



City of Markham
OFFICIAL PLAN

Open House

April 11, 2013

What is an Official Plan



The Official Plan is a statutory document that provides direction for Markham Council, residents, businesses and investors about the appropriate use of land and form of development in Markham.

In general, the Official Plan provides guidance on:

- Where new housing, industry, offices and shops will be located
- Where and how growth will occur in the community
- What services such as parks, schools, roads/transit, sewers will be needed to support growth



Why do we need an Official Plan now?



A new Official Plan is needed for several reasons:

- To comply with the Planning Act requirement that municipalities review their Official Plan every 5 years
- To conform with provincial policy and plans (e.g., the Greenbelt Plan and the Growth Plan) and the new York Region Official Plan
- To reflect the direction Markham has been taking in planning new communities in recent years
- To incorporate Council's endorsed growth alternative to 2031



Planning for Growth in Markham to 2031



Forecast Growth (2031)

Population	422,000
Jobs	240,000

In May 2010, Council endorsed a growth alternative that accommodates population and employment growth in Markham to 2031.

The growth alternative involved three main elements:

- **Protecting the natural environment**, in the form of an identified Greenway System that is off limits to development
- **Directing most of the residential growth (approx. 60%) to the existing urban area** within mixed-use centres and corridors along rapid transit routes within the current urban area of the City (referred to as intensification)
- **Allowing limited expansion of the urban area** (referred to as the Future Urban Area) to accommodate some growth

By directing growth to mixed-use centres and corridors, established low-density residential neighbourhoods and heritage districts can remain largely unchanged.

This strategy for focusing growth in the urban area is consistent with the provincial and York Region plans, and is also consistent with the way Markham has been planning for many years.

Markham Structure

The strategy for accommodating growth results in a physical structure for the City that consists of the following components:

Greenway System – lands within the Oak Ridges Moraine and the Provincial Greenbelt, as well as protected environmental features outside of these areas

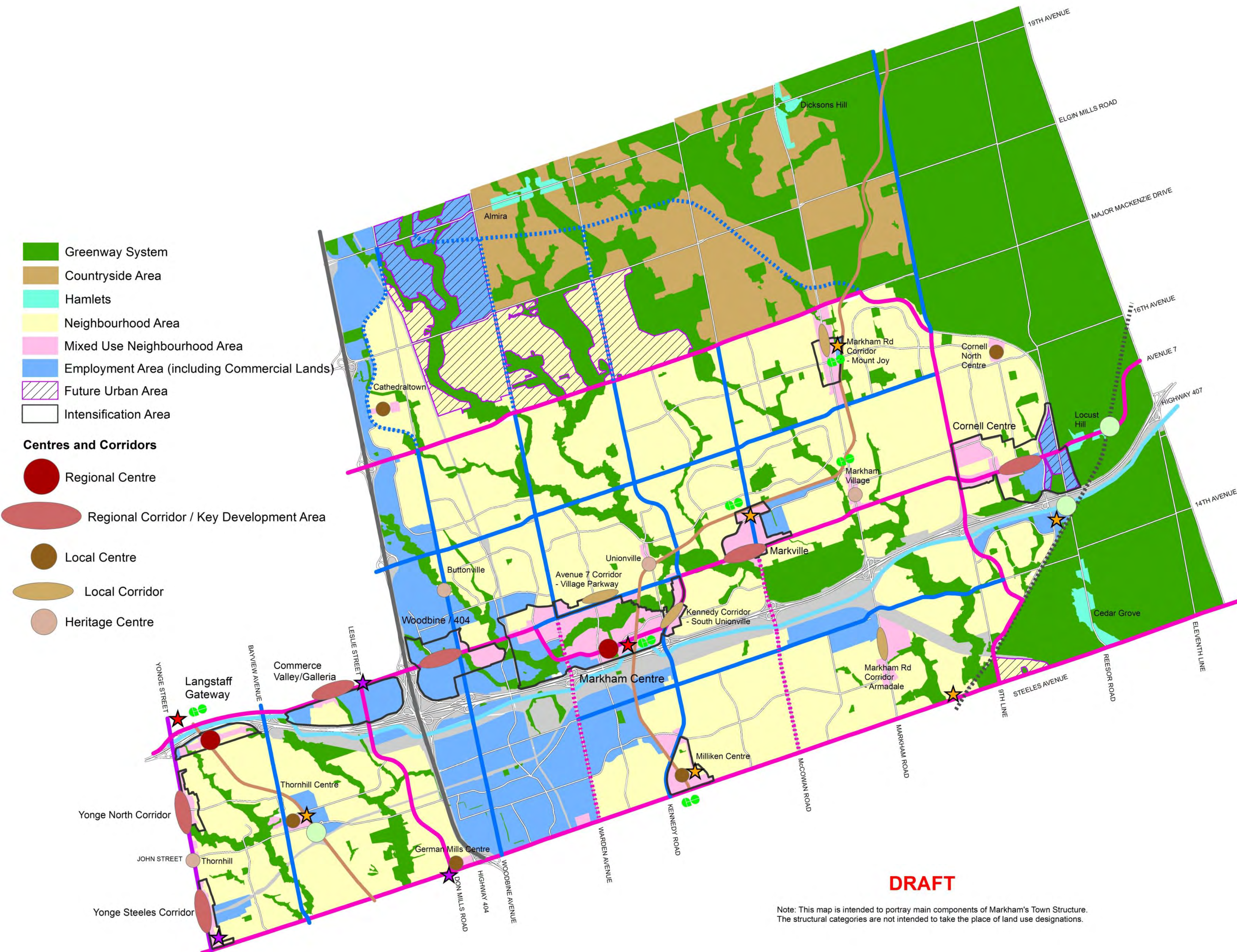
Countryside Area – lands outside the Greenway System and outside the urban area, to be used primarily for agricultural purposes

Employment Area – lands which accommodate the majority of the economic activity within Markham, such as manufacturing, warehousing, office and supporting services

Neighbourhood Area – residential lands, developed primarily in ground-related housing forms, together with supporting parkland, institutional, retail and service uses

Mixed Use Neighbourhood Areas – areas identified for higher intensity mixed-use development primarily in Centres and Corridors along rapid transit corridors

Centres and Corridors aligned along rapid transit corridors – the areas where most of Markham's intensification growth will occur



Centres and Corridors



Centres and Corridors are intended to be developed with higher intensity mixed-use development that is served by rapid transit. The rapid transit routes include the planned Yonge Street subway extension, the Avenue 7 (Highway 7) rapid transit corridor, the future Highway 407 Transitway and GO rail lines.

Centres and Corridors will be developed with well-designed, pedestrian-friendly and transit-oriented buildings.



