concerns.

Moreover, the City is actively working towards creating 15-minute communities through the OPAs for the four Centres, which are designed to provide a diverse range of amenities and services within shorter distances (i.e. 15 minutes of travel time) from residents' and workers' homes. By offering a mix of uses, these communities enhance accessibility, enabling individuals to conveniently access necessary facilities without the need for extensive travel. This holistic approach to community planning fosters a higher quality of life, promotes Richmond Hill's evolution into a more urban municipality, reduces dependency on cars, and encourages vibrant, walkable neighborhoods.

The City is also in the process of updating its Transportation Master Plan (TMP) to support planned growth as identified in the Official Plan Update by planning for future transportation infrastructure improvements. These infrastructure improvements have been phased by 2031, 2041, and 2051 horizon years to occur within the City's growth areas, through intensification along transit corridors and in new greenfield development. The TMP proposes numerous City road network improvement projects (in addition to road projects led by the Region and the Province), and a considerable expansion to the City's active transportation network. These investments need to be supported by

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additional infrastructure in the transit network, such as the extension of the Yonge subway line to Richmond Hill, and continued expansion in transit service by York Region Transit and GO Transit.

While the TMP supports mobility to help accommodate the growth forecast, it is important to note that congestion is forecasted to increase above existing levels, even with the planned transportation investments. During peak travel hours, it is anticipated that the City will continue to experience high volumes of traffic. The City is optimizing the network to provide operating conditions that remain functional but cannot “build our way out of congestion” with road expansion. A major focus of the TMP is on sustainable travel and making transit, active transportation, and micromobility an attractive alternative to private automobiles. These principles have helped inform the recommended policies set out in OPA 18.5 for the KDA.

Existing Non-Residential Gross Leasable Area

The City received requests for greater flexibility on Policy 4.4.2.1(2)(a) regarding maintaining or increasing the existing amount of retail, commercial or office uses in the KDA. City Staff weighed this request against the vision for this centre that includes a long-term target of 7 residents to 3 jobs and achieving a minimum 15% of the total gross floor area in the KDA to be in the form of non-residential uses. Both of these goals can only be achieved if the existing amount of retail, commercial, and office space in the KDA is maintained and increased over time. Therefore, Staff are recommending that Policy 4.4.2.1(2)(a) remain unchanged, while Staff continue to explore whether additional flexibility can be provided through the implementing zoning by-law.

Parks

Comments were received regarding the perceived limited parks and urban open spaces in OPA 18.5. As is noted in the Basis section of OPA 18.5, the proposed OPA is informed by and implements the planned parks outlined in the City’s 2022 Parks Plan. Furthermore, as was noted in Staff Report [SRPI.23.018](#), which was received by Council at the January 30, 2023 Special Council Meeting, *Bill 23, the More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022* changed the *Planning Act* requirements for parkland dedication and cash-in-lieu to provide more certainty in parkland costs in order to facilitate housing development. The Bill 23 changes to the *Planning Act* reduced the amount of parkland / cash-in-lieu of parkland that municipalities are allowed to acquire as a community grows, specifically as it relates to areas with growing, intensified and largely vertical communities, for which new maximum parkland caps have been established.

The Yonge and Carrville/16th Avenue KDA will be served by an urban square in the northwest quadrant and a neighbourhood park in the northeast quadrant. In the southern quadrants, the KDA is served by the expansion of the Spruce Avenue Park as well as William Duncan Park. Additionally, the OPA plans for a multi-use trail and a bridge crossing that connects the KDA to the German Mills Creek and nearby David Dunlap Observatory Park to the east. Beyond these, OPA 18.5 encourages the development of urban plazas, which are privately-owned, publicly-accessible spaces

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that help contribute to the public realm and create gathering places and memorable landmarks.

The amount of planned parkland identified in OPA 18.5 implements the City's 2022 Parks Plan service level standard with respect to walking distance to parkland while providing the maximum amount of parkland possible in the KDA as a result of the Bill 23 legislative changes to the *Planning Act*.

