



## Electronic General Committee Meeting

### Revised Agenda

Meeting No. 6  
April 6, 2021, 9:30 AM  
Live streamed

**Note:** Members of the General Committee will be participating in the meeting remotely.

Due to COVID-19, our facilities are closed to the public.  
Access is not permitted to the Markham Civic Centre and Council Chamber.

Members of the public may submit written deputations by email  
to [clerkspublic@markham.ca](mailto:clerkspublic@markham.ca)

Members of the public who wish to make virtual deputations must register by completing an online [\*\*\*Request to Speak Form\*\*\*](#) or e-mail [clerkspublic@markham.ca](mailto:clerkspublic@markham.ca) providing full name, contact information and item they wish to speak to. Alternatively, you may connect via telephone by contacting the Clerk's office at 905-479-7760 on the day of the meeting.

General Committee meetings are video and audio streamed on the City's website at:

<https://pub-markham.escribemeetings.com/>



# Electronic General Committee Meeting

## Revised Agenda

### Revised Items are Italicized.

Meeting Number: 6

April 6, 2021, 9:30 AM - 1:00 PM

Live streamed

Alternate formats for this document are available upon request.

General Committee meetings are live video and audio streamed on the City's website.

Closed captioning during the video stream may be turned on by clicking the **[cc]** icon located at the lower right corner of the video screen.

Please bring this General Committee Agenda to the Council meeting on April 20, 2021.

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#### Pages

#### 1. CALL TO ORDER

#### 2. DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY INTEREST

#### 3. APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

##### 3.1. MINUTES OF THE MARCH 22, 2021 GENERAL COMMITTEE (16.0)

8

1. That the minutes of the March 22, 2021 General Committee meeting be confirmed.

#### 4. DEPUTATIONS

#### 5. COMMUNICATIONS

##### 5.1. YORK REGION COMMUNICATIONS (13.4)

25

**Note: Questions regarding Regional correspondence should be directed to Chris Raynor, Regional Clerk.**

1. That the following communications dated March 24, 2021 from York Region be received for information purposes:
  - a. Regional Official Plan Update - Policy Directions Report
  - b. Proposed 2051 Forecast and Land Needs Assessment

- c. Bradford Bypass Project - Regional Response to the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada
- d. GTA West Transportation Corridor Project - Regional Response to the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada

## 6. PETITIONS

## 7. CONSENT REPORTS - FINANCE & ADMINISTRATIVE ISSUES

- 7.1. MINUTES OF THE AUGUST 22, 2019, JANUARY 23, 2020, FEBRUARY 20, 2020, APRIL 23, 2020, JUNE 11, 2020, AUGUST 27, 2020, SEPTEMBER 30, 2020, OCTOBER 22, 2020 AND DECEMBER 3, 2020 BOARD OF MANAGEMENT MARKHAM VILLAGE BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT AREA COMMITTEE (16.0) 252

- 1. That the minutes of the August 22, 2019, January 23, 2020, February 20, 2020, April 23, 2020, June 11, 2020, August 27, 2020, September 30, 2020, October 22, 2020 and December 3, 2020 Board of Management Markham Village Business Improvement Area Committee meeting be received for information purposes.

- 7.2. DEVELOPMENT CHARGES DECEMBER 31, 2020 RESERVE BALANCES AND ANNUAL ACTIVITY OF THE ACCOUNTS (7.11) 270

S. Neville, ext. 2659 and K. Ross, ext. 2126

- 1. That the report titled “Development Charges December 31, 2020 Reserve Balances and Annual Activity of the Accounts” be received by Council as required under Section 43(1) of the *Development Charges Act, 1997, as amended*; and further,
- 2. That staff be directed to do all things necessary to give effect to this report.

## 8. PRESENTATIONS - FINANCE & ADMINISTRATIVE ISSUES

- 8.1. DEVELOPMENT CHARGES BACKGROUND STUDY UPDATE (7.11) 283

S. Neville, ext. 2659 and K. Ross, ext. 2126

**Note: Mark Visser, Senior Manager Strategy Innovation & Investments, Financial Services, will provide a presentation on this matter.**

- 1. That the Development Charges Background Study Update presentation be received.

- 8.2. CELEBRATE MARKHAM GRANT PROGRAM - 2021-2022 FUNDING CYCLE STATUS UPDATE - ALTERNATIVE PROGRAM OPTIONS & 297

**IMPLICATIONS (7.0)**

C. Kakaflikas, ext. 6590 and D. De Los Santos, ext. 3663

**Note: Don De Los Santos, Manager, Small Business Centre, Culture and Economic Development, will provide a presentation on this matter.**

1. That the presentation entitled “Celebrate Markham Grant Program 2021-2022 Funding Cycle Status Update – Alternative Program Options and Implications”, be received; and,
2. That Council approve the recommendations of the Interdepartmental Staff Review Committee as included in the attached PowerPoint; and further,
3. That Staff be authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to this resolution.

**9. REGULAR REPORTS - COMMUNITY SERVICES ISSUES****9.1. AWARD OF CONSTRUCTION TENDER 003-T-21 WEST THORNHILL – PHASE 3B STORM SEWER AND WATERMAIN REPLACEMENT (3.0)**

308

R. Grech, ext. 2357 and F. Chan, ext. 3189

1. That the report entitled “Award of Construction Tender 003-T-21 West Thornhill – Phase 3B Storm Sewer and Watermain Replacement” be received; and,
2. That the contract for Tender 003-T-21 West Thornhill – Phase 3B Storm Sewer and Watermain Replacement be awarded to the lowest priced Bidder, Direct Underground Inc. in the amount of \$4,263,945.97, inclusive of HST impact; and,
3. That a 10% contingency in the amount of \$426,394.60 inclusive of HST, be established to cover any additional construction costs and that authorization to approve expending of this contingency amount up to the specified limit be in accordance with the Expenditure Control Policy; and,
4. That the construction award in the amount of \$4,690,340.57 (\$4,263,945.97 + \$426,394.60) be funded from the following capital projects:
  - a. 058-6150-21164-005 “West Thornhill Flood Control Implementation - Phase 3B Construction”; and,
  - b. (b) 053-6150-21170-005 “Cast Iron Watermain Replacement – West Thornhill Phase 3B” as outlined under the financial considerations section in this report; and,
5. That the remaining funds in project #21164 “West Thornhill Flood Control Implementation - Phase 3B Construction” in the amount \$1,816,921.34 from the Stormwater Fee Reserve and the budget



remaining in project #21170 “Cast Iron Watermain Replacement – West Thornhill Phase 3B” from the Waterworks Reserve in the amount of \$1,065,105.09 will be returned to the original funding source; and,

6. That a 5-year moratorium be placed on any major servicing and utility installation along restored areas including Johnston Street, Dove Lane, Ida Street, Wiarton Court, St. Andrews Court; and further,
7. That Staff be authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to this resolution.

**9.2. AWARD OF CONSTRUCTION TENDER 004-T-21 WEST THORNHILL – PHASE 4A STORM SEWER AND SANITARY SEWER UPGRADES (3.0)**

315

R. Grech, ext. 2357 and F. Chan, ext. 3189

1. That the report entitled “Award of Construction Tender 004-T-21 West Thornhill – Phase 4A Storm Sewer and Sanitary Sewer Upgrades” be received; and,
2. That the contract for Tender 004-T-21 West Thornhill – Phase 4A Storm Sewer and Sanitary Sewer Upgrades be awarded to the lowest priced Bidder, GFL Infrastructure Group, in the amount of \$12,477,267.18, inclusive of HST; and,
3. That a 10% contingency in the amount of \$1,247,726.72 inclusive of HST, be established to cover any additional construction costs and that authorization to approve expending of this contingency amount up to the specified limit be in accordance with the Expenditure Control Policy; and,
4. That the construction award in the amount of \$13,724,993.90 (\$12,477,268.18 + \$1,247,726.72) be funded from the following capital projects:
  - a. 058-6150-21165-005 “West Thornhill Flood Control Implementation - Phase 4A Construction”; and,
  - b. 053-5350-21172-005 “Royal Orchard Sanitary Sewer Upgrades (West Thornhill Phase 4A)” as outlined under the financial considerations section in this report; and,
5. That the remaining funds in project #21165 “West Thornhill Flood Control Implementation - Phase 4A Construction” in the amount of \$4,091,337.96 will not be required from the Stormwater Fee Reserve and the budget remaining in project #21172 “Royal Orchard Sanitary Sewer Upgrades – West Thornhill Phase 4A Construction” in the amount of \$7,186.76 will be returned to the waterworks reserve; and,
6. That a 5-year moratorium be placed on any major servicing and utility installation along restored areas including Royal Orchard Blvd (from Pomona Creek to Bayview), Kirk Drive, Knotty Pine Trail, Augusta Court, Doral Gate and Blue Spruce Lane; and further,
7. That Staff be authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give

effect to this resolution.

