



Staff Report for Committee of the Whole Meeting

Date of Meeting: October 22, 2025

Report Number: SRPBS.25.087

Department: Planning and Building Services

Division: Policy Planning

Subject: **SRPBS.25.087 – Background Report and Draft Land Use Options for the Development of the East Beaver Creek Secondary Plan**

Purpose:

The purpose of this report is to present the Background Report and draft land use options respecting the East Beaver Creek (EBC) Secondary Plan area.

Recommendation(s):

- a) That Staff Report SRPBS.25.087 be received for information; and
- b) That all comments on the background report and draft land use options, forming Attachment 1 to this report, be referred back to staff and the project team for consideration.

Contact Person(s):

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Maria Flores, Director, Policy Planning, Planning and Building Services, phone number 905-771-5438

Gus Galanis, Commissioner, Planning and Building Services, phone number 905-771-2465

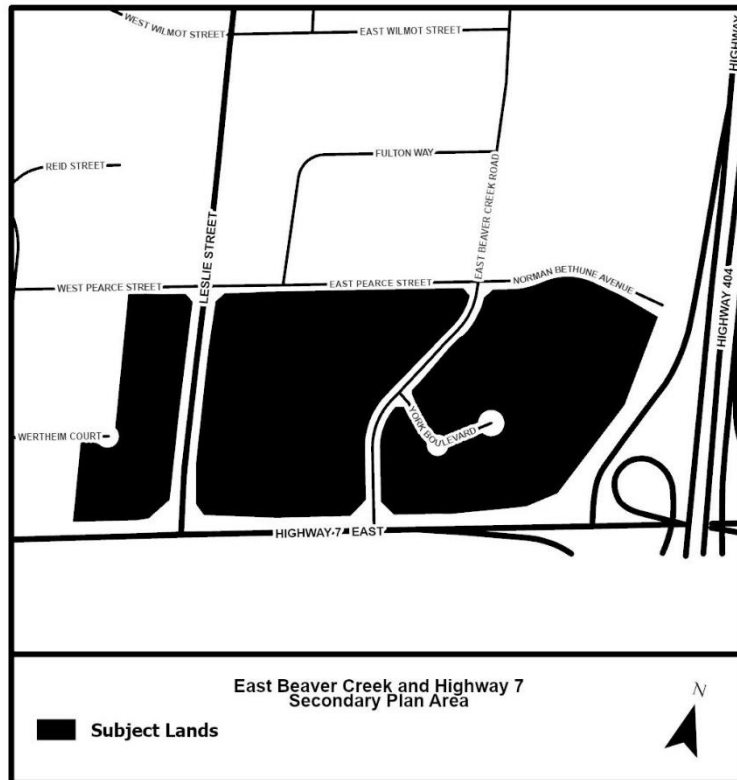
Report Approval:

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.

Page 2

Location Map:

Below is a map displaying the study area location. Should you require an alternative format, please contact the person listed under the heading “Contact Person” above.



Page 3

Key Messages:

- In June 2022, Council adopted OPA 18.3 which amended the City's Official Plan to reflect an updated City Structure comprised of a network of centres and corridors. EBC is among one of three (3) new Local Centres that were identified by Council for future growth under the revised city structure;
- At the October 23, 2024 Council meeting, Council approved Staff Report [SRPBS.24.115](#)¹ which directed staff to prepare a comprehensive Secondary Plan for the East Beaver Creek Road and Highway 7 area. A project team comprised of technical staff from the City along with consultants were subsequently identified;
- In April 2025, the City retained a lead planning consultant (Gladki Planning Associates (GPA)) to lead the development of the EBC Secondary Plan, alongside a multi-disciplinary team of urban design, land economics/growth management, and hydrogeology/geotechnical consultants. Transportation engineering and servicing consultants were also retained by the City to assess cumulative impacts of growth;
- The project team has completed the Background Report and developed three (3) preliminary land use options for EBC (refer to Attachment 1). These options demonstrate conceptually how the area can redevelop into a mixed-use Local Centre over the long term;
- In August 2025, the project team released the draft land use options for public consultation through two separate community engagement events. The response and feedback heard at these events as well as feedback from landowners and external agencies are outlined in Attachment 2 to this report;
- This staff report presents the findings of the EBC Background Report and draft land use options for information purposes and recommends that comments be referred to the project team. Comments and feedback received will inform the development of a preferred option for consideration and endorsement by Council through the next phase of the study.