Regional Centres

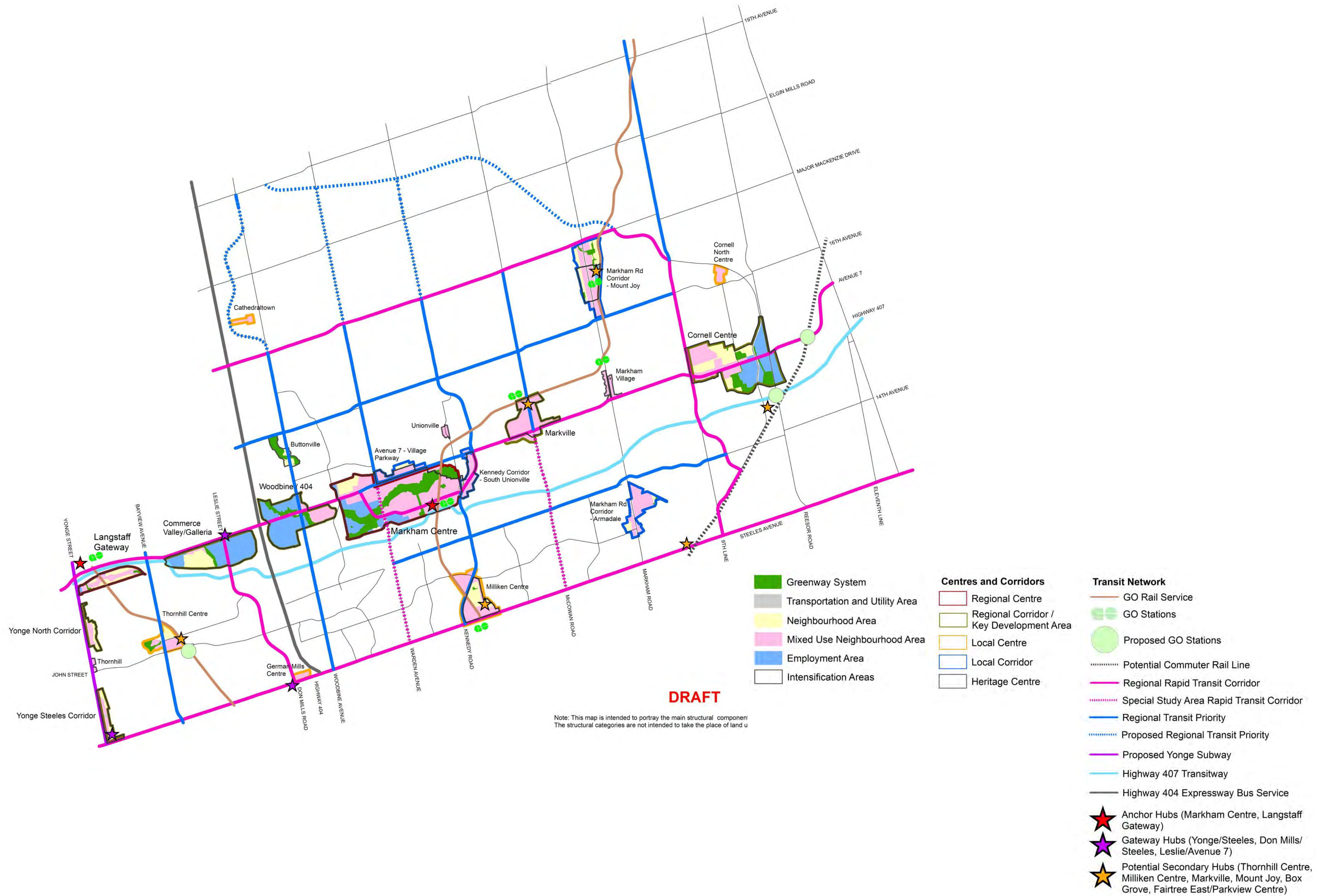
Markham Centre and the Langstaff Gateway

The majority of forecast growth will be directed to the Markham Centre and the Langstaff Gateway regional centres.

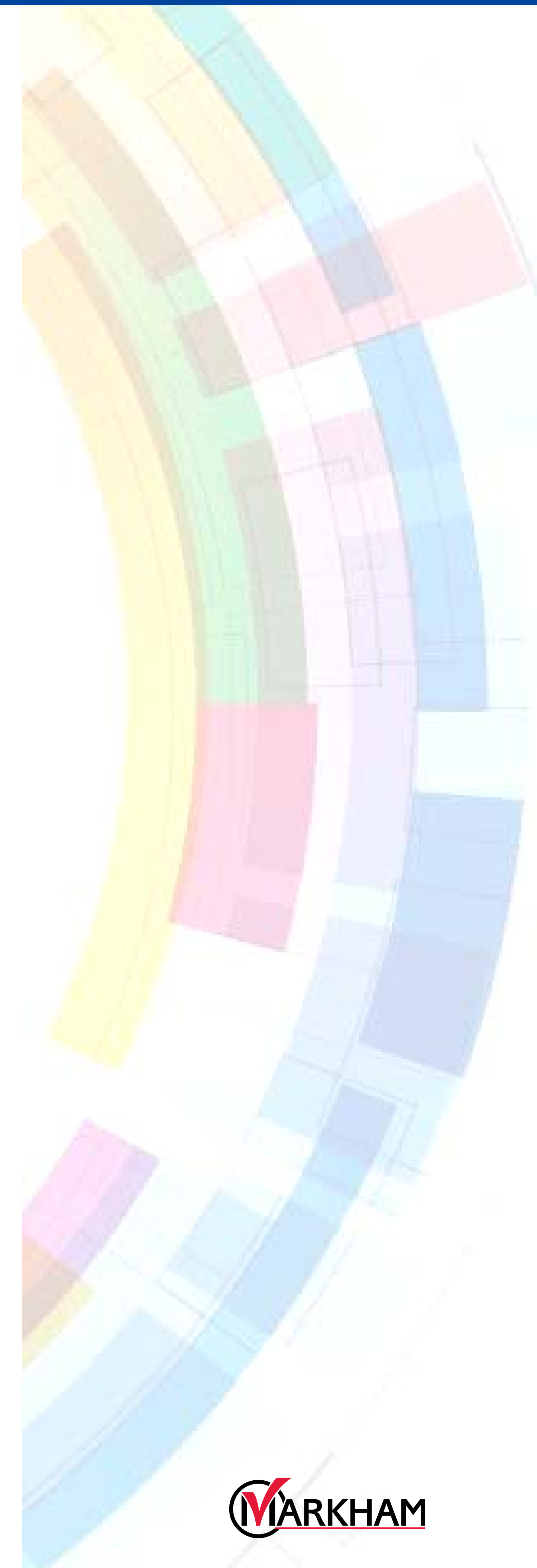
These areas will contain the highest concentration and greatest mix and intensity of uses and activities in Markham and will be developed with mid-rise and high-rise buildings.

Regional centres will have a long-term target of one job for every resident.

Centres and Corridors and Transit Network



The Regional Centres and Regional Corridors/Key Development Areas are priority areas for intensification. Not all Local Centres and Heritage Centres have potential for further intensification.



Centres and Corridors



Regional Corridors/Key Development Areas

These are areas of retail and commercial development along the Yonge Street and Avenue 7 (Highway 7) rapid transit corridors where opportunities exist for more intensive residential or office uses. These areas will be developed with mid-rise and high-rise buildings.

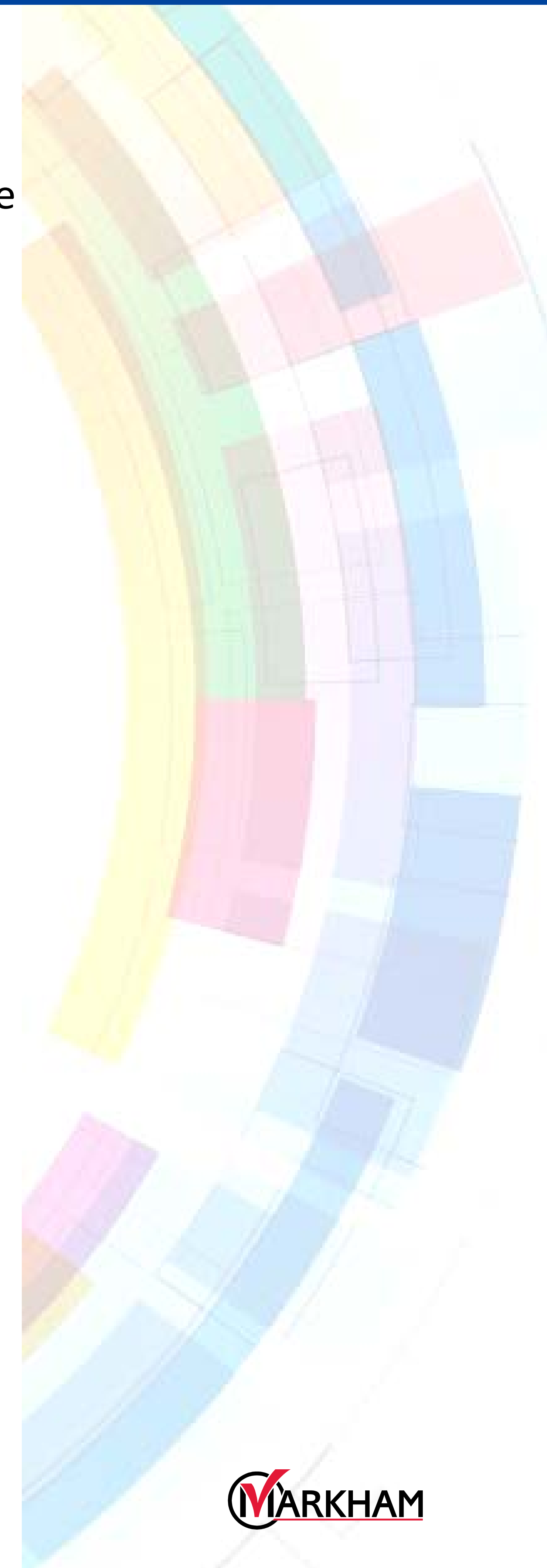


Local Centres and Corridors

These areas serve as important neighbourhood focal points and main streets and contain a mix of activities but on a smaller scale, serving the adjacent community. These centres are served by local transit offering connections to rapid transit, and in some cases contain GO stations.