## 10. MOTIONS

## 11. NOTICES OF MOTION

### 11.1. ***TAMIL MEMORIAL MONUMENT (12.0)***

Whereas the City of Markham is home to a large community of Tamil diaspora with over 21,000 living in Markham; and

Whereas The City of Markham's Tamil community has made significant contributions to business, culture, and art in the City of Markham; and

Whereas the City of Markham acknowledges that during the Sri Lankan civil war thousands of Tamil civilians lost their lives; and

Whereas the City of Markham condemns the demolition of a memorial site built in Sri Lanka at Jaffna University in 2019 which was dedicated to the Sri Lankan civilians who lost their lives in the Mullivaikkal at the end of their 26 year civil war in Sri Lanka ending in May of 2009; and

Therefore the City of Markham will join with the Tamil diaspora in Markham to build a memorial in the shape of a waterfall or a garden for the Sri Lankan Tamils that lost their lives in Sri Lanka fighting a 26 year civil war; and

Therefore this proposed memorial be built in collaboration with the Tamil people and the City of Markham; and

Therefore the proposed memorial site be built as a waterfall or a Garden or another style memorial that meets Bylaw requirements and is located in a designated park in Ward 7 of Markham which has a large Tamil diaspora; and

Therefore the funding for this initiative be arranged by the community through fundraising efforts within the community and once attained the City of Markham will provide a suitable size land for this initiative with installation of this initiative at no cost to the community; and

Therefore this proposed designated site be in accordance with Markham City bylaws and with the Markham community.

## 12. NEW/OTHER BUSINESS

*As per Section 2 of the Council Procedural By-Law, "New/Other Business would generally apply to an item that is to be added to the **Agenda** due to an urgent statutory time requirement, or an emergency, or time sensitivity".*

## 13. ANNOUNCEMENTS

## 14. CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

That, in accordance with Section 239 (2) of the Municipal Act, General Committee resolve into a confidential session to discuss the following matters:

### 14.1. FINANCE & ADMINISTRATIVE ISSUES

#### 14.1.1. GENERAL COMMITTEE CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES - MARCH 1, 2021 (16.0) [ Section 239 (2) (f)]

### 14.2. LAND, BUILDING & PARKS CONSTRUCTION ISSUES

#### 14.2.1. A PROPOSED OR PENDING ACQUISITION OR DISPOSITION OF LAND BY THE CITY OR LOCAL BOARD; REPORTING OUT OF REAL PROPERTY ACQUISITION (8.7) [SECTION 239 (2) (c)]

#### 14.2.2. *THE SECURITY OF THE PROPERTY OF THE MUNICIPALITY OR LOCAL BOARD; PROPOSED LEASE EXTENSION (8.2) [SECTION 239 (2) (a)]*

## 15. ADJOURNMENT

### **Information Page**

**General Committee Members:** All Members of Council

#### **General Committee**

Chair: Regional Councillor Jack Heath

Vice Chair: Councillor Khalid Usman

#### **Finance & Administrative Issues**

Chair: Regional Councillor Jack Heath

Vice Chair: Councillor Khalid Usman

#### **Community Services Issues**

Chair: Councillor Karen Rea

Vice Chair: Councillor Isa Lee

#### **Environment & Sustainability Issues**

Chair: Regional Councillor Joe Li

Vice Chair: Councillor Reid McAlpine

#### **Land, Building & Parks Construction Issues**

Chair: Councillor Keith Irish

Vice Chair: Councillor Andrew Keyes

General Committee meetings are audio and video streamed live at the City of Markham's website.

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**Consent Items:** All matters listed under the consent agenda are considered to be routine and are recommended for approval by the department. They may be enacted on one motion, or any item may be discussed if a member so requests.

**Note:** The times listed on this agenda are approximate and may vary; Council may, at its discretion, alter the order of the agenda items.

**Note: As per the Council Procedural By-Law, Section 7.1 (h)  
General Committee will take a 10 minute recess after  
two hours have passed since the last break.**



## Electronic General Committee Meeting Minutes

**Meeting Number: 5**

**March 22, 2021, 9:00 AM - 1:00 PM**

**Live streamed**

Roll Call	Mayor Frank Scarpitti Deputy Mayor Don Hamilton Regional Councillor Jack Heath Regional Councillor Joe Li Regional Councillor Jim Jones Councillor Keith Irish	Councillor Alan Ho Councillor Karen Rea Councillor Andrew Keyes Councillor Amanda Collucci Councillor Isa Lee Councillor Reid McAlpine
Regrets	Councillor Khalid Usman	
Staff	Andy Taylor, Chief Administrative Officer Trinela Cane, Commissioner, Corporate Services Arvin Prasad, Commissioner, Development Services Claudia Storto, City Solicitor and Director of Human Resources Bryan Frois, Chief of Staff Kimberley Kitteringham, City Clerk Martha Pettit, Deputy City Clerk Mary Creighton, Director, Recreation Services Hersh Tencer, Manager, Real Property Brian Lee, Director, Engineering Biju Karumanchery, Director, Planning & Urban Design Graham Seaman, Director, Sustainability & Asset Management	Alex Moore, Manager of Purchasing & Accounts Payable Morgan Jones, Director, Operations Meg West, Manager of Business Planning and Projects Hristina Giantsopoulos, Election/Council & Committee Coordinator Laura Gold, Council/Committee Coordinator John Wong, Technology Support Specialist II Eddy Wu, Acting Director, Environmental Services Joel Lustig, Treasurer Lisa Chen, Sr. Manager, Financial Planning & Reporting Jason Ramsaran, Facility Assets Coordinator Bindi Patel, Supervisor, Community Program

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**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Under the authority of the *COVID-19 Economic Recovery Act, 2020* (Bill 197) and the City of Markham's *Council Procedural By-law 2017-5*, and in consideration of the advice of public health authorities, this meeting was conducted electronically with members of General Committee, staff, and members of the public participating remotely.

General Committee convened at 9:04 AM with Regional Councillor Jack Heath presiding as Chair for all items on the agenda.

**2. DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY INTEREST**

None were disclosed.

**3. APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES****3.1 MINUTES OF THE MARCH 1, 2021 GENERAL COMMITTEE (16.0)**

Moved by Mayor Frank Scarpitti

Seconded by Regional Councillor Jim Jones

1. That the minutes of the March 1, 2021 General Committee meeting be confirmed.

**Carried**

**4. PRESENTATION****4.1 PRESENTATION - METROLINX PRESENTATION ON THE YONGE NORTH SUBWAY EXTENSION (13.0)**

Phil Verster, CEO, Metrolinx, addressed the Committee to provide an overview of the project and introduced Stephen Collins, Program Sponsor, and Rajesh Khetarpal VP, Community Engagement 905, who delivered a presentation entitled, Metrolinx Presentation on the Yonge North Subway Extension which outlined the current proposed routing alignment.

After the presentation, the following deputations were heard by the Committee:

Amir Farmanesh, Thornhill resident, addressed the Committee to express his concerns and opposition to the proposed routing alignment;

Bill McNaught, on behalf of the residents at 8111 Yonge Street, Thornhill, addressed the Committee to express overall support of the subway extension and their opposition of the proposed routing alignment;

Dev Chopra, Markham resident, addressed the Committee to state his concerns with the proposed routing option and his opposition of the subway extension as currently drafted;

Ian Reid, Markham resident, addressed the Committee to express his concerns and opposition to the current alignment of the subway extension;

John Sherin, of CHEC Energy, addressed the Committee to express his concerns with the current alignment option and his opposition to it;

Peter Palframan, Thornhill resident, addressed the Committee to express his concerns and opposition to the current alignment option;

David Yun, Thornhill resident, addressed the Committee on behalf of his parents to express his and their concerns in opposition to the current alignment option of the subway extension; and,

The Royal Orchard Rate Payers Association submitted a written deputation.

Councillor Keith Irish addressed the Committee and thanked Metrolinx for attending the meeting and for their presentation. He expressed the following concerns on behalf of his residents:

- The cost effectiveness of the current route diversion and the drivers that initiated raising the subway and stations to grade;
- The plan to initiate two stations within 400 meters of one another; and,
- The depth variance of the subway line and the overall significant impact to residents in the affected areas.

Mayor Scarpitti addressed the committee and thanked all of the deputants for their support of the subway and appreciates their concerns with the current routing contained in Option 3 and its potential impact. The Mayor noted that he will continue to advocate for; the subway extension, stations at Royal Orchard and Clarke, the sharing of information and extensive consultation as the project moves forward, and consideration to diversion options that incorporate minimal disruption.