Background:

On October 23, 2024, Council approved [SRPBS.24.115](#)¹ which directed staff to prepare a comprehensive Secondary Plan for the East Beaver Creek Road and Highway 7 area ("EBC" or "EBC area"). The EBC area represents one of several areas identified for growth and intensification within the City's hierarchy of centres and corridors as set out in the City's Official Plan.

In April 2025, the City retained Gladki Planning Associates (GPA) as the lead planning consultant for the development of the EBC Secondary Plan. GPA is supported by a

¹ Refer to Agenda Item 15.6, October 23, 2024 Council Meeting C#24-24, <https://pub-richmondhill.escrimemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?DocumentId=65771>

Page 4

multi-disciplinary team of professionals including DTAH (providing Urban Design expertise) Parcel Economics (providing Land Economics and Growth Management expertise), and SLR (providing Hydrogeology and Geotechnical expertise). Transportation planning consultants as well as water, wastewater and stormwater engineering consultants were also retained by the City to assess cumulative impacts of EBC growth on infrastructure.

Purpose of Secondary Plan

The purpose of the Secondary Plan is to develop a policy framework to guide future development/redevelopment in the EBC study area. The Secondary Plan will consider land use changes and account for lands that have been converted from employment through the York Region Official Plan, and to plan for infrastructure and public realm improvements such as roads, servicing and parkland.

Study Process and Phases

Development of the EBC Secondary Plan will be undertaken through a multi-phased process, as outlined in the Terms of Reference, and consistent with the deployment of other municipally initiated policy projects. The phases/stages include:

Table 1 Study Process and Phases

Project Stage/Phase	Description of Scope of Work
Phase 1: Background Study, Guiding Principles and Three Draft Land Use Options	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commencement of project, policy review, data collection and analysis • Preparation of Background Report outlining guiding principles and development of conceptual land use options
Phase 2: Policy Directions and Preferred Land Use Option	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparation of Policy Directions Report to serve as a framework for the Secondary Plan • Recommendation of a preferred land use option
Phase 3: Policy Formulation of Draft Secondary Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secondary Plan policy formulation (text and mapping)
Phase 4: Statutory Consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Release of draft Secondary Plan for statutory public consultation and stakeholder review in accordance with the <i>Planning Act</i>
Phase 5: Final Secondary Adoption and submission to Approval Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finalization of Secondary Plan for Council adoption with revisions (if necessary) Submission of Secondary Plan to approval authority (Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing) for approval

Phase 1 of the project, which includes the preparation of a Background Report and draft land use options (refer to Attachment 1), is complete. Phase 2 will commence following this report being received by Council and it will focus on evaluation and option

Page 5

refinement. Modelling, technical analysis, and public and stakeholder consultation will also form part of the development of the Secondary Plan.

Discussion

Background Report

The Background Report for EBC provides an analysis of existing conditions in the study area, identifies challenges and opportunities, and establishes a revised vision and guiding principles to guide the area's transition into a more mature, urban, mixed-use community (refer to Attachment 1). In addition, three (3) land use options have been derived to illustrate how the area can redevelop and intensify over time through intensification. By way of summary, an overview of the report's key topic areas is presented below.

Existing Conditions

Presently, the EBC area is dominated by a mix of light industrial, office and commercial uses which are interspersed throughout the area. This includes a variety of traditional warehousing, distribution, and light manufacturing operations which are generally housed in single-storey buildings. Buildings are situated on large sites and are generally accompanied by expansive surface parking and servicing areas which dominate the site. Office uses are located throughout EBC as well, with a large cluster located along Leslie Street and dispersed along East Beaver Creek Road at York Boulevard.