Heritage Centres (Thornhill, Buttonville, Unionville and Markham Village) New development in these centres will be consistent with approved Heritage District Conservation Plans and secondary plans.



Markham's new Official Plan

The new Official Plan is made up of two parts:

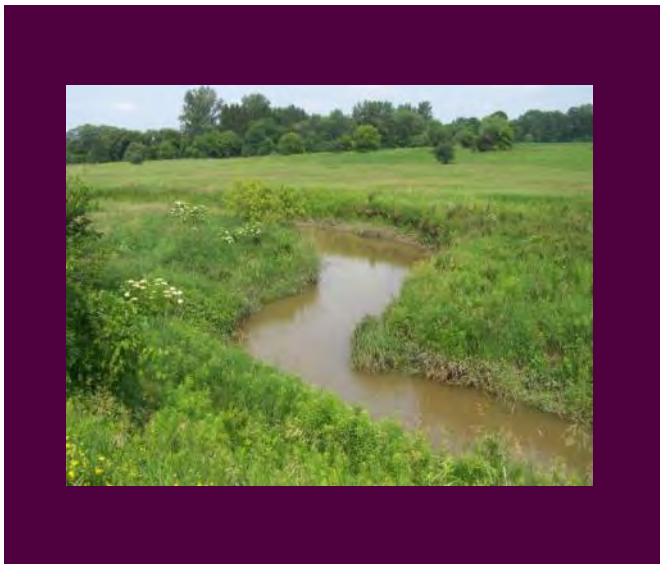
PART I Contains the vision, goals, objectives, policies and maps that apply to Markham as a whole. In February 2013, Chapter 11 – Area and Site Specific Policies was added to Part 1 of the Official Plan. It contains area and site specific policies that vary from the City-wide policies contained in Part 1. (Chapter 11 was originally intended to be incorporated as a separate Part III volume).

PART II Will contain secondary plans that provide more detailed policies and maps for specific geographic areas within Markham. Secondary Plan(s) will be released as they are completed.

A Vision for Sustainable Growth

The new Official Plan outlines a vision for sustainable growth in Markham to 2031 leading to a vibrant, liveable city.

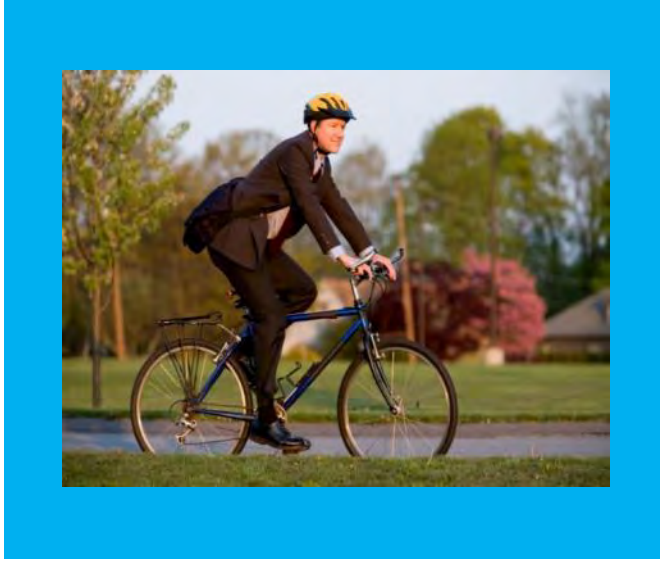
The vision for sustainable growth is based on four key themes:



Protecting the natural environment and agricultural lands



Building complete communities



Increasing travel options



Maintaining a vibrant and competitive economy

The goals and strategic objectives associated with the four themes provide the basis for all of the policies in the new Official Plan.

Protecting the natural environment



The Official Plan identifies a protected Greenway System of natural features.

The Greenway System includes:

- valleylands and river and stream corridors
- wetlands and woodlands
- sensitive groundwater features
- significant wildlife habitat
- buffers needed to protect these features and functions
- enhancement lands (linkages and restoration)
- agricultural lands within the Oak Ridges Moraine and Greenbelt

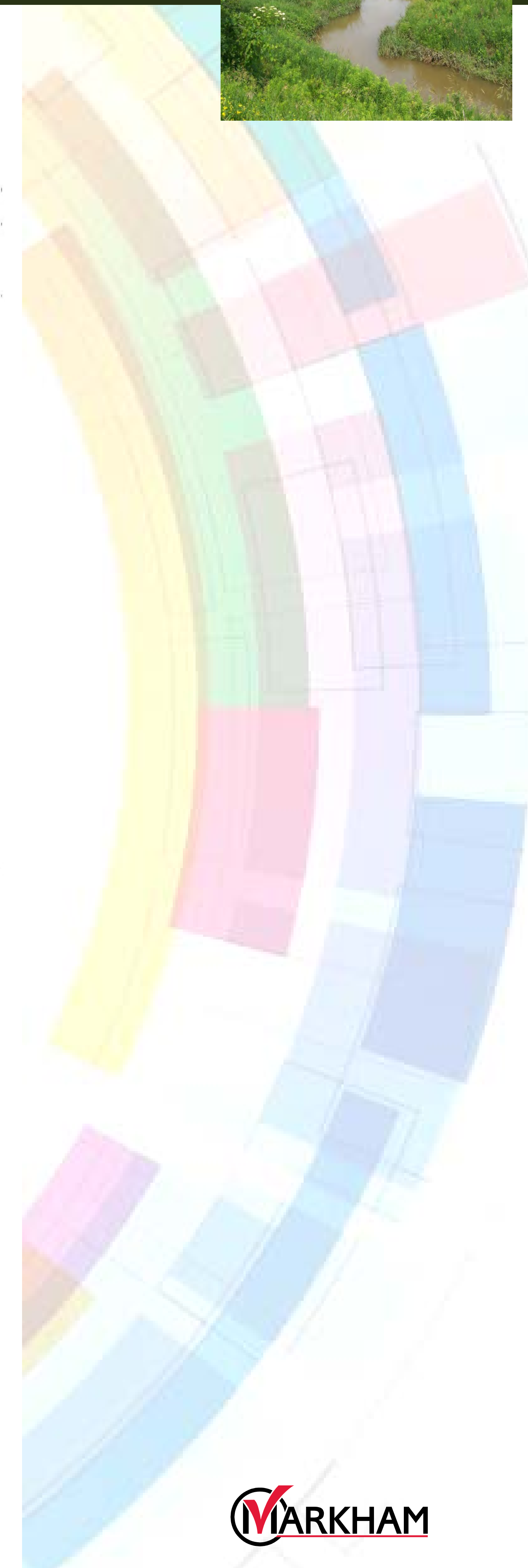
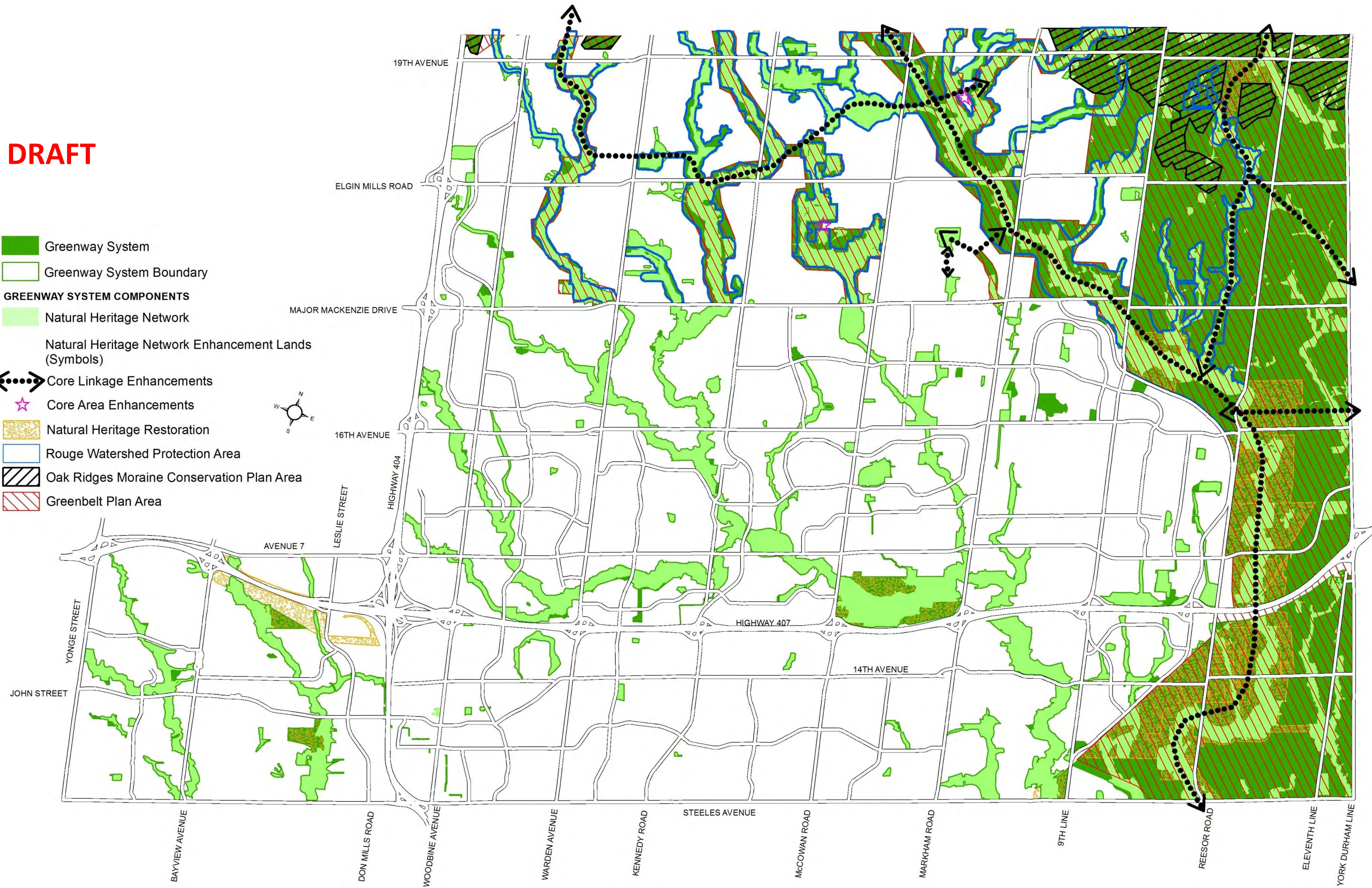
GOAL: To ensure the protection and enhancement of Markham's waterways, woodlands and wetlands, and promote the enhancement of ecological corridors and the protection of agricultural lands.