There was discussion on the following in relation to the Yonge North Subway Extension;

- Consideration for alternative alignment options, other than what is being proposed;
- Suggestion to provide an alternative route that proceeds north on Yonge street towards Langstaff;

- The opposition for alignment Option 3 because it diverts away from Yonge Street;
- Concerns with safety, and the routing option that includes large turns;
- The inconsistent depth along the subway line;
- That the preference is to route under Yonge street as much as possible;
- Consideration to avoid running the subway under residential areas;
- Whether there will be ample parking to encourage public transit use and where the responsibility of one would fall;
- The importance of this investment opportunity in the subway expansion,
- The creation of affordable housing in areas that surround the subway stations;
- The preference to seeing the subway go underground rather than above ground and concerns over loss of land use as a result;
- The perceived accommodation of the golf course and cemetery over the residents;
- Questions regarding the creation of two station within close proximity of one another -400m;
- Whether there was consideration to run the subway under the golf course;
- The difference between above and underground stations/railways and the impact to surrounding land values, and the maintenance of each;
- Whether a new environmental assessment is required if alignment Option 1 is selected over alignment Option 3;
- The assessment and determination of minimal disruption to the homes above the subway;
- The support and protection of current residents in consideration with this development when evaluating the future benefits;
- The change in tunnel depth relative to the timing to reach project milestones;
- Consideration to incorporate tax incremental financing and a fee to new condominium units to assist the financing of the project;
- Undertake a current land value capture for future consideration;



- That there be consideration made to undertake three new studies to review re-development options in conjunction with the subway extension;
  - Steeles Avenue to the tracks;
  - Clarke Station to Elgin Street;
  - Royal Orchard to Holy Cross Cemetery;
- Consideration for stations at Royal Orchard and at Clark Street;
- Consideration for a station at Bridge Street and that it be created and funded through Development Charges;
- Consideration for the construction of a ghost station for future use in case required;
- Concerns regarding vibrations and right of ownership to the air above the land owned by homeowners and potential objection to the current project;
- The type of compensation available to residents may be entitled to as a result of the subway construction;
- The potential overcrowding downstream the subway line towards Toronto with the increased capacity; and,
- That in consideration of the importance of public consultation, an additional public meeting be scheduled.

Stephen Collins and Rajesh Khetarpal, thanked the Committee for the opportunity to address the Members of Council and responded to the questions and concerns raised. They indicated that the work moving forward is on the current alignment option and will continue to work with the community to mitigate concerns.

The Committee requested that an additional Development Services Committee meeting be scheduled in three weeks for residents, Members of Council and Metrolinx to further discuss the current update.

Moved by Councillor Keith Irish

Seconded by Mayor Frank Scarpitti

1. That Metrolinx's presentation on the Yonge North Subway Extension be received;

2. **That the deputations from Amir Farmanesh, Bill McNaught on behalf of the 200 residents at 8111 Yonge Street, Dev Chopra, Ian Reid, John Sherin, Peter Palframan, and David Yun be received;**
3. **That the written deputation from the Royal Orchard Rate Payers Association be received;**
4. **That an evening Special Development Services Meeting be scheduled within three week's time for further public consultation on the Yonge North Subway Extension; and,**
5. **That staff and Metrolinx provide information and deliver presentations on the design of the Yonge North Subway Extension; and further,**
6. **That staff be authorized and directed to do all things necessary to to give effect to this resolution.**

**Carried**

## **5. DEPUTATIONS**

Deputations were made for the following item:

- 4.1 - Presentation - Metrolinx Presentation on the Yonge North Subway Extension

Please refer to the individual item for the deputation details.

## **6. COMMUNICATIONS**

### **6.1 YORK REGION COMMUNICATIONS (13.4)**

The Committee requested that staff provide a response to the Region on behalf of the City on both items.

Moved by Mayor Frank Scarpitti

Seconded by Deputy Mayor Don Hamilton

1. That the following communications dated March 3, 2021, from York Region be received for information purposes:
  - a. Parkland Dedication Bylaw Request
  - b. Land Request to Support Acceleration of Affordable Housing

**Carried**

**7. PETITIONS**

There were no petitions.

**8. CONSENT REPORTS - FINANCE & ADMINISTRATIVE ISSUES****8.1 MINUTES AND NOTES OF THE NOVEMBER 16, 2020, DECEMBER 14, 2020 AND JANUARY 18, 2021 ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ACCESSIBILITY (16.0)**

Moved by Regional Councillor Jim Jones

Seconded by Councillor Isa Lee

1. That the minutes and notes of the November 16, 2020, December 14, 2020 and January 18, 2021 Advisory Committee on Accessibility meetings be received for information purposes.

**Carried**

**8.2 MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER 8, 2020, SENIORS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (16.0)**

Moved by Regional Councillor Jim Jones

Seconded by Councillor Isa Lee

1. That the minutes of the October 8, 2020 Seniors Advisory Committee meeting be received for information purposes.

**Carried**

**8.3 MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 16, 2021 MARKHAM ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (16.0)**

Moved by Regional Councillor Jim Jones

Seconded by Councillor Isa Lee

1. That the minutes of the January 16, 2021 Markham Environmental Advisory Committee meeting be received for information purposes.

**Carried**

**8.4 MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 1, 2021 RACE RELATIONS COMMITTEE (16.0)**

Moved by Regional Councillor Jim Jones

Seconded by Councillor Isa Lee

1. That the minutes of the February 1, 2021 Race Relations Committee meetings be received for information purposes.

**Carried**

**8.5 2020 SUMMARY OF REMUNERATION AND EXPENSES FOR COUNCILLORS AND APPOINTEES TO BOARD (7.0)**

The Committee consented to place this item, including the report update, on the March 31, 2021 Council Meeting Agenda for consideration.

Moved by Councillor Alan Ho

Seconded by Councillor Karen Rea

1. That the report titled “2020 Summary of Remuneration and Expenses for Councillors and Appointees to Boards” be received; and further,
2. That Staff be authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to this resolution.

**Carried**

**8.6 078-R-15 JANITORIAL CLEANING SERVICES FOR VARIOUS CITY LOCATIONS CONTRACT EXTENSION (7.0)**

Moved by Regional Councillor Jim Jones

Seconded by Councillor Isa Lee

1. That the report entitled “078-R-15 Janitorial Cleaning Services for Various City Locations Contract Extension” be received; and,
2. That the contract for Janitorial Cleaning Services for various City locations be extended for one (1) year with National Cleaning Contractors from April 2021

to March 2022 in the 2019 (Pre-COVID) amount of \$441,587.24 (2021 - \$343,022.06 and 2022 - \$98,565.17) (inclusive of HST); and,

3. That the contract for additional janitorial cleaning services due to COVID-19 pandemic in the amount of \$171,088.60 inclusive of HST be awarded to National Cleaning Contractors; and,
4. That the 2021 award amount of \$343,022.06 inclusive of HST be funded from various City Department's Operating Budgets; and,
5. That the 2022 award amount of \$98,565.17 inclusive of HST be subject to Council approval of the 2022 operating budgets and that the award amount be amended to reflect changes to the various departments' budget accounts as approved by Council during the 2022 budget process; and,
6. That the Director, Sustainability and Asset Management and Senior Manager, Procurement and Accounts Payable be authorized to approve additional enhanced cleaning in the event other facilities open during 2021; and,
7. That the additional cleaning requirements arising as a direct result of COVID-19 in the amount of \$171,088.45 (\$99,897.13 + \$71,191.32) inclusive of HST be charged directly to the COVID-19 cost centre and that it be funded from the COVID-19 Reserve by an amount determined as part of the 2021 year-end process; and,
8. That the tendering process be waived in accordance with the City's Purchasing By-law # 2017-8, Part II, Section 11.1(c), Non Competitive Procurement which states, "when the extension of an existing Contract would prove more cost-effective or beneficial"; and further,
9. That Staff be authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to this resolution.

**Carried****9. CONSENT REPORTS - COMMUNITY SERVICES ISSUES****9.1 ANNUAL WATER QUALITY REPORT (JANUARY-DECEMBER 2020)  
(5.0)**

The Committee made the following inquiries in relation to this report:

- Whether there was a copy of the report provided to Council;
- Clarification on what raw surface water is;
- Clarification on whether the City receives any water from the Region of Peel; and,
- The amount of Total Coliform in the water -during the summer months.

Staff responded to the inquiries posed by the Committee and confirmed that the report was sent to council, and that the majority of the City's water comes from the City of Toronto. It was further indicated that the amount of Total Coliform in the water is impacted by the hot summer months especially with high humidity and that regular testing is undertaken to monitor and ensure safe drinking water.

Moved by Councillor Andrew Keyes

Seconded by Mayor Frank Scarpitti

1. That the report titled “Annual Water Quality Report (January-December 2020)” as required by Schedule 22 of Ontario Regulation 170/03, under the *Safe Drinking Water Act, 2002*, enclosed herein be received; and
2. That the 2020 Annual Water Quality Report (Attachment “A”), containing information for the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP) on water supply and quality as required by Section 11 of Ontario Regulation 170/03, under the *Safe Drinking Water Act, 2002*, be received; and,
3. That Council acknowledge that staff posted the 2020 Annual Water Quality Report on the City’s website and that it has been made available electronically and in hard copy version by February 28, 2021 as per regulations; and further,
4. And That Staff be authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to this resolution.

**Carried****10. CONSENT REPORTS - LAND, BUILDING & PARKS CONSTRUCTION ISSUES****10.1 AMENDMENT TO BY-LAW 2013-113 TO DELEGATE AUTHORITY TO CONVEY EASEMENTS TO ALECTRA (8.1)**

There was an inquiry on whether Council will receive a report in relation to easements conveyed to Alectra pursuant to the delegated authority By-Law 2013-113.