Retail and commercial uses are the predominant land use within EBC and generally serve the broader Beaver Creek Business Park located north and west of the study area. These uses include a large restaurant campus, a variety of commercial and technical schools, printing establishments, and other culturally significant businesses that serve City's East Asian and South Asian community.

Despite EBC functioning as a designated employment area, it is also home to a cluster of residential uses which were first introduced into the area in the early-to-mid 1990's. There are three (3) high-density apartment buildings located at 9015 and 9017 Leslie Street and 75 Norman Bethune Avenue with additional phases of residential development proposed along Norman Bethune. In total, the area houses an estimated 2,000 residents. However, the area lacks community uses that are necessary to support residents' daily needs (e.g. schools, libraries, community centres). Additional information on existing conditions within EBC are set out in Section 3 of the Background Report (refer to Attachment 1).

Challenges and Opportunities

Section 4 of the Background Report identifies opportunities and challenges respecting the EBC study area (refer to Attachment 1).

Page 6

With respect to challenges, EBC has functioned as a longstanding employment area since the early 1980's, and the introduction of residential uses into what was originally planned as a Business Park has given rise to several challenges, as outlined below:

- **Lack of Cohesive Land Use Patterns**

The introduction of residential uses into EBC has over time led to irregular lot patterns and fragmented parcels, particularly for the lands located between Leslie Street and East Beaver Creek Road. As a result, the alignment of new streets, connections, and redevelopment of sites may be complicated, and may result in the need for curvilinear connections and more thoughtful approaches to site planning and land assembly.

- **Interface between residential and employment uses**

EBC is home to local businesses and industries that serve the community. The interface between residential uses and employment uses is important and should be carefully considered to ensure viability of existing employment uses north and west of the study area.

In contrast, there are several opportunities which can be leveraged to make improvements and help address these identified challenges:

- **Removal of Buttonville Airport Height Restrictions**

The Buttonville Airport, located in the City of Markham and situated northeast of the study area, ceased operations permanently in November 2023. This has presented an opportunity to revisit building height parameters in the study area in light of the local context and recent development trends occurring in the City.

Federal airport zoning regulations restricted building heights in the vicinity of the airport, including lands within EBC to ensure safe aircraft operations. These regulations are anticipated to be repealed at some point in the future, and discussions with Transport Canada staff indicate that they will no longer be a limiting factor for building heights. As a result, building heights in the study area may increase substantially beyond the current limit of 10-11 storeys set out in the City's Official Plan. The removal of Buttonville Airport height restrictions will also allow more flexibility in the built form that can be accommodated within EBC.

- **Rapid Transit availability (and connection to planned subway)**

EBC is well-served by existing bus rapid transit ("BRT") which operates along Highway 7 via dedicated rights-of-way ("rapidways") that are exclusive for frequent, high-capacity bus service. The adjacency of the rapidways to EBC provides an opportunity to increase transit modal share, and facilitate a more walkable, complete community with a mix of uses and finer-grained street network. A long-term proposal would also see additional access to rapid transit service along Leslie Street extending from Steeles Avenue to Highway 7 through the implementation of a rapid transit corridor.

Page 7

Vision and Guiding Principles

Section 5 of the Background Report summarizes the draft vision and guiding principles for EBC which, if approved, would serve as the foundation for the area to evolve as a complete community. The vision and guiding principles will also be used to guide redevelopment in the Secondary Plan area over the long term.