Greenway System



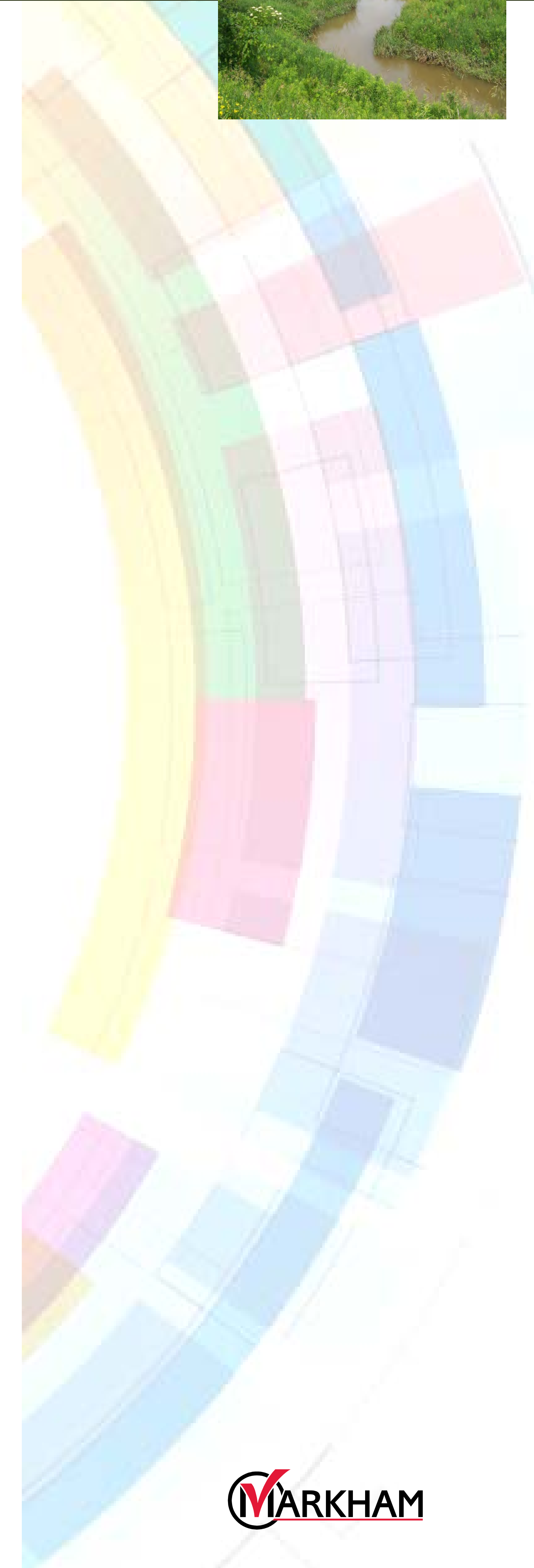
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- Greenway System
- Greenway System Boundary
- GREENWAY SYSTEM COMPONENTS**
- Natural Heritage Network
- Natural Heritage Network Enhancement Lands (Symbols)
- Core Linkage Enhancements
- Core Area Enhancements
- Natural Heritage Restoration
- Rouge Watershed Protection Area
- Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan Area
- Greenbelt Plan Area



The Greenway System, encompassing approximately 33% of Markham's land base, is not available for development.

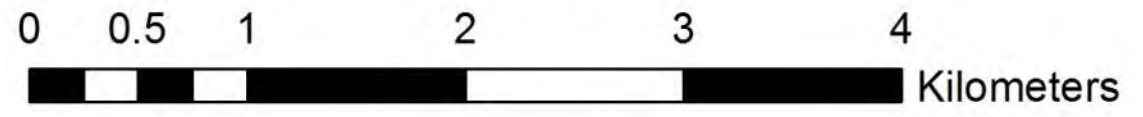
Provincial and Federal Policy Areas



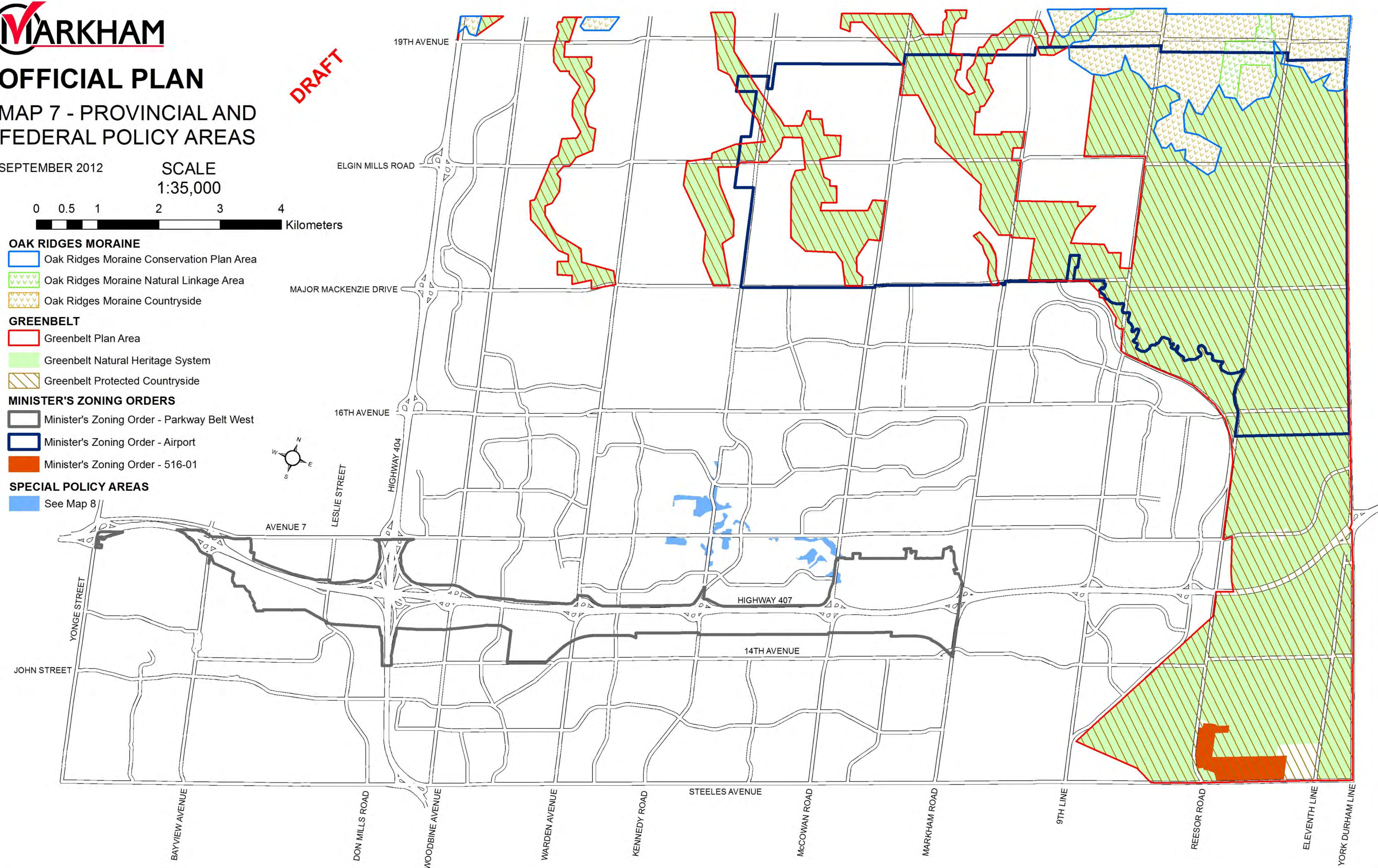
OFFICIAL PLAN MAP 7 - PROVINCIAL AND FEDERAL POLICY AREAS