Staff confirmed that easements to Alectra would appear on the Real Property Transaction memo, which is provided to Council at various times throughout the year, typically on a quarterly basis.

Moved by Councillor Isa Lee

Seconded by Mayor Frank Scarpitti

1. That the report entitled “Amendment to By-Law 2013-113 to Delegate Authority to Convey Easements to Alectra” be received; and,
2. That By-Law 2013-113 – “A By-Law to Delegate Authority to Conduct Certain Real Property Transactions” be amended to authorize the Senior Manager of Real Property to:
  - a. execute any documents and/or agreements required to convey easements over City-owned lands to Alectra Utilities Corporation (“Alectra”) and/or its affiliates where such easements are required by Alectra to provide services to City-owned property, provided the form of the easement is satisfactory to the Senior Manager of Real Property and the City Solicitor or his/her designate; and
  - b. to determine the purchase price to be paid by Alectra for easements over City-owned lands as described in resolution #2(a), provided that the purchase price is at least 90% of Fair Market Value; and

- c. to determine the purchase price paid by Alectra, including a nominal purchase price where the requirement for easements as described in #2(a) are not prompted by third party development or construction
- 3. That Council adopt the By-law attached as Attachment No.1 of this Report to amend By-Law 2013-113 “A By-Law to Delegate Authority to Conduct Certain Real Property Transactions” at the next Council meeting; and,
- 4. That Staff be authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to this resolution.

**Carried**

## **11. PRESENTATIONS - COMMUNITY SERVICES ISSUES**

### **11.1 2021-2022 THORNLEA POOL RESTORATION (3.0)**

Mary Creighton, Director of Recreation introduced Graham Seaman, Director of Sustainability and Asset Management and Jason Tsien, Senior Manager, Business Development, Recreation Services who delivered a presentation entitled, 2021-2022 Thornlea Pool Restoration that provided an overview of the capital project requirements which include the required repairs, proposed design and construction.

There was discussion on the following in relation to the presentation:

- The current size of the pool;
- Clarification on the acquisition of the pool and maintenance responsibility; and,
- Consideration of providing additional aquatic facilities as the community demand increases.

Staff provided information in relation to their inquiries.

Moved by Councillor Keith Irish

Seconded by Regional Councillor Joe Li

- 1. That the presentation entitled “2021-2022 Thornlea Pool Restoration” be received; and,



2. That a capital project for Phase 1 and 2 be established in the amount of \$2,307,412. The capital project will include the design and construction as outlined in this presentation; and,
3. That the project be funded from the Lifecycle Reserve; and,
4. That authority be given to the Sr. Manager of Procurement & Accounts Payable to work with the applicable Director to undertake an informal pre-qualification and award process with a minimum of three (3) vendors and consultants to expedite the procurement process when necessary, by allowing a preferred vendor list to be developed, used and released to the market; and,
5. That authority be given to the CAO to award the tenders outlined in recommendation 4; and,
6. That a new contract Project Manager position in the Sustainability and Asset Management Department be funded from this project; and further,
7. That Staff be authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to this resolution.

**Carried**

## **12. REGULAR REPORTS - FINANCE & ADMINISTRATIVE ISSUES**

### **12.1 STAFF AWARDED CONTRACTS FOR THE MONTH OF FEBRUARY 2021 (7.0)**

There was discussion on the following contract:

- 265-Q-20 Traffic Data Collection and Data Submission

Moved by Councillor Isa Lee

Seconded by Regional Councillor Joe Li

1. That the report entitled “Staff Awarded Contracts for the Month of February 2021” be received; and further,
2. That Staff be authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to this resolution.

**Carried**

### **12.2 TRANSFER PAYMENT AGREEMENT FOR THE PROVINCIAL AUDIT AND ACCOUNTABILITY FUND (AAF) (7.0)**

The Committee requested a brief overview of this initiative.

Trinela Cane, Commissioner, Corporate Services, addressed the Committee. She indicated that as part of the Province's second intake of the provincial Audit and Accountability Fund, Council had approved the submission of three projects for funding consideration:

- Standardized Terms of Reference for studies supporting development application submissions;
- Comprehensive review and update of the Development Fee By-law; and,
- Plan for Expansion of the Administrative Monetary Penalties System.

She advised that the City received approval for only one of these projects, the Plan for the Expansion of the Administrative Penalties System, and funding of up to \$110,000 to complete the project. A third party consultant must undertake the work and it must be completed before October 15, 2021. This project will provide a plan to expand the application of the current AMPS program beyond parking offences to include other regulatory by-laws across multiple City departments. It is a more cost effective method of dealing with minor offences compared to the current court process. The final report, including the recommended scope for AMPS expansion, proposed business processes and a cost benefit analysis, will be provided to General Committee in September, prior to submission to the Province in October.

Moved by Mayor Frank Scarpitti

Seconded by Regional Councillor Jim Jones

1. That the report entitled “Transfer Payment Agreement for Provincial Audit and Accountability Fund” be received; and,
2. That the Mayor and Clerk be authorized to execute the Ontario Transfer Payment Agreement with Her Majesty the Queen in right of Ontario as represented by the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing (the “Province”) to fund the Plan for Expansion of the Administrative Monetary Penalties System (AMPS) , provided the agreement is in a form satisfactory to the Commissioner of Corporate Services and the City Solicitor; and,
3. That a new capital project named, “Plan for Expansion of the Administrative Monetary Penalties System” be created in the amount of \$110,000.00 to be funded from the Provincial Audit and Accountability Fund; and,

4. That the tendering process be waived in accordance with Purchasing By-Law 2017-8 (Part II, Section 11.1 Non Competitive Procurement, item 1 item 1 (h)); and,
5. That the contract for consulting services for the expansion of the administrative penalties system be awarded to WSCS Consulting Inc. in the amount of \$89,511.25 (inclusive of HST); and,
6. That the remaining balance in the amount of \$20,488.75 be retained within the new capital project for any additional costs related to the project, and that authorization to approve expending of this amount up to the specified limit be in accordance with the Expenditure Control Policy; and further,
7. That Staff be authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to this resolution.

**Carried**

### **13. REGULAR REPORTS - COMMUNITY SERVICES ISSUES**

#### **13.1 ANIMAL CARE COMMITTEE MINUTES - NOVEMBER 18, 2020, DECEMBER 16, 2020 AND JANUARY 20, 2021 (16.34)**

The Committee endorsed the recommendation from the December 16, 2020 Animal Care Committee Meeting.

Moved by Councillor Karen Rea

Seconded by Councillor Andrew Keyes

1. That the minutes of the Animal Care Committee meetings held November 18, 2020, December 16, 2020 and January 20, 2021 be received for information purposes; and,
2. **That the Animal Care Committee express its sincere appreciation to Council for approving the Legislative Services Animal Care Model and that it request that staff report back in one year on any impacts on the service level.**

**Carried**

### **14. MOTIONS**

There were no motions.

**15. NOTICES OF MOTION**

There were no notices of motion.

**16. NEW/OTHER BUSINESS****16.1 JOHN STREET MUP**

The Committee made an inquiry in relation to the Cycling and Pedestrian Advisory Committee Memo that was sent to Members of Council last week which outlined that the John Street MUP was tendered however, not yet awarded.

Staff advised that due to the uncertainty and potential financial impacts surrounding the pandemic that capital projects were prioritized in 2020 and some were held off until 2021. With this particular project, staff undertook to confirm with the Province that the funding deadline for this initiative was extended in consideration of the Covid-19 restrictions. Staff are currently reviewing the 2021 projects and will report back to Committee.

The Committee requested that the report back include a list of projects and their progress status.

**17. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

There were no announcements.

**18. CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS**

The Committee did not resolve into confidential session.

The Committee consented to place item 18.2.1. A Proposed or Pending Acquisition or Disposition of Land by the City or Local Board; Surplus Lands Report (8.7) [Section 239 (2) (c)] on the March 31, 2021 Confidential Council Meeting agenda for consideration and item 18.1.1. General Committee Confidential Minutes of March 1, 2021 (16.0) [Section 239 (2) (f)], be placed on a future confidential meeting agenda for consideration.

Moved by Deputy Mayor Don Hamilton  
Seconded by Regional Councillor Joe Li

That item, 18.2.1. A Proposed or Pending Acquisition or Disposition of Land By The City or Local Board; Surplus Lands Report (8.7) [SECTION 239 (2) (c)] be placed on the March 31, 2021 Confidential Council Meeting agenda for consideration.

**Carried**

**19. ADJOURNMENT**

General Committee adjourned at 2:36 PM and did not resolve into confidential session.

Moved by Deputy Mayor Don Hamilton

Seconded by Regional Councillor Joe Li

That the General Committee meeting adjourn at 2:36 PM.