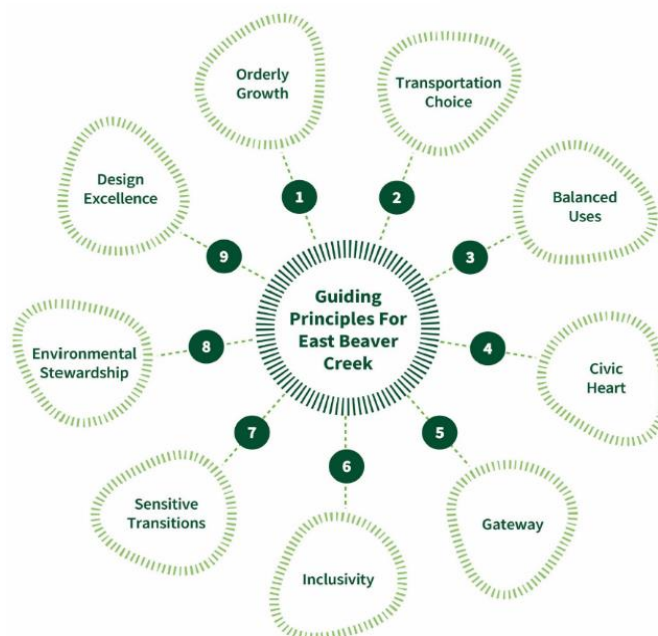
Preliminary guiding principles for EBC were endorsed by Council as part of the Official Plan Update Key Directions Report. Updates to the draft vision and guiding principles have been proposed to reflect changes that have occurred at the Provincial level, and to account for contextual changes that have taken place recently in EBC and the surrounding area. Changes include, among others, the decommissioning of Buttonville Airport as noted above and the repeal of the associated Airport Zoning Regulations which bear influence on building heights.

The draft Vision proposes to identify EBC as a future mixed-use area with a civic presence, and that it be well connected by public transit. It states:

“East Beaver Creek (EBC) will be a complete community where people enjoy a high quality of life and can meet their daily needs locally or through a convenient transit trip. The broad mix of uses, diverse network of public spaces, and strong civic presence will contribute to EBC’s unique identity, complementing the surrounding area.”

There are nine proposed guiding principles which support the vision for a complete community as follows:

Figure 1 Proposed Guiding Principles



Page 8

Proposed Block Structure and Land Use Options:

Section 6.0 of the Background Report illustrates a proposed block structure and three draft land use options for EBC. These draft land use options share the same block structure that includes new streets and connections, a civic block at the site of the City's municipal offices, a community park and urban plazas, and proposed upgrades to stormwater infrastructure. These are described briefly below.

Blocks and Connections

The block structure for EBC reflects a finer grain network of connections and block fabric. While this network is not yet fully established, the structure is flexible in that it can support public and private streets, mid-block connections, and pathways and trails to support a walkable and connected community. Smaller blocks will support a more urban block fabric that will help create opportunities for buildings with active frontages. Through the next phase of the study process, the project team will delineate a more detailed street and active transportation network.

Parks and Open Spaces

The proposed block structure accounts for a community park located south of East Pearce Street and west of East Beaver Creek Road in the vicinity of the City's municipal offices, as well as two potential urban plazas located east and west of East Beaver Creek Road. These parks are intended to provide support for both active and passive recreation and are reflected in each of the three land use options prepared. In addition to the community park, a prominent civic space is identified in the area adjacent to the City's municipal offices which is intended to improve the civic presence of city hall and help foster a stronger sense of place and social ties.

Servicing and Stormwater Management

With respect to stormwater management, the proposed block structure accounts for the need to expand the existing stormwater facility located east of East Beaver Creek Road and south of York Boulevard (SWMF 28-1) to support greater levels of intensification in EBC. This facility is located east of East Beaver Creek Road, and north of Highway 7 and its proposed expansion is reflected in each of the three proposed land use options.

To permit any new additional roads and increased development to occur within the future Secondary Plan area, SWMF 28-1 will need to be expanded to meet current Provincial criteria as part of an overall stormwater management strategy for EBC.

Land Use Options

The three draft land use options are conceptual and demonstrate how the area can redevelop over time into a more urban, compact complete community with heights and densities that support a protected major transit station area. **Table 2** provides a brief comparison of the options with respect to statistics and built form. Additional details are found in Section 6 of the Background Report (refer to Attachment 1).