Affordable Housing

With respect to affordable housing, OPA 18.5 defers to the City's existing Policy 3.1.5(2) of the Official Plan, which requires that a minimum 35% of new housing units in the KDAs be affordable to low and moderate income households. This aligns with the Regional Official Plan Policy 2.3.41 that requires 35% of new housing in major transit station areas be affordable. However, it should be noted that *Bill 23, More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022*, along with the proposed Provincial Planning Statement may revise the definition of affordable housing. As such, through a forthcoming Housekeeping OPA, the City will review the definition of "affordable" and ensure that the City's housing policies comply with Regional and Provincial directions.

Phasing in the Provision of Infrastructure

The City received a request to add policies in the Official Plan that would allow for partial delivery of infrastructure, such as sidewalks, in order to align the provision of infrastructure with the timing of development. This is especially relevant for the development of large tracts of land that occur in phases over many years. Staff acknowledge this comment, but is satisfied that the existing Policy 3.1.9.1 in the Official Plan already requires phasing of new development to align with the timing of infrastructure improvements. The implementation of this policy is typically conducted through discussions with the City and the proponent on a site-by-site basis.

Light Pollution

The City received comments regarding the concerns with potential light pollution and the resulting impact on the operations of the David Dunlap Observatory (DDO) as the development in the KDA intensify. The observatory is designated a [national historic site](#) and it is located just northeast of the KDA. It is noted that the heritage attributes of the property are limited to the physical elements of the telescope and building as opposed to the continued function for scientific research. The observatory has a historic role in astronomical research and education in Canada, and the telescope is a "scientific artifact". The DDO was sold in 2008 due to increasing light pollution from development in the surrounding region and Toronto, and hence the observatory is no longer protected for its research function. Presently, the observatory is used as a community learning space, and it attracts many astronomical enthusiasts and visitors. In any case, the concerns about light pollution warrants a review of the City's policies and by-laws in order to protect for dark sky. Due to the cumulative effects of many light sources in the City beyond just the KDA, Staff recommends that this matter be examined on a city-

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wide basis, and that the Official Plan policies on light pollution be reviewed in the future Housekeeping OPA.

Planning Analysis:

Under the Ontario land use planning framework, the City of Richmond Hill is subject to the *Planning Act*, the Provincial Policy Statement, and a number of Provincial plans, including A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (Growth Plan), the Greenbelt Plan, the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan (ORMCP), and the Parkway Belt West Plan.

Richmond Hill is also a lower-tier municipality, and as such, the City is subject to the Regional Official Plan of its upper-tier municipality – in this case, the Region of York's 2022 Official Plan. City Staff reviewed the Regional Official Plan and conclude that OPA 18.5 conforms to the Regional Official Plan. It is important to recognize that OPA 18.5 is one of multiple proposed amendments that together will form the City's Official Plan Update. While the policies of OPA 18.5 will conform to Provincial and Regional plans, as noted in the OPA's "Basis" section, conformity with the York Region Official Plan shall be achieved through a combination of: (1) existing City-wide Official Plan policies; (2) area-specific policies contained in the Official Plan Amendment; and (3) future amendments to the Official Plan.

Set out below is a summary of how OPA 18.5 complies with Provincial legislation and policies. More details are found in Appendix D which provides a fulsome analysis of the relevant Provincial and Regional policies and how OPA 18.5 conforms to those policies.

Planning Act

The *Planning Act* (1990) authorizes municipalities to identify and delineate the boundary of protected major transit station areas (PMTSA), and to identify land uses and minimum and/or maximum density and/or heights of buildings or structures on lands within PMTSAs. Moreover, the aforementioned matters are protected from appeals. Accordingly, OPA 18.5 identifies the KDA as an intensification area encompassed by three PMTSAs, which have been approved by the Province via the Region of York's 2022 Official Plan.