**Carried**

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**From:** Switzer, Barbara <Barbara.Switzer@york.ca> **On Behalf Of** Regional Clerk  
**Sent:** March 24, 2021 1:45 PM  
**To:** Aurora Clerks General Inbox <Clerks@aurora.ca>; Aguila-Wong, Christine <caguila-wong@markham.ca>; clerks@newmarket.ca; EG Clerks General Inbox <clerks@eastgwillimbury.ca>; King Clerks General Inbox <clerks@king.ca>; Rachel Dillabough <rdillabough@georgina.ca>; Richmond Hill Clerks General Inbox <clerks@richmondhill.ca>; Vaughan Clerks General Inbox <clerks@vaughan.ca>; WS Clerks General Inbox <clerks@townofws.ca>  
**Subject:** Regional Council Decision - Regional Official Plan Update - Policy Directions Report

**CAUTION: This email originated from a source outside the City of Markham. DO NOT CLICK on any links or attachments, or reply unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.**

On March 18, 2021 Regional Council made the following decision:

1. Council receive the preliminary policy directions summarized in this report and further described in Attachment 1 to support development of draft policies regarding: Aligning Growth and Infrastructure, Agriculture and Rural Areas, Diversity and Inclusion and Mapping Updates that will be presented to Council as part of the Regional Official Plan Update.
2. Council receive the preliminary agricultural mapping illustrated in Attachment 2 for continued consultation to support development of draft mapping that will be presented to Council as part of the Regional Official Plan Update.
3. The Regional Clerk forward this report and attachments to the Clerks of the local municipalities, and the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

The original staff report is attached for your information.

Please contact Sandra Malcic, Director, Long Range Planning at 1-877-464-9675 ext. 75724 if you have any questions with respect to this matter.

Regards,

**Christopher Raynor** | Regional Clerk, Regional Clerk's Office, Corporate Services

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The Regional Municipality of York | 17250 Yonge Street | Newmarket, ON L3Y 6Z1  
**O:** 1-877-464-9675 ext. 71300 | [christopher.raynor@york.ca](mailto:christopher.raynor@york.ca) | [york.ca](http://york.ca)

Our Mission: **Working together to serve our thriving communities – today and tomorrow**

# **The Regional Municipality of York**

Regional Council  
Planning and Economic Development  
March 18, 2021

Report of the Commissioner of Corporate Services and Chief Planner

## **Regional Official Plan Update Policy Directions Report**

### **1. Recommendations**

1. Council endorse the preliminary policy directions summarized in this report and further described in Attachment 1 to support development of draft policies regarding: Aligning Growth and Infrastructure, Agriculture and Rural Areas, Diversity and Inclusion and Mapping Updates that will be presented to Council as part of the Regional Official Plan Update.
2. Council endorse the preliminary agricultural mapping illustrated in Attachment 2 for continued consultation to support development of draft mapping that will be presented to Council as part of the Regional Official Plan Update.
3. The Regional Clerk forward this report and attachments to the Clerks of the local municipalities, and the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

### **2. Summary**

This report summarizes preliminary policy directions for several topic areas as part of the Regional Official Plan (ROP) update being undertaken through the Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR). This is the second general Policy Directions Report presented to Council to inform development of an updated ROP, to be presented to Council in 2021. Attachment 1 and 2 provide further details summarizing Provincial planning updates and proposed policy directions on policy areas not previously reported to Council.

Key Points:

- This report focuses on policy directions in the following four thematic areas:
  1. Aligning Growth and Infrastructure
  2. Agriculture and Rural Areas

### 3. Diversity and Inclusion

#### 4. Mapping Updates

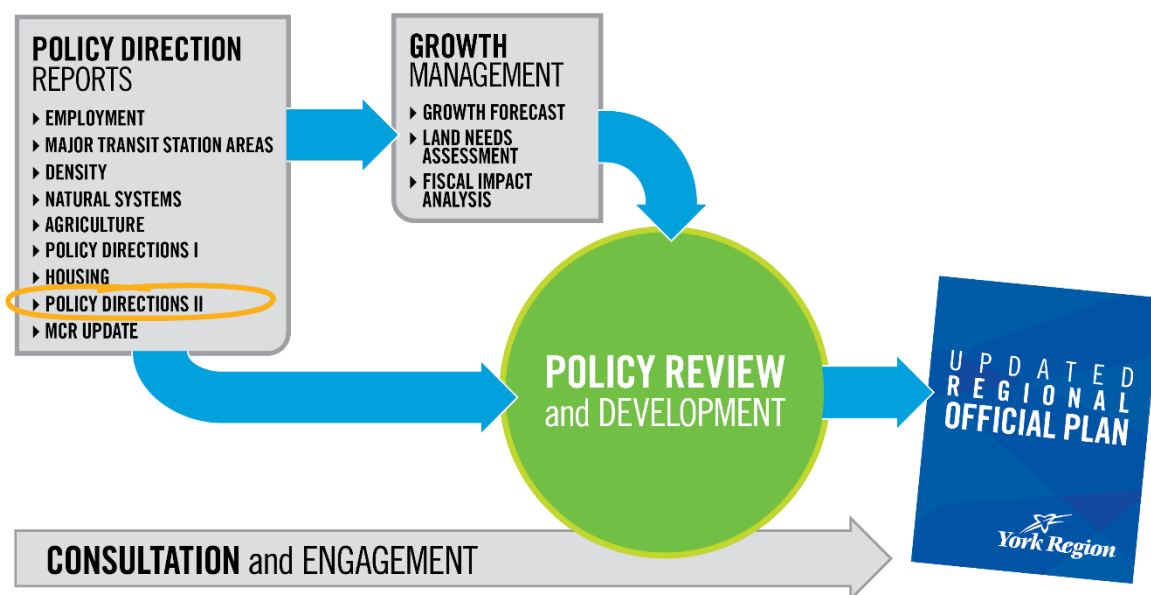
- These are preliminary policy directions not previously presented to Council in past MCR background reports
- The ROP is being assessed to identify required policy and mapping updates to implement new Provincial policies, including direction to plan for a York Region population of 2.02 million and 990,000 jobs by 2051
- The content outlined in the aligning growth and infrastructure section of this report reflects the growth management principles outlined in the Proposed 2051 Forecast and Land Needs Assessment report also on the March 18, 2021 Special Council agenda
- Following ongoing stakeholder consultation and public engagement on the preliminary directions presented in this report, a draft ROP containing updated policies will be presented to Council

## 3. Background

### **Policy directions in this report support the development of a draft Regional Official Plan**

Since adoption of the 2010 ROP, there have been significant updates to Provincial plans and policies. York Region is required to update the ROP through an MCR process to conform with these updates and new Provincial direction by 2022. The Province introduced a new planning horizon year of 2051, with corresponding new population and employment forecasts. Between 2020 and 2051, York Region's population is forecasted to increase from 1.21 million to 2.02 million people, and between 2019 and 2051, employment in York Region is expected to increase from 655,000 to 990,000 jobs. The allocation of these forecast numbers is outlined in the Proposed 2051 Forecast and Land Needs Assessment report, which informs the policy directions outlined in the aligning growth and infrastructure section of Attachment 1. This report provides proposed policy directions and is one of the final reports that support development of a draft updated ROP (Figure 1). Draft policies will be developed in the coming months and an updated draft ROP is anticipated to be presented to Council in Q4 2021.



**Figure 1****Municipal Comprehensive Review Components**

**This report builds on directions presented through past direction reports to Council**

The MCR process involves a series of background and direction reports to support planning for growth and updating the ROP. Policy directions for a number of topic areas have previously been presented to Council, including:

- [Planning for Employment Background Report](#) (May 2019)
- [Planning for Agriculture Background Report](#) (June 2019)
- [Planning for Density in New Communities](#) (June 2020)
- [Natural Systems Planning Background Report](#) (June 2020)
- [Planning for Major Transit Station Areas](#) (September 2020)
- [Proposed Employment Area Mapping and Employment Conversions](#) (October 2020)
- [Regional Official Plan Update Policy Directions Report](#) (December 2020)
- [Regional Official Plan Update Housing Challenges and Opportunities](#) (January 2021)

Policy directions in this report and Attachment 1 are categorized under four thematic areas:

1. Aligning Growth and Infrastructure
2. Agriculture and Rural Areas
3. Diversity and Inclusion
4. Mapping Updates

Proposed policy directions summarized in this report build on, but do not reiterate, past directions previously presented to Council. Attachment 1 provides details of updates to Provincial plans and considerations for updated ROP policies to implement revised Provincial direction. In addition, Attachment 1 provides greater detail on preliminary policy directions than the body of this report and a number of policy topic areas not highlighted in this report, including excess soil, mineral aggregate resources and species at risk. Attachment 2 provides preliminary agricultural draft mapping to support proposed policy directions found in Attachment 1.

## 4. Analysis

### ALIGNING GROWTH AND INFRASTRUCTURE

#### **Aligning growth, infrastructure and financial planning supports sustainable development**

The coordination and alignment of infrastructure and financial planning with land use planning is important for sustainable growth management in York Region. An agile approach to growth management is proposed to respond to the changing nature and pace of development in a manner that optimizes growth in areas with existing infrastructure capacity before investing in new major infrastructure. The Proposed 2051 Forecast and Land Needs Assessment report provides a preliminary distribution of growth to 2051 as a result of provincially mandated growth and provides considerations for integrated growth management that includes a fiscally sustainable approach to infrastructure investment.