Page 9

There are several common elements that are constant across the options, including:

- Lands west of Leslie Street are presently designated employment in the City's Official Plan and are proposed to remain the same designation to preserve the City's supply of employment lands, and
- The highest densities and tallest building heights are generally proposed to be directed along Highway 7 and Leslie Street

Table 2 Land Use Options Characteristics and Statistics

Option:	Proposed Land Use Characteristics	Proposed Built Form	Proposed Statistics ²			
			Units	People	Jobs	P+J/ H ³
Option 1: Lower Density	Majority of EBC area proposed for mixed use, with non-residential uses along East Pearce Street to buffer employment area to the north	Building height decreases away from transit nodes. Low-rise buildings (1-4 storeys) generally within employment and non-residential areas, with the remaining buildings being mid-rise (5-8 storeys). Tallest buildings are 25 storeys	4,870	9,160	1,840	273
Option 2: Medium Density	All of EBC area between Leslie Street and Highway 404 proposed for mixed use Sensitive uses, such as residential located closer to industrial area.	Low-rise buildings (1-4 storeys) proposed to front on East Pearce Street and set behind a landscape buffer. Tallest buildings are 30 storeys.	6,110	11,490	1,730	328
Option 3: Higher Density	All of EBC area between Leslie Street and Highway 404 proposed for mixed use. Greater intensity of sensitive uses, such as residential, located closer to industrial area.	Mid-rise buildings (5-8 storeys) proposed to front on East Pearce Street and set back behind a landscape buffer. Tallest buildings are 35 storeys.	8,650	16,260	1,640	444

Policy Context Analysis

Staff have reviewed the draft land use options against the Provincial Planning Statement 2024 (PPS 2024) and the City’s in-effect Official Plan policies applicable to EBC. In that regard, City Staff note the following for Council’s consideration:

² Proposed statistics in units, people, jobs and density represent estimates only based on applied assumptions.

³ P+J/Ha reference is a density calculation which combines the projected number of people and jobs divided over a gross land area, represented in hectares. The minimum prescribed density applicable to EBC under the Provincial Planning Statement, 2024 is 160 residents and jobs per hectare.

Page 11

- All options represent a complete community proposed with higher densities, compact built form, and a mix of land uses where residents can live, work, play, and access daily needs within a well-connected urban environment;
- All options are consistent with the PPS 2024 which direct municipalities to, among other matters:
 - provide for an appropriate range and mix of housing options and densities required to meet projected requirements of current and future residents (PPS Policy 2.1.(4))
 - facilitate residential intensification, including the development and redevelopment of underutilized commercial and institutional sites (e.g., shopping malls and plazas) for residential use, and introduce new housing options within previously developed areas to result in a net increase in residential units (PPS Policy 2.2.(1)(b)(ii))
 - promote density for new housing which efficiently uses land, resources, infrastructure and public service facilities, while supporting the use of active transportation;
 - promote development and intensification within major transit station areas to achieve minimum density targets, and support the development of surface parking lots to be transit-supportive (PPS Policy 2.4.1(3)(a)(b));
- All options implement a Local Centre designation and establish appropriate density targets based on local context in accordance with the City Structure set out in the City's Official Plan.

It is important to note that the PPS 2024 represents minimum standards and planning authorities and decision-makers are encouraged to go beyond these minimums to address matters of importance to a specific community, unless doing so conflicts with PPS policies. With respect to EBC, the density of each land use option meets and exceeds the minimum prescribed density of 160 people and jobs per hectare directed under the PPS 2024 for major transit station areas served by existing or planned bus rapid transit (BRT). This is due in large part to the locational factors and characteristics of EBC such as proximity to transit (including a connection to the planned future subway at Highway 7 and High Tech Road), proximity to Provincial 400-series highways, and the established high-rise residential uses that exist in the area today.

Growth Management Analysis

The City's OP provides a comprehensive framework to manage growth. In this regard, staff have reviewed the land use options and proposed densities from a growth management perspective, recognizing that EBC is not the only area within the City that will experience growth and intensification. In order to ensure balanced growth throughout the City Structure, EBC should not absorb a significant share of the City's

Page 12

overall projected housing growth. While EBC is a strategic growth area, it is not envisioned at the same level of intensity as areas that are served (or planned to be served) by subway infrastructure. As a result, the three draft options propose a level of density that is appropriate for EBC and supportive of public rapid transit while at the same time contributing to a healthy increase in the supply of housing.