Provincial Policy Statement, (2020)

The Provincial Policy Statement (2020) includes policies which encourage compact, mixed-use development to support liveable and resilient communities while considering housing needs. Accordingly, OPA 18.5 directs higher density development within the KDA in a range of forms of residential and non-residential development to support a mix of land uses.

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A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, (2020)

A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2020) includes policies which support the achievement of complete communities and prioritize major transit station areas (MTSAs) on priority transit corridors. Accordingly, OPA 18.5 plans for a complete community by integrating a mix of uses in a compact form that provides for amenities and services within a 15-minute walk or 5-minute bike ride. The OPA also includes policies that require development to protect for high-order transit, including the alignment of the Yonge Subway extension, and a future potential TTC subway station and GO Transit station in the KDA.

Regional Policy Considerations:

The York Region Official Plan (2022) was approved by the Province in November 2022 and include policies which identify three protected major transit station areas (PMTSA) that overlap with the Yonge and Carrville/16th Avenue KDA. These PMTSAs are: #39 (16th-Carrville BRT Station), #41 (Bantry-Scott BRT Station) and #51 (Weldrick BRT Station). PMTSA #39 overlaps entirely with the KDA and has a prescribed minimum density target of 300 residents and jobs per hectare, while PMTSAs #41 and #51 are partially located in the KDA, and they are prescribed with a minimum density target of 200 residents and jobs per hectare. The purpose of PMTSAs, the process of identifying them, and the City's input into that Regional process is documented in [Staff Report SRPRS.20.004](#).

To support the minimum prescribed density for the PMTSAs, the Regional Official Plan directs: (1) that the area support a mix of land uses to be identified in the City's Official Plan; (2) that the City provide direction regarding built form and scale of development to support and implement the Regional intensification hierarchy; (3) that the City consider identifying a residents to jobs ratio target to ensure live-work opportunities and an appropriate balance of jobs to population; and (4) that the City provide affordable housing targets. Accordingly, OPA 18.5 delineates PMTSAs #39, #41, and #51 in the City's OP Schedule 3 (Settlement Area). OPA 18.5 also designates lands within PMTSA #39 and portions of lands within PMTSAs #41 and #51 as Key Development Area. The OPA further provides a target ratio of 7 residents to 3 jobs, which is intended to be achieved over the long-term through the implementation of mixed use policies. Through a subsequent OPA, the City will review its affordable housing targets and definition to further implement the ROP's housing policies.

Local Policy Context and Considerations:

Section 3.1.3 of the Official Plan outlines the City Structure, as well as the intensification hierarchy, which provides clarity and certainty on priority areas where new growth and intensification are directed. OPA 18.5 designates lands as Key Development Area (KDA), and in accordance with the City Structure, the Yonge and Carrville/16th KDA will accommodate intensification at a scale and intensity second only to the Richmond Hill Centre. KDAs are intensification areas located along the Regional Corridors where

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public rapid transit services intersect with major nodes of retail and commercial development, and where opportunities exist for redevelopment of large land parcels that can support new public streets.

The Official Plan directs for all relevant policies of the Official Plan to be considered when reviewing and evaluating changes to land use, including any amendments to the Official Plan. While OPA 18.5 builds on existing policies, its focus is to supplement and in some cases amend the existing Chapter 4 policies of the Official Plan as it relates to the Yonge and Carrville/16th Avenue KDA by employing modern approaches to city building and good planning principles. The amendment satisfies the secondary plan requirements of the Official Plan for this KDA, as set out in Section 5 of the City's Official Plan.

Future decisions regarding development in this KDA will rely on policies provided in this OPA in combination with other relevant policies of the Official Plan. It is important to recognize that the balance of Official Plan policies regarding City Vision, City Building, Implementation and Interpretation, are in effect and continue to apply and must also be taken into consideration.