SEPTEMBER 2012 SCALE
1:35,000

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- OAK RIDGES MORaine**
 - Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan Area
 - Oak Ridges Moraine Natural Linkage Area
 - Oak Ridges Moraine Countryside
- GREENBELT**
 - Greenbelt Plan Area
 - Greenbelt Natural Heritage System
 - Greenbelt Protected Countryside
- MINISTER'S ZONING ORDERS**
 - Minister's Zoning Order - Parkway Belt West
 - Minister's Zoning Order - Airport
 - Minister's Zoning Order - 516-01
- SPECIAL POLICY AREAS**
 - See Map 8



Q:\Geomatics\Departments\Planning\Policy\Mi527 New OP\Map XX - Provincial and Federal Policy Areas.mxd



Protect agricultural lands



Markham recognizes the importance of agricultural functions to the sustainability of Markham.

The Official Plan contains policies to:

- Protect and support local food production
- Promote efficient agricultural operations
- Address the economic viability of agricultural activities
- Support complementary agri-business activities
- Encourage food production within the existing urban area and new communities (e.g., community gardens)



Hamlets

Adjustment to Hamlet Boundaries



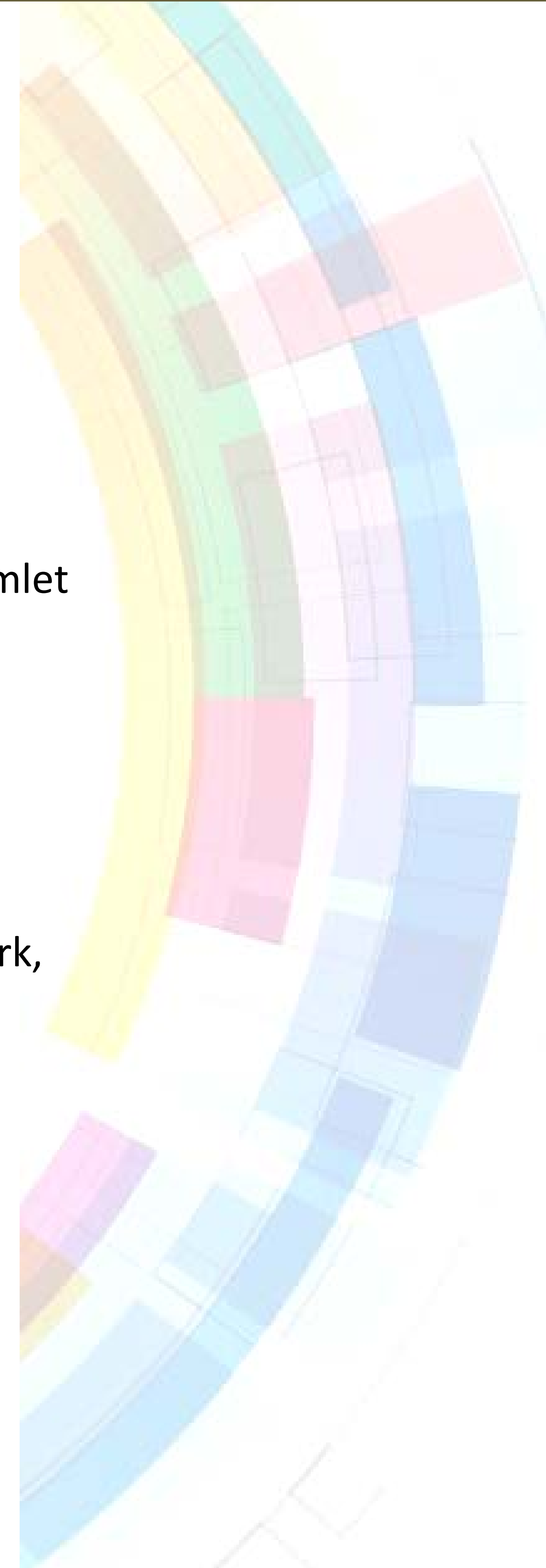
A preliminary review of the Hamlet boundaries of:

- Cedar Grove
- Locust Hill
- Dickson Hill
- Almira

was undertaken in 2009 through the Environmental Policy Review and Consolidation Study that resulted in some minor adjustments to the Hamlet boundaries. These boundaries were reflected in the draft Official Plan released in September 2012.

A further review of the Hamlet boundaries was recently completed to respond:

- The transfer of Markham lands to the future Rouge National Urban Park,
- Provincial Greenbelt policy,
- New environmental lines (TRCA flood lines),
- Zoning boundaries, and
- Land ownership boundaries.