To support fiscally sustainable investments in infrastructure, it is proposed that phasing policies be strengthened in the ROP. Phasing policies will optimize the timing of development to efficiently use existing and new Regional infrastructure. This will help maintain fiscal sustainability and provide for stronger alignment between population and employment growth, efficient operation of infrastructure and delivery of soft services that are essential for supporting population growth in new areas.

Another consideration for aligning growth and infrastructure is the potential to identify remaining agricultural/rural Whitebelt lands that are not required for growth to 2051 as future urban areas. This supports public knowledge and transparency about long-term development of those lands beyond the 2051 planning horizon. Ongoing coordination between Planning, Water and Wastewater Master Plan, Transportation Master Plan updates and Regional

capital budgets will be essential to effectively deliver on the policy directions outlined in Attachment 1.

## **AGRICULTURE AND RURAL AREAS**

### **Policies are proposed which limit and provide guidance for non-agricultural uses on Agricultural designated lands**

In the Region's Agricultural land use designation, there is pressure to allow new or redevelopment of existing non-agricultural uses that are often industrial, institutional, public, recreational or commercial uses. The current Provincial policy framework permits limited redevelopment opportunities of existing non-agricultural uses and strongly discourages new non-agricultural uses in the Agricultural area. Aligned with Provincial direction, it is preferred that non-agricultural uses be directed to settlement and Rural areas. The proposed policy directions permit modest opportunities for new or redevelopment of existing non-agricultural uses in line with Provincial direction to inform decision-making at the local municipal level.

Preliminary criteria have been developed for evaluating both new and redevelopment of existing non-agricultural uses in the agricultural designation that limit these opportunities. In particular, the following approaches are proposed for non-agricultural uses:

- New non-agricultural uses within the Greenbelt Plan area will be required to conform to the applicable Provincial policies in the Greenbelt Plan and Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan
- For new non-agricultural uses outside of the Greenbelt Plan area, within Whitebelt lands not required to address growth to 2051, criteria will align with Provincial policy direction
- Existing non-agricultural uses within the Greenbelt Plan area will have limited redevelopment, with the goal of bringing uses into closer conformity to applicable Provincial plans

All criteria are in conformity with Provincial plans and policies and aligned with Regional priorities, further examined in Attachment 1.

### **Proposed agricultural mapping refinements would add approximately 2,200 hectares of lands to the Agricultural designation**

In 2017, the Province released draft agricultural mapping to implement the Agricultural System policies in the updated Provincial plans. Through the MCR, York Region has the opportunity to refine this Provincial mapping to better reflect the Regional and local municipal context in accordance with Provincial implementation procedures.

An agricultural consultant was retained to compare and assess differences between Provincial mapping and the Region's current agricultural mapping. The consultant

recommendations were presented to Council in [June 2019](#), identifying 19 study areas to be considered for inclusion in the Agricultural designation.

Consultation with local municipalities, stakeholders, members of the public and impacted landowners to discuss potential agricultural mapping changes has been ongoing. In October 2020, the Region undertook an online public engagement campaign and direct outreach to potentially impacted landowners on proposed changes.

In addition to the consultant recommendations, the following were considered in the analysis of agricultural refinement areas:

- Local municipal, landowner, stakeholder and public input
- Current and future Regional and local municipal planning contexts including potential re-designation of Whitebelt lands required for urban uses to meet the Provincial Land Needs Assessment Methodology
- Continuity of the agricultural system across municipal boundaries

Recommendations are summarized in Table 1 and shown on Attachment 2. The proposed mapping will also be available for viewing on [York.ca/HaveYourSay](http://York.ca/HaveYourSay).

**Table 1**  
**Refinement Study Areas Considered for Re-designation**

Study Area (see Attachment 2)	Preliminary Recommendation	Municipality
4, 17, 24 and 31	No new Agricultural designation in areas currently identified as Whitebelt	Georgina, Whitchurch-Stouffville, Vaughan
1, 11 and 16	Scoped portion of area identified for re-designation to Agriculture	Georgina, East Gwillimbury, Whitchurch-Stouffville
35	Local Municipal request to include Candidate lands	King
2, 3, 9, 10, 13, 14, 15, 21, 27, 39 and 41	Re-designation to Agriculture	East Gwillimbury, Georgina, King, Richmond Hill, Whitchurch-Stouffville

## **Local Agricultural and Rural Lands within Regionally identified Towns and Villages where servicing capacity does not exist will be further reviewed in consultation with local municipalities**

In some limited instances, there are lands designated as agriculture or rural in local municipal official plans that are identified as Town and Villages in the ROP. These communities include Sutton, Pepperlaw and Nobleton with unserviced areas identified in Attachment 2. Further consultation is required to determine an appropriate designation and/or means of identifying these lands in the ROP in the event they are not forecasted to accommodate growth to 2051 given their limited opportunity to be serviced and/or developed.

## **Specialty crop areas are essential for food-related agriculture**

Specialty crop areas play an important role in growing food-related agricultural crops and should be protected to support York Region's Agriculture and Agri-food sector. The proposed policy directions discourage the use of lands in the Holland Marsh specialty crop area for uses that do not require its muck soils for food production, including the growing of cannabis and other non-food related crops. With finite muck soils, a unique soil type found in the Holland Marsh, the protection of this area for food sources that utilize muck soils is important to support this agricultural sector.

## **DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION**

### **The Municipal Comprehensive Review recognizes diversity and inclusion as a core principle to updating the Regional Official Plan**

Council has continued to demonstrate a commitment for creating communities that are welcoming and inclusive, places where diverse communities can live with respect and dignity. Inclusive communities is a core principle of planning for complete communities. Planning for complete communities support people of all ages, stages and abilities to live, work, play and thrive in their communities, an integral part for the long-term success of York Region.

Provincial policy has maintained that municipalities must approach managing growth in a manner that recognizes the diversity of communities, while working to improve accessibility and reduce land use barriers for full participation in society by all residents. To build on this direction and continue to create strong, caring and safe communities, it is proposed that inclusion be highlighted as a core principle of planning for communities in York Region. This will be expanded upon in the updated ROP by identifying diversity and inclusion as a key component to interpreting and implementing ROP policies, engaging communities in planning related matters and in planning for communities.

Public consultation focused on policy directions presented to Council in the [December Policy Directions Report](#) and outlined in this report will continue into Spring 2021. As previously outlined in the October 2019 report [An Update on Public Consultations for the Municipal](#)

[Comprehensive Review](#), targeted consultations of under-represented communities through traditional engagement methods and focused engagement with Indigenous Communities is underway. New methods for engaging under-represented communities will continue to be explored to promote inclusive and representative engagement through the MCR process.

## **MAPPING UPDATES**

### **Updated mapping will support readers to understand the Regional Official Plan in a visually accessible manner**

Mapping is important for implementation of the policies of the Official Plan. It also supports visualization of the Regional structure and key themes of the ROP. Updates to Provincial plans require new mapping including delineation of built up areas and mapping of greenfield areas, settlement areas, major transit station areas (MTSAs) and employment areas. In addition to the Agricultural mapping, Provincial policy direction requires updates to natural heritage and water resource system mapping. Proposed directions for mapping include general updates, adding new mapping to meet Provincial conformity and simplify content. To simplify the presentation of mapping in the updated ROP, an assessment of mapping options and formats will be undertaken to avoid duplication and provide easier interpretation through accessible and easy to view formats. Additional analysis on mapping directions, including information on how mapping updates will support regional designations and refinements at the local municipal level, will be provided in subsequent reporting to Council.

## **5. Financial**

To support the amount of growth to 2051, an integrated growth management approach to land use planning and infrastructure delivery will be required to manage the capital plan in line with objectives of the Council approved Fiscal Strategy. To meet population and employment forecasts, timely delivery of growth-related servicing is required. Implications are explored in the separate forecast and land budget report. Developing policies which manage growth in a fiscally sustainable way, including aligning growth with investment in infrastructure, is of paramount importance to maintain the long-term fiscal health of York Region.

## **6. Local Impact**

Local municipalities are key partners in updating and implementing the ROP, particularly as local staff provide expertise and experiential knowledge from implementing ROP policies in their local municipal contexts. Regional and local municipal staff work closely throughout the MCR process through regularly scheduled local municipal working group sessions where there is an opportunity for ongoing input and feedback into the policy review and development process. Local staff have been engaged on the topic areas presented in this report and Regional staff will continue to work with local municipal staff throughout the MCR process. Local municipal staff input has informed the proposed agricultural refinements

outlined in Attachment 2. These and previous policy directions are informing the policy development process. Local municipal staff have planning knowledge of their local municipal context which will help inform draft policies to be presented to Council in Fall 2021.