Public Consultation:

In addition to the consultation detailed in Staff Report SRPI.23.066, further engagement occurred and has been summarized in a report prepared by LURA Consulting entitled "Phase 3 Batch 2: What We Heard – Official Plan Amendments 18.5, 18.6, 18.7, and 18.8 Summary Report" (see Appendix C). The What We Heard report represents a fulsome summary of the feedback received on the proposed OPAs on the four centre-specific OPAs – Yonge Street and Carrville/16th Avenue Key Development Area, Village Local Centre, Newkirk Local Centre, and Oak Ridges Local Centre. It provides a high level overview of the feedback and issues discussed in the earlier sections of this staff report. Below is a summary of the consultation engagements and notification related to the development of OPA 18.5.

Comments on the other centre-specific OPAs are summarized separately in staff reports SRPBS.23.027, SRPBS.23.028, and SRPBS.23.030.

Engagement

Staff conducted extensive consultation on OPA 18.5 for the Yonge and Carrville/16th Avenue Key Development Area using a variety of methods, as follows:

In-Person Open House

On June 7, 2023, the City hosted a combined public open house for the four centre-specific OPAs. The event was held at the McConaghy Seniors' Centre, 10100 Yonge Street from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. Open House attendees had the opportunity to review material presented on a series of display boards, ask questions to City Staff, and provide comments on each of the four proposed OPAs.

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The Open House was well attended. The City received 224 registrations for the Open House, and 166 participants attended the Open House event.

Council Public Meeting

A Council Public Meeting, pursuant to Section 26 (3) of the *Planning Act* was held on June 20, 2023 to notify the public and receive comments on the proposed Official Plan Amendments. Members of the public were invited to submit written comments before the meeting and provide oral delegations to Council during the meeting. Overall, 36 written comments were submitted and 18 requests for oral delegations were received at the Council Public Meeting. These submissions included other orders of government, regulatory agencies, property owners and/or their delegated representatives, community associations, individual residents/business owners, and other community members.

Stakeholder and Landowner Meetings

Stakeholder meetings with prescribed agencies (Metrolinx, York Region, Alectra, School Boards, and the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority) occurred in March 2023 to discuss the proposed OPA prior to the public release. Additional follow-up meetings with York Region Staff occurred in June and September 2023 respectively to discuss additional feedback received. Meetings with landowners and a resident group were held in June, August, September and November 2023 to discuss feedback on the draft OPA 18.5.

Notification

OPA 18.5 has been initiated under Section 17 and 26 of the *Planning Act*. The *Planning Act* requires public consultation on the proposed amendment to be conducted through at least one public meeting with a minimum of 37-days notice issued beforehand. The statutory open house and council public meeting pursuant to the *Planning Act* took place on June 7, 2023 and on June 20, 2023 respectively. Notice for these events was issued on May 11, 2023 through the City's website, social media, and the Liberal newspaper, and re-issued on May 18, 2023.

Notice for today's meeting regarding the adoption of OPA 18.5 has been provided to all persons who formally requested to the City Clerk to be notified of a decision made by Council with respect to the proposed amendment, as well as to people on the OP Update notification list, and to people who have subscribed to the OP Update webpage.

Next Steps:

Following Council adoption of OPA 18.5, the City Clerk will provide Notice of Adoption to all prescribed bodies and those who have requested to be notified of Council's adoption.

Additionally, the OPA and its associated record will be provided to York Region, who is responsible for issuing approval of the Council adopted amendment. As the approval authority, the Region has the authority to approve, modify and approve, or refuse

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Council's decision to adopt an official plan amendment. Notification of the Region's decision will be issued to all prescribed bodies and to those who have requested notification. Following the 20-day appeal period, if there are no appeals, the amendment will come into force. In the meanwhile, staff will continue to work on the City's Official Plan Update, with public consultation on Batch 3 OPAs to be held in 2024.

Financial/Staffing/Other Implications:

The recommendations of this report do not have any financial, staffing or other implications. The approval of the updated OP policies will require changes to the City's Zoning By-Laws, which are presently under review and for which a separate workplan and budget is established.