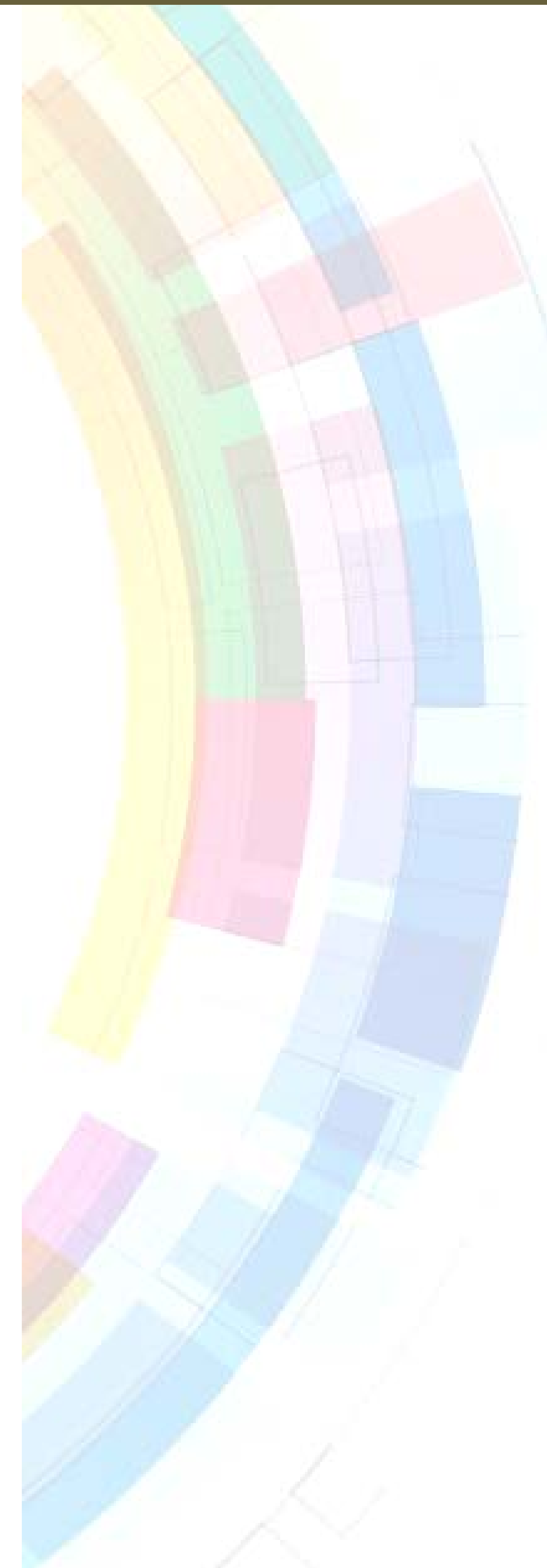
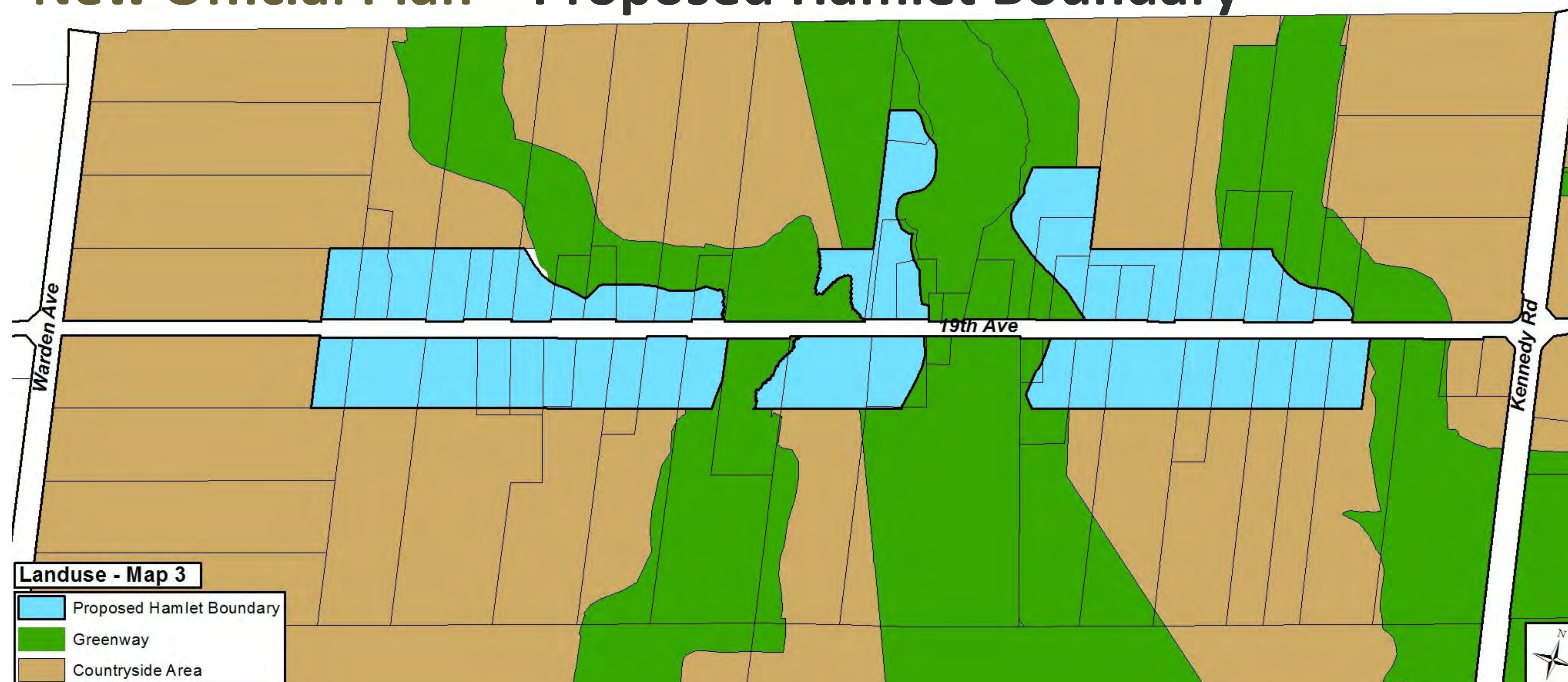