## 7. Conclusion

To meet Provincial conformity requirements set through Provincial planning documents, ROP policies and mapping updates are required. This is the second omnibus report summarizing preliminary policy directions, further described through Attachment 1, which will be the basis for continued consultation as work continues on development of a draft ROP. The policy directions in this report support effective land use planning across the Region's local municipalities. Continued reporting to Council on policy directions, culminating in a draft ROP, will guide efficient growth and development across York Region.

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For more information on this report, please contact Sandra Malcic, Director, Long Range Planning at 1-877-464-9675 ext. 75724. Accessible formats or communication supports are available upon request.

Recommended by:



**Paul Freeman, MCIP, RPP**  
Chief Planner



**Dino Basso**  
Commissioner of Corporate Services

Approved for Submission:



**Bruce Macgregor**  
Chief Administrative Officer

March 5, 2021  
Attachments (2)  
12212751

**ATTACHMENT 1****Provincial Policy Updates and Potential Direction for York Region Official Plan Update**

The Provincial planning policy framework has been updated including the following: Provincial Policy Statement (2020), A Place to Grow, the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2020) (The Provincial Growth Plan), Greenbelt Plan (2017) and Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan (2017).

This Attachment, on a topic-specific basis, provides a summary of Provincial updates and considerations for updating the York Region Official Plan (ROP).

Types of Policies/Topic Area	Brief Description of Provincial Policy Change	Considerations/Potential Direction for York Region Official Plan
Aligning Growth and Infrastructure		
Aligning Growth and Infrastructure	<p>Updates to the Provincial Growth Plan reinforce and strengthen the need for an integrated approach to managing growth by requiring that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Infrastructure planning, land use planning, and infrastructure investment be coordinated</li> <li>• Direction be provided for an urban form that optimizes infrastructure</li> <li>• Infrastructure investment and other implementations tools be used to facilitate intensification and higher density development</li> <li>• Transit investments in high density areas be prioritized to optimize return on investment and the efficiency and viability of transit services</li> </ul>	<p>Policy considerations include strengthening messaging throughout the ROP to highlight the importance of integrated land use, infrastructure, and financial planning, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clearly articulating the need for a more agile and adaptive approach to growth management in response to the changing nature and pace of growth, market demand, and/or other factors</li> <li>• Enhancing the objective of optimizing growth in areas serviced with existing infrastructure capacity before making new investments</li> <li>• Strengthening phasing policies at the Regional scale such that the delivery and operation of infrastructure is phased in a fiscally sustainable manner</li> <li>• Strengthening connections between the timing and scale of growth in intensification areas and the existing and/or planned infrastructure and water wastewater capacity in infrastructure Master Plans</li> <li>• Identifying remaining Agricultural or Rural Whitebelt lands not required by the Provincial land needs assessment by 2051 as future urban</li> </ul>



Types of Policies/Topic Area	Brief Description of Provincial Policy Change	Considerations/Potential Direction for York Region Official Plan
Agriculture and Rural Area Policy Directions		
New Non-Agriculture uses in Agricultural designated areas	<p>Updates to the Provincial Policy Statement allow limited non-agricultural uses in the Agricultural Designation, subject to criteria</p> <p>Updates to the Provincial Growth Plan require:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Land use compatibility to be achieved where agricultural and non-agricultural uses interface</li> <li>• New non-agricultural uses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Lands will not be removed from the Agricultural area</li> <li>○ Achieve land use compatibility</li> <li>○ Subject to an Agricultural Impact Assessment to minimize and mitigate any adverse impacts</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>The Greenbelt Plan is more limited than the Growth Plan in terms of agricultural uses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Non-agricultural uses are permitted in the Agricultural areas, subject to criteria</li> <li>• Non-agricultural uses are subject to an Agricultural Impact Assessment</li> </ul>	<p>Policy considerations for new non-agriculture uses in agricultural designated areas include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compliance with applicable Provincial plans and policies</li> <li>• Limiting new non-agricultural uses in the Agricultural Designation outside the Greenbelt Plan Area include that they be subject, but not limited to, the following criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Demonstrate a need within the planning horizon for additional land to accommodate the proposed use</li> <li>○ Alternative locations be evaluated, with confirmation that no reasonable alternative locations are available</li> <li>○ Preference that non-agricultural uses be located in the following areas: Urban Areas, Rural Areas, Towns and Villages and Hamlets</li> <li>○ Lands remain in the Agricultural designation</li> <li>○ Submission of an Agricultural Impact Assessment</li> <li>○ Comply with the minimum distance separation formulae</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Non-agricultural uses within the Greenbelt Plan and Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan areas continue to be limited in accordance with the applicable Provincial plan policy</li> <li>• Requiring an Agricultural Impact Assessment</li> </ul>

Types of Policies/Topic Area	Brief Description of Provincial Policy Change	Considerations/Potential Direction for York Region Official Plan
Existing Non-Agriculture uses on Agriculture lands in the Greenbelt Plan area	Updates to the Greenbelt Plan allow for modest redevelopment of existing non-agricultural uses as long as they are in conformity with the Plan	<p>Policy consideration for redevelopment of existing non-agricultural uses in the Agricultural Designation within the Greenbelt Plan area include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Redevelopment of non-agricultural uses be subject to, but not limited to the following criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Proposed redevelopment is more in conformity with the applicable Provincial plan</li> <li>○ Lands remain in the Agricultural designation</li> <li>○ No new parcels created or urban boundary expansions would be permitted</li> <li>○ Demonstration that the site has been legally in continual use since before the Provincial plan was approved</li> <li>○ Redevelopment does not hinder surrounding agricultural operations, complies with the minimum distance separation formulae and is supported by an Agricultural Impact Assessment addressing the following elements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Proposed use would be of the appropriate size and scale to the area including to the existing and/or planned infrastructure</li> <li>▪ Demonstration that there is a need for the proposed use in terms of demand for the product or service</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ The proposed use shall not adversely affect the ecological integrity of the Regional Greenlands System</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

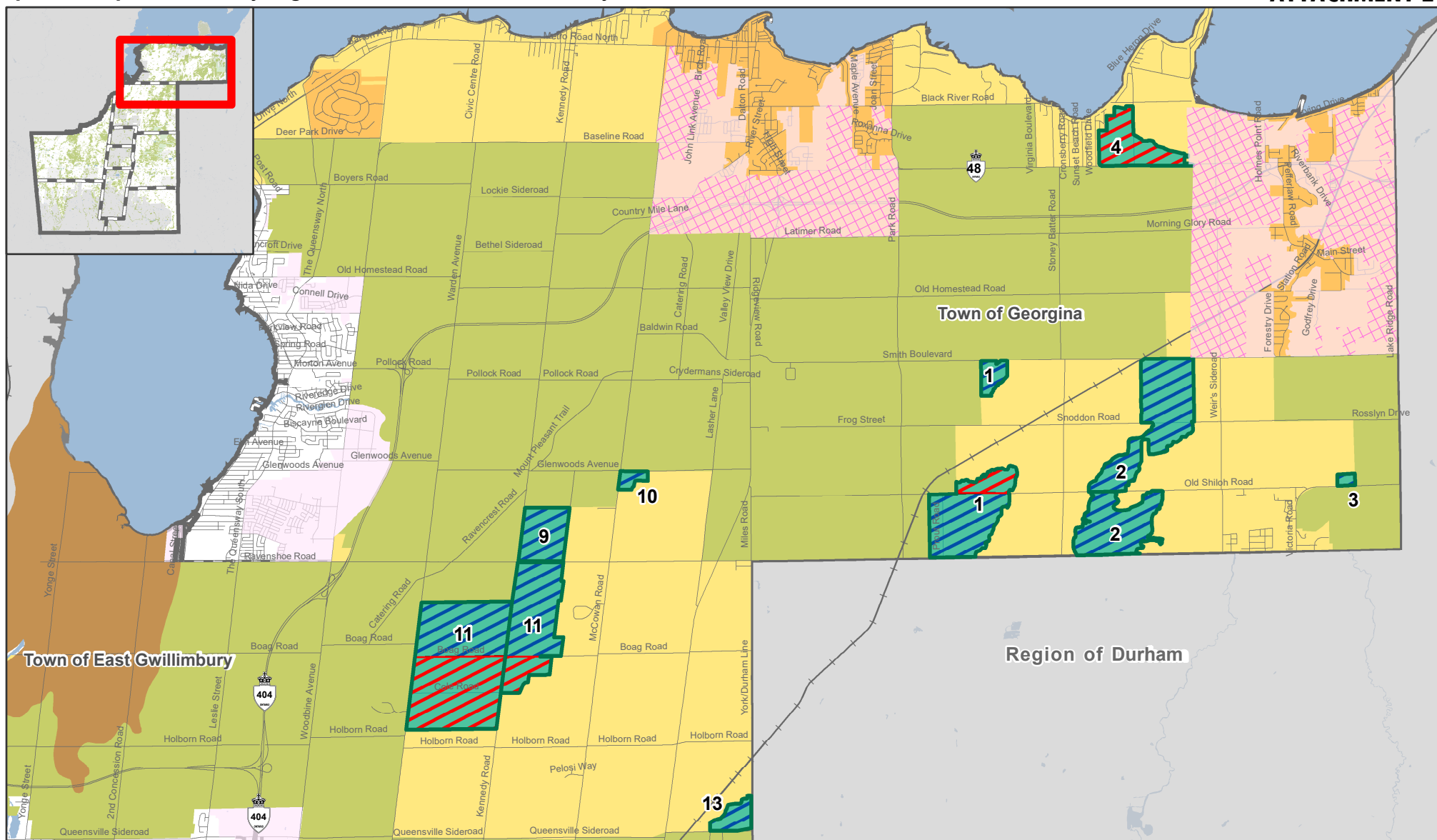
Types of Policies/Topic Area	Brief Description of Provincial Policy Change	Considerations/Potential Direction for York Region Official Plan
Local Agricultural and Rural Lands within Regionally identified Towns and Villages where servicing capacity does not exist	<p>In some Towns and Villages (e.g. Nobleton, and Sutton) there are locally designated Agricultural and Rural lands within these communities that, although currently identified as Town and Village in the Regional Official Plan, have limited growth potential given Provincial policy servicing constraints</p> <p>The Greenbelt Plan servicing policies, which are serviced either by groundwater or lakes, are not permitted to extend water or wastewater services from a Great Lakes source unless a set of criteria are met</p> <p>The Lake Simcoe Protection Plan impacts Pefferlaw and Sutton where there are strict sewage treatment policies that apply in this watershed and limit servicing capacity</p>	<p>Policy consideration for unserviced agricultural and rural lands within identified Towns and Villages include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Determining the appropriate designation and/or means of identifying these lands within the Official Plan which is consistent with the local municipal official plan designation in the event they are not forecasted to accommodate growth to 2051 given their limited opportunity to be serviced and/or developed</li> </ul> <p>These lands are identified as DGA (designated greenfield area) Agriculture and Rural unserviced areas on Attachment 2</p>
Implementation of the Provincial Agricultural Land Base Mapping	<p>Updates to the Province's Agricultural System land base mapping in 2017 is a part of the updates to the Provincial plans on Agricultural Systems</p> <p>York Region has the opportunity to refine the draft Provincial agricultural mapping utilizing Provincial refinement criteria (found in the Implementation Procedures for the Agricultural System in Ontario's Greater Golden Horseshoe)</p>	<p>Mapping considerations to refine the Provincial Agricultural System mapping include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reviewing the technical assessment completed by Agricultural consultant</li> <li>Consideration for maintaining a Rural designation for any lands in the Whitebelt where the Province is proposing an Agricultural designation, including lands ultimately required for urban uses</li> <li>Considering the local municipal planning context</li> <li>Supporting the continuity of the agricultural system across municipal boundaries</li> <li>Supporting lands that meet the Provincial refinement criteria to be re-designated to Agriculture or remain Rural</li> </ul>