Unlike other Local Centres in the City, the EBC area is not immediately surrounded by existing well-established, low-rise residential neighbourhoods at its periphery which would necessitate a more considerate approach to built form and transition of building heights. However, EBC is not directly served by subway infrastructure as is the case for other strategic growth areas in the City like the Richmond Hill Centre and the Yonge/16th-Carrville KDA.

Consideration to increase the level of intensification within EBC beyond what is identified in these land use options can have growth management implications. Meaning, any further substantial increase in EBC would have to be balanced out by removing intensification opportunities elsewhere in the City. Moreover, excess levels of intensification are not required within EBC to sustain transit or for the City to achieve its intensification objectives.

Public Consultation, Engagement and What Was Heard

Public and stakeholder engagement forms an important part of the EBC Secondary Plan process. Since the commencement of the EBC project, two public engagement events have taken place alongside focused meetings with key stakeholders. This staff report provides a summary of the engagement process that has taken place to date, and summarizes the feedback heard. A more fulsome overview of engagement events and feedback is set out in the attached Engagement Summary (refer to Attachment 2).

External Agencies

The project team met with external agencies in June and September 2025 to discuss the EBC Secondary Plan process. External agencies included representatives from the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority, York Region Public and Catholic District Schoolboards, York Region Development Services, Provincial Ministry of Transportation, Transport Canada, and representatives from the City of Markham. The purpose of these meetings was to present the project scope and to consult with stakeholders whose subject matter areas may be impacted by redevelopment within EBC. These meetings also assisted the project team to collect preliminary input on existing conditions and the development of land use options.

The feedback received from external agencies has generally been positive with support for EBC to evolve as a mixed-use community. The project team was also able to gain a better understanding of the work being undertaken by the City of Markham through its upcoming Official Plan Review respecting lands south of Highway 7 which presently continue to be identified for employment. Implications of growth on existing schools and school capacity are also being considered. Nearby schools are at or are approaching

Page 13

capacity and there may be a need to designate a school site within EBC depending on the level of growth proposed.

First Nations

An introductory meeting with the Mississauga's of the Credit First Nation (MCFN) was held in early June 2025. The purpose of this meeting was to share the East Beaver Creek Secondary Plan study timeline and gather initial feedback from First Nations. Discussion covered the planning context, growth and intensification objectives, and related initiatives. Additional follow up meetings with First Nations are anticipated for the latter stages of the Secondary Plan process.

Major Landowners

Separate meetings with major landowners and their representatives were held in June and September 2025. Several major landowners and/or their designates representing properties along York Boulevard, Norman Bethune Avenue, East Beaver Creek Road, and Leslie Street attended both meetings. At these meetings the project team presented the study timeline, discussed landowner interest and development aspirations within EBC, and presented the draft land use options for feedback. Landowners expressed positive support for the land use options overall, however, there was a strong desire for taller buildings and greater density permissions to maximize development potential on individual sites.

Community Workshops

Two community workshops were held in August 2025 to engage residents and stakeholders on the Secondary Plan process. Participants were asked to reflect on what they currently like or dislike about EBC, and to share future ideas for the community that they would like reflected. Both workshops were well attended, with a total of 49 participants attending the virtual session held on August 18, 2025, and approximately 68 participants attending the in-person session on August 21st, 2025.

Following the workshops, the City received correspondence from representatives of 9015 and 9017 Leslie Street apartment condominiums ("Grand Parkway Residences"). Representatives of the condo highlighted support for the City's process to develop a Secondary Plan including support for new roads, connections and active transportation routes to improve mobility. There was a strong desire for parkland to be located at the southern part of the study area to serve as a buffer between the existing condo buildings and future development.