Relationship to Council's Strategic Priorities 2020-2022:

Updating the Official Plan is identified as a Council Priority. OPA 18.5 supports all four of Council's Strategic Priority areas by directing the majority of growth to strategic growth areas, and more specifically, the Yonge and Carrville/16th Avenue Key Development Area. The OPA also helps to create a strong sense of belonging by diversifying housing choice and enhancing the public realm in this KDA. With regards to getting around the City, the OPA provides for a fine-grained street network, along with facilities for active transportation and transit expansion. Lastly, the proposed OPA promotes fiscal responsibility by coordinating the secondary planning process with infrastructure planning through the Parks Plan, the Transportation Master Plan, and other important City initiatives.

Climate Change Considerations:

OPA 18.5 supports climate change mitigation and adaptation by promoting compact development and complete communities with higher density development and a mixed of uses. The OPA advocates for two major transit systems in the KDA, and it provides for cycling and pedestrian facilities. All of these measures will help decrease travel times and reliance on automotive vehicles while reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Conclusion:

The purpose of this report is to request that Council adopt OPA 18.5. The OPA was originally brought forward for consideration at the November 1st COW meeting, but it was later withdrawn from the Council Meeting on November 8th in order to have additional time to consult and meet with stakeholders, and to report back to Council at the November 29, 2023 Special Council Meeting.

OPA 18.5 is a municipally-initiated official plan amendment to the City's Official Plan (refer to Appendix A) which seeks to update the Yonge and Carrville/16th Avenue Key Development Area policies in the Official Plan to address several key directions contained in the City Plan [Key Directions Report](#). The OPA implements provincial and regional policy directions regarding complete communities and represents a city-

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building approach to intensification in a key strategic growth area of the City. Adoption of this OPA will complete the secondary planning process for the Yonge and Carrville/16th Avenue KDA and help guide development in this important centre.

Attachments:

The following attached documents may include scanned images of appendixes, maps and photographs. All attachments have been reviewed and made accessible. If you require an alternative format please call the contact person listed in this document.

- Appendix A - Official Plan Amendment (OPA) 18.5 Yonge and Carrville/16th Avenue Key Development Area
- Appendix B - Implementing By-law 132-23
- Appendix C - Engagement Summary Report prepared by LURA (“What We Heard Report”)
- Appendix D - Provincial and Regional Conformity Table
- Appendix E - Table of Proposed Changes to OPA
- Appendix F - Extract from the Council Public Meeting on June 20, 2023
- Appendix G - Questions and Answers on OPA 18.5
- Appendix H - Summary of Changes in Forecasted People and Jobs

Report Approval Details

Document Title:	SRPBS.23.044 Request for Approval - OPA 18.5 Yonge and Carrville or 16th Avenue Key Development Area.docx
Attachments:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- SRPBS.23.044 - Appendix A - OPA 18.5 Yonge and Carrville or 16th Ave KDA.pdf- SRPBS.23.044 - Appendix B - By-law 132-23.pdf- SRPBS.23.044 - Appendix C - What We Heard OPAs 18.5-18.8 Engagement Feedback.pdf- SRPBS.23.044 - Appendix D - Provincial and Regional Conformity.pdf- SRPBS.23.044 - Appendix E - Table of Proposed Changes to OPA 18.5.pdf- SRPBS.23.044 - Appendix F - Council Public Meeting Extracts - June 20, 2023.pdf- SRPBS.23.044 - Appendix G - Questions and Answers on OPA 18.5.pdf- SRPBS.23.044 - Appendix H - Summary of Changes in Forecasted People and Jobs.pdf
Final Approval Date:	Nov 27, 2023

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

Maria Flores - Nov 24, 2023 - 4:33 PM

Gus Galanis - Nov 24, 2023 - 4:44 PM

Darlene Joslin - Nov 27, 2023 - 12:57 PM