Hamlets - Almira

Current Official Plan – Existing Hamlet Boundary

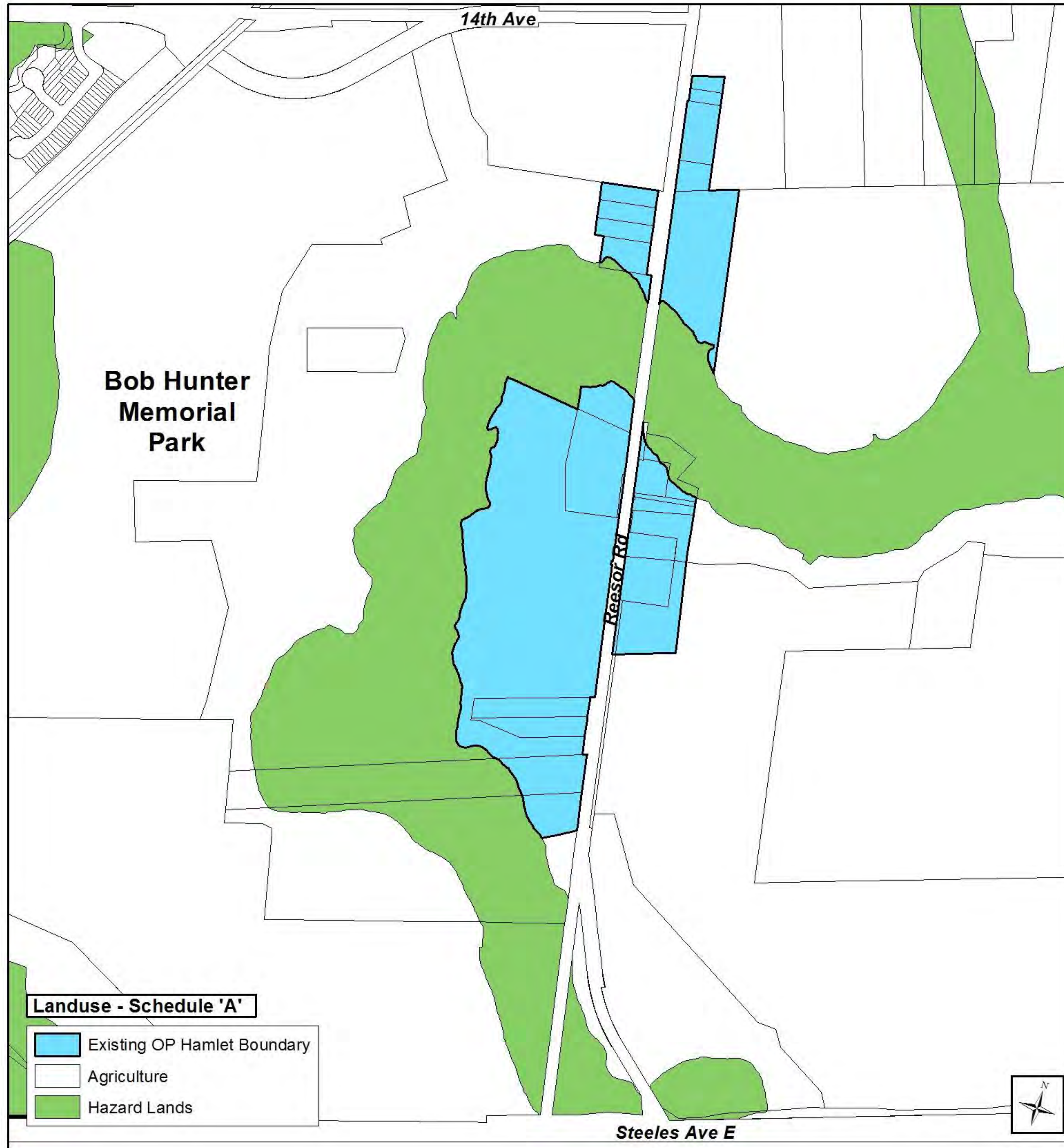


New Official Plan – Proposed Hamlet Boundary



Hamlets

Current Official Plan Existing Hamlet Boundary



New Official Plan Proposed Hamlet Boundary

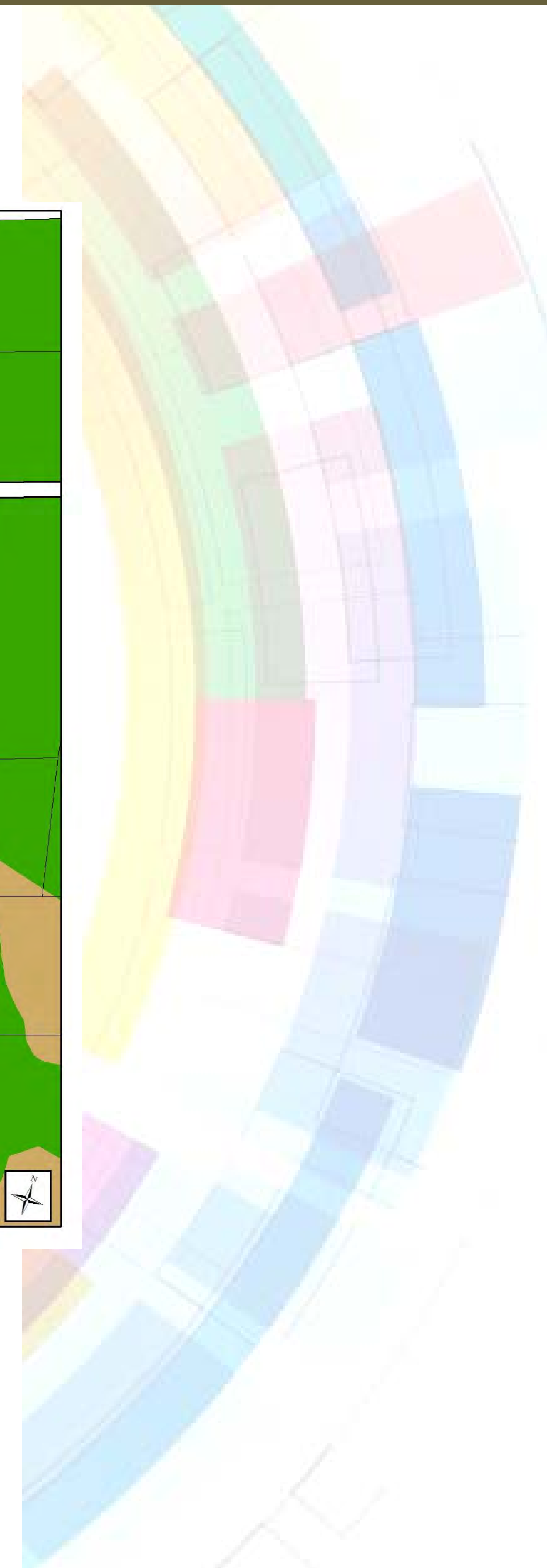


Hamlets – Dickson Hill

Current Official Plan Existing Hamlet Boundary



New Official Plan Proposed Hamlet Boundary

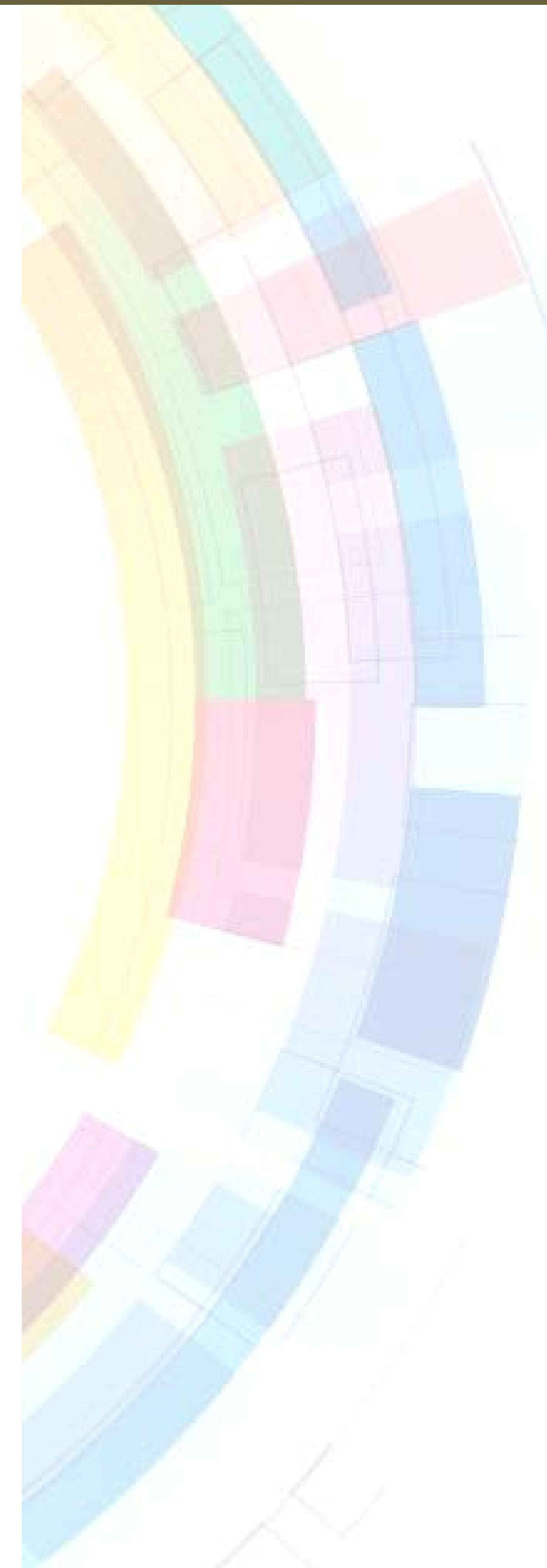
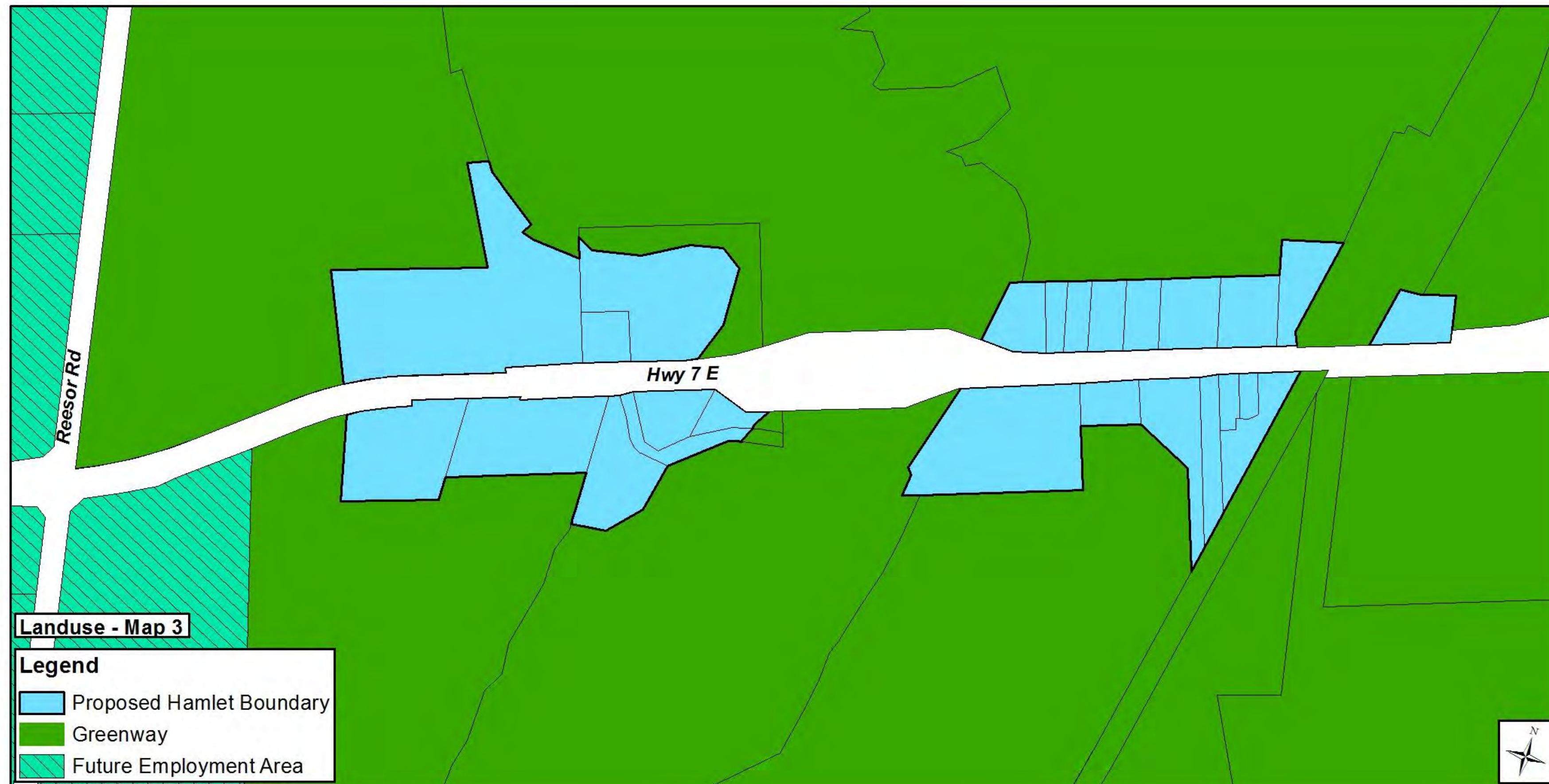