Support for the land use options was moderate, with Option 1 (Lowest Density) identified as the preferred approach. The level of built form intensity illustrated in the draft options generated the greatest concern due to perceived transportation impacts (e.g. traffic congestion). In response, residents indicated a desire to limit building heights (maximum 15 storeys) and densities (maximum 2.5 FSI) to ensure compatibility between development and existing uses.

Page 14

Online Survey

An online survey was hosted on the City's website over a two-week engagement period (August 12 through August 27). A total of 56 responses were received, with most respondents (approximately 64 percent) indicating that they were residents of EBC. Among other matters, the survey sought feedback on existing conditions within the study area, as well as feedback on ways to improve amenities and parkland. Areas of concern include traffic congestion and active transportation. Notably, more than half of survey respondents (52%) indicated opposition for future new high-rise buildings (9+ storeys) in EBC citing worsening traffic congestion as a primary concern.

Forthcoming Transportation and Servicing Analyses:

As part of the EBC Secondary Plan process, transportation, water, wastewater and stormwater servicing analyses will be undertaken to assess the cumulative impacts of growth on infrastructure. This work is in development and will help determine the need and extent of infrastructure improvements to support growth within EBC. The transportation analysis will evaluate anticipated growth and provide recommendations to improve the multi-modal transportation network required to support growth. This includes assessing the need for new streets, active transportation connections, and transit capacity to accommodate projected population and employment densities. Similarly, water, wastewater and stormwater analyses will identify recommended municipal infrastructure and servicing options to support the mix of land uses and target densities proposed for EBC through the land use options and preferred development concept.

Staff anticipates reporting back to Council on the transportation and servicing analyses for EBC through the next phase of the study process which will involve evaluation of the land use options and the development of key policy directions.

Summary and Next Steps:

This staff report presents the Background Report and draft land use options for the East Beaver Creek Secondary Plan area for information purposes. The report summarizes existing conditions within EBC and presents conceptual land use options that demonstrate how the area can redevelop and intensify over time into a more urban, compact, complete community.

Feedback on the background report and land use options will help inform the evaluation of the three draft land use options and the next phase of the study process. The next phase will focus on identifying a preferred land use option for EBC and the development of key policy directions to guide development of the Secondary Plan. Staff anticipate reporting back to Council on the next phase of the process in early 2026.

Accordingly, this report recommends that all comments on the EBC Background Report, including the draft conceptual land use options be received by Council for information (refer to Attachment 1), and that all comments on same be referred back to staff.

Page 15

Financial Implications:

There are no financial implications as a result of this staff report. Funding is currently available within the Development Charge Reserve Fund budget to undertake the EBC Secondary Plan, as identified through staff report [SRPBS.24.115](#)⁴.

Relationship to Strategic Plan 2024-2027:

The recommendations of this report are aligned with **Pillar 1: Growing a Liveable, Sustainable Community**, specifically **Priority 1**, managing growth in a way that enables choice and connection for the City, its residents and businesses now and in the future in ensuring that future growth within the City supports the creation of complete communities and encourages and prioritizes sustainable design through the land use planning process.

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.

- Attachment 1 – East Beaver Creek Secondary Plan Background Report (Gladki Planning Associates)
- Attachment 2 – East Beaver Creek Secondary Plan Engagement Summary

⁴ Refer to Agenda Item 15.6, Council Meeting C#24-24, October 23, 2024 <https://pub-richmondhill.escrimemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?DocumentId=65771>

Page 16

Report Approval Details

Document Title:	SRPBS.25.087 - Background Report and Draft Land Use Options for the development of the East Beaver Creek Secondary Plan.docx
Attachments:	- SRPBS.25.087_Attachment 1_EBC Background Report_AODA.pdf - SRPBS.25.087_Attachment 2_EBC Engagement Summary_AODA.pdf
Final Approval Date:	Oct 15, 2025

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

Maria Flores - Oct 15, 2025 - 10:11 AM

Gus Galanis - Oct 15, 2025 - 10:32 AM

Darlene Joslin - Oct 15, 2025 - 11:17 AM