Hamlets – Locust Hill

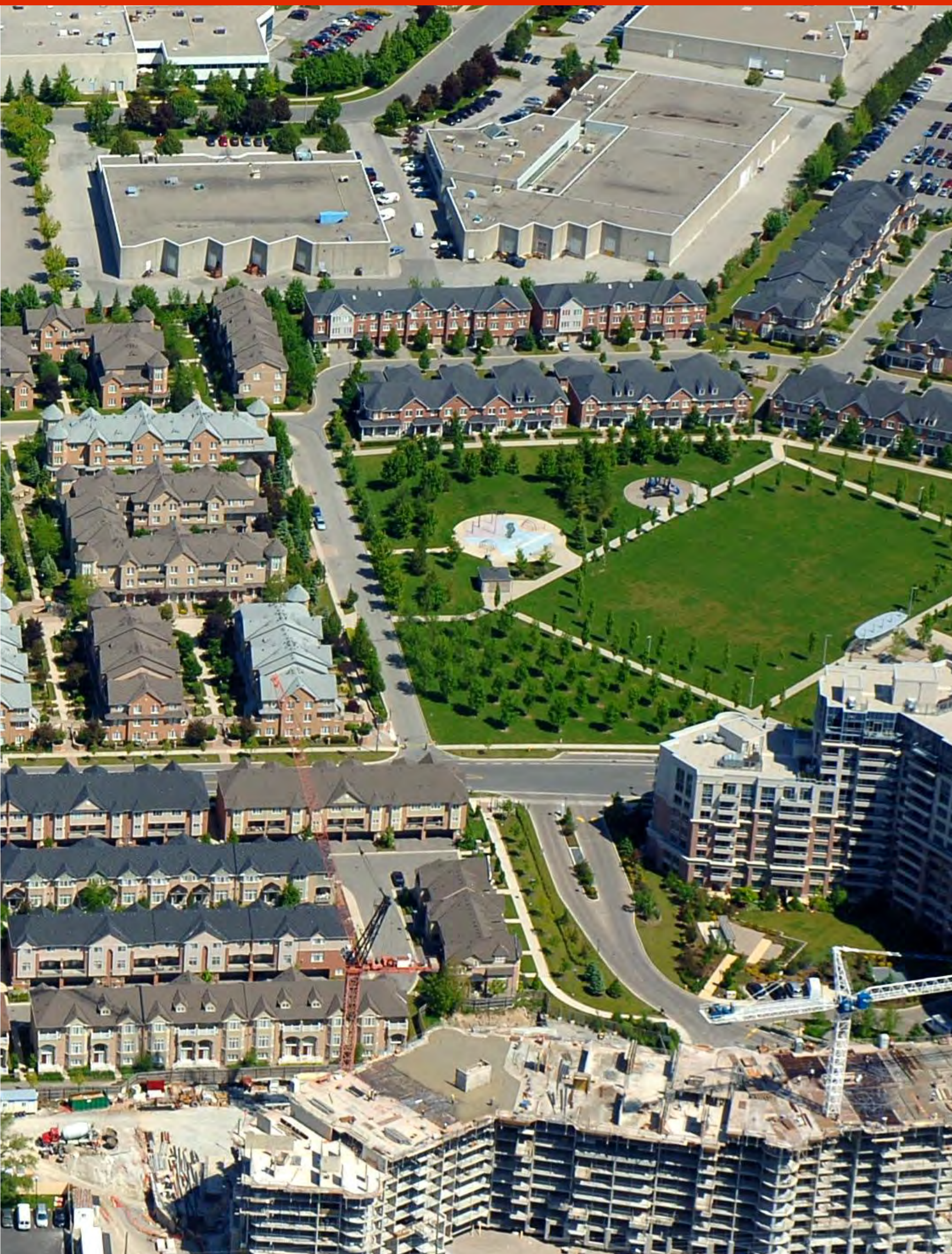
Current Official Plan - Existing Hamlet Boundary



New Official Plan - Proposed Hamlet Boundary



Building Complete Communities



A key goal of this Plan is to create a city in which the day-to-day needs of Markham's residents, including housing, employment, recreation, shopping, health care, education and personal service, are met.

This will be accomplished by planning for compact urban development, accommodating a mix and range of housing, job opportunities and services for all residents regardless of age or income, with convenient access by transit, walking or cycling.

To reduce the distance between where people live and where they work, Markham will need to diversify the types of housing that are available and increase the supply of employment lands to accommodate a range of employment opportunities. In addition, we need to facilitate the development of mixed-use, higher-density buildings in the Centres and Corridors located along the rapid transit network.

High urban design standards and sustainable building practices will be applied to all development, but particularly within Centres and Corridors. The vision for these areas is to have well-designed buildings housing a variety of activities located along attractive pedestrian-friendly streets with access to parks, squares and open spaces at key locations.

GOAL: To develop sustainable, compact and complete communities incorporating healthy active living, excellence in community design, efficient infrastructure, housing choices for all, and facilities and services meeting community needs, including a range of travel choices.

Building Complete Communities



A choice of housing of various types, sizes, tenure and affordability contributes to the liveability of neighbourhoods and the quality of life for residents.

The Official Plan contains policies:

- To provide a greater diversity of housing types and sizes to address the changing composition of Markham households over time
- To provide a greater diversity of housing tenure that will assist those residents and workers with a preference for rental and shared accommodation given their household size and composition, their stage of life and level of ability, or their economic status
- To increase opportunities for affordable and shared housing options that will assist low and moderate income households experiencing affordability challenges, and those persons with special needs requiring support with daily living and personal care activities

Housing choice is vital to the creation of healthy sustainable communities

Building Complete Communities



The Official Plan recognizes the importance of community facilities and services such as schools, libraries, community centres, parks, arts and culture, health and social services, in achieving complete communities.

The Official Plan contains policies:

- To work with all community service providers to improve the delivery of services particularly in Centres and Corridors
- To provide flexible zoning standards and permissions which allow community infrastructure to evolve and adapt to the changing needs of the community
- To design and develop high-quality parks and open spaces that provide for comfortable, safe, accessible, year round use

Community infrastructure is central to building a vibrant and liveable community

Building Complete Communities



As Markham continues to grow and the population becomes more culturally diverse, the demand for community access to quality cultural programming, products, facilities and opportunities for personal cultural expression will increase.

The Official Plan contains policies:

- To pursue opportunities for integrating arts and cultural facilities and programs as part of community design and the development approval process
- To locate new arts and culture programs, services and facilities in new mixed-use neighbourhoods and Centres and Corridors to create a mass of cultural activity

It is important to create opportunities to engage in community life

Building Complete Communities



Markham has a wealth of cultural heritage resources and is a leader in cultural heritage conservation.

By identifying, protecting, and managing Markham's cultural heritage and archaeological resources, there is an opportunity to preserve the heritage values, attitudes and integrity of Markham's historic settlements for the benefit of the community and for future generations.

The Official Plan contains policies:

- To promote conservation of Markham's cultural heritage resources by identifying and recognizing these resources and adopting and implementing programs for their protection
- To recognize the importance of conserving archaeological resources and the potential to incorporate archaeological discoveries in Markham's placemaking efforts

Markham is committed to protecting and conserving its wealth of cultural heritage and archaeological resources.