Types of Policies/Topic Area	Brief Description of Provincial Policy Change	Considerations/Potential Direction for York Region Official Plan
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incorporating landowner, stakeholder and public input</li> </ul> <p>Preliminary staff recommendations are shown on Attachment 2</p> <p>The Province assessed two areas when they created the agricultural land base map, proposed and Candidate Lands and a Land Evaluation and Area Review (LEAR). This includes proposed areas that met the tests of a LEAR as prime agriculture, where these proposed areas are to be assessed by municipalities using the Provincial Implementation Procedures for the Agricultural System. The Region assessed these areas for consideration to potentially change from Rural to Agriculture designations. Provincially recommended 'Candidate lands' are optional lands to be assessed if they should be added to the Agriculture designation. It was determined by staff not to assess these candidate lands for consideration due to York Region's significantly limited rural lands, unless an assessment was requested by the local municipality. These lands are defined as areas of larger than 250 hectares, with medium LEAR scores and in active agriculture production.</p> <p>Where required, further refinement will occur with the final draft mapping presented in subsequent reporting to Council later in 2021</p>

Types of Policies/Topic Area	Brief Description of Provincial Policy Change	Considerations/Potential Direction for York Region Official Plan
Highest and best use of Non-Food Related Agricultural Crops in the Holland Marsh Specialty Crop Area	<p>Non-Food related agricultural crops are identified as agricultural, employment or commercial retail uses under the Provincial Policy Statement and may include such crops as cannabis and flowers</p> <p>Agricultural uses, agriculture-related uses and on-farm diversified uses are permitted in the Holland Marsh Specialty Crop Area and do not specify if the crops grown are to be food-related</p>	<p>Policy considerations include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discouraging the use of the Holland Marsh Specialty Crop Area for uses that do not require its muck soils for food production, such as cannabis and floriculture</li> </ul> <p>The policy change would promote the protection of the Holland Marsh for food-related crops</p>
Excess Soil	<p>Updates to the Growth Plan and Greenbelt Plan identify that municipalities should develop excess soil reuse strategies</p> <p>Updates to the Provincial Policy Statement, Growth Plan, Greenbelt Plan and Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan identify that municipalities shall incorporate best practices for the management of excess soils into their planning policies and development applications</p>	<p>Policy considerations include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Integrating new excess soil policies in the Official Plan that align with Provincial plans by identifying that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Municipalities should develop excess soil reuse strategies</li> <li>Municipalities shall incorporate best practices for the management of excess soils into their planning policies and development applications</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Mineral Aggregate Resources	<p>Updates to Provincial plans and the Provincial Policy Statement regarding mineral aggregate resources have been made to align wording across Provincial plans for site development and rehabilitation, which includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New direction on progressive and final rehabilitation of aggregate sites</li> </ul>	<p>Policy considerations include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Updates to meet new Provincial direction outlined through updated Plans, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Integrating additional rehabilitation policies for future reuse of lands</li> <li>Identifying mineral aggregate resource conservation efforts, including recovering and recycling materials for continued use</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Types of Policies/Topic Area	Brief Description of Provincial Policy Change	Considerations/Potential Direction for York Region Official Plan
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide aggregates as close to market as possible</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Requiring an agricultural impact assessment if mineral aggregate extraction is to occur in Agricultural areas</li> <li>○ Supporting aggregates as close to market as possible</li> </ul>
<b>Environment Policy Directions</b>		
Species at Risk	Updates to Provincial plans include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Updated definitions for habitat of endangered and threatened species</li> <li>• The protection of endangered and threatened species is deferred to established Federal and Provincial procedures</li> <li>• Exempt new development or site alteration from some environmental studies where the only identified key natural heritage feature is the habitat of endangered or threatened species</li> </ul>	Policy considerations include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focusing updates to reflect new Provincial direction including:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Updating definitions for the habitat of endangered and threatened species</li> <li>○ Referencing Provincial and Federal species at risk procedures for development and site alteration</li> <li>○ Updating requirements for natural heritage evaluations and hydrological evaluations where the only feature is the habitat of endangered or threatened species, in accordance with Provincial plans</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Diversity and Inclusion</b>		
Diversity and Inclusion	N/A	Policy considerations to focus on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integrating inclusionary language throughout the Plan and identifying inclusion as a core principle of planning in York Region</li> <li>• Enhancing partnership and engagement policies to support inclusive engagement throughout the planning process</li> </ul>

Types of Policies/Topic Area	Brief Description of Provincial Policy Change	Considerations/Potential Direction for York Region Official Plan
<b>Mapping</b> Mapping (General Direction) 1-14, Figures 1-3	Many of the maps will be updated to reflect current information. There are also several new Provincial requirements for Official Plan maps, which includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Growth Plan requires delineation of built up areas, designated greenfield areas, settlement areas, major transit station areas (MTSA) and employment areas</li> <li>• The Greenbelt Plan requires the update of natural heritage systems (NHS) and agricultural areas. It also requires delineation of key natural heritage features and key hydrologic features plus their minimum vegetation protection zones</li> </ul>	Policy considerations include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Simplifying Map 1 and displaying land use designations and land use categories on separate sub-schedules</li> <li>• Grouping the water resource components on one or a series of maps</li> <li>• Incorporating Provincial layers on ROP maps (Natural Heritage System and Agriculture Areas)</li> <li>• Updating mapping containing Regional infrastructure to align with Transportation, Water and Wastewater Master Plans</li> </ul>



## Preliminary Additional Mapping Analysis

- Proposed to remain Rural
- Proposed to change to Agriculture

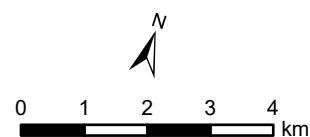
## Consultant Report Analysis

- Redesignate to Agriculture
- DGA**
- DGA Boundary
- DGA Ag and Rural Unserved Areas

## 2010 Agricultural and Rural Area

- Agriculture Policy Area
- Holland Marsh Area
- Rural Policy Area
- Towns and Villages
- Regional Boundary

- Municipal Boundary
- Freeway
- Provincial Highway
- Lake Simcoe
- Lake Ontario
- Surrounding Areas
- Railway
- Waterbody
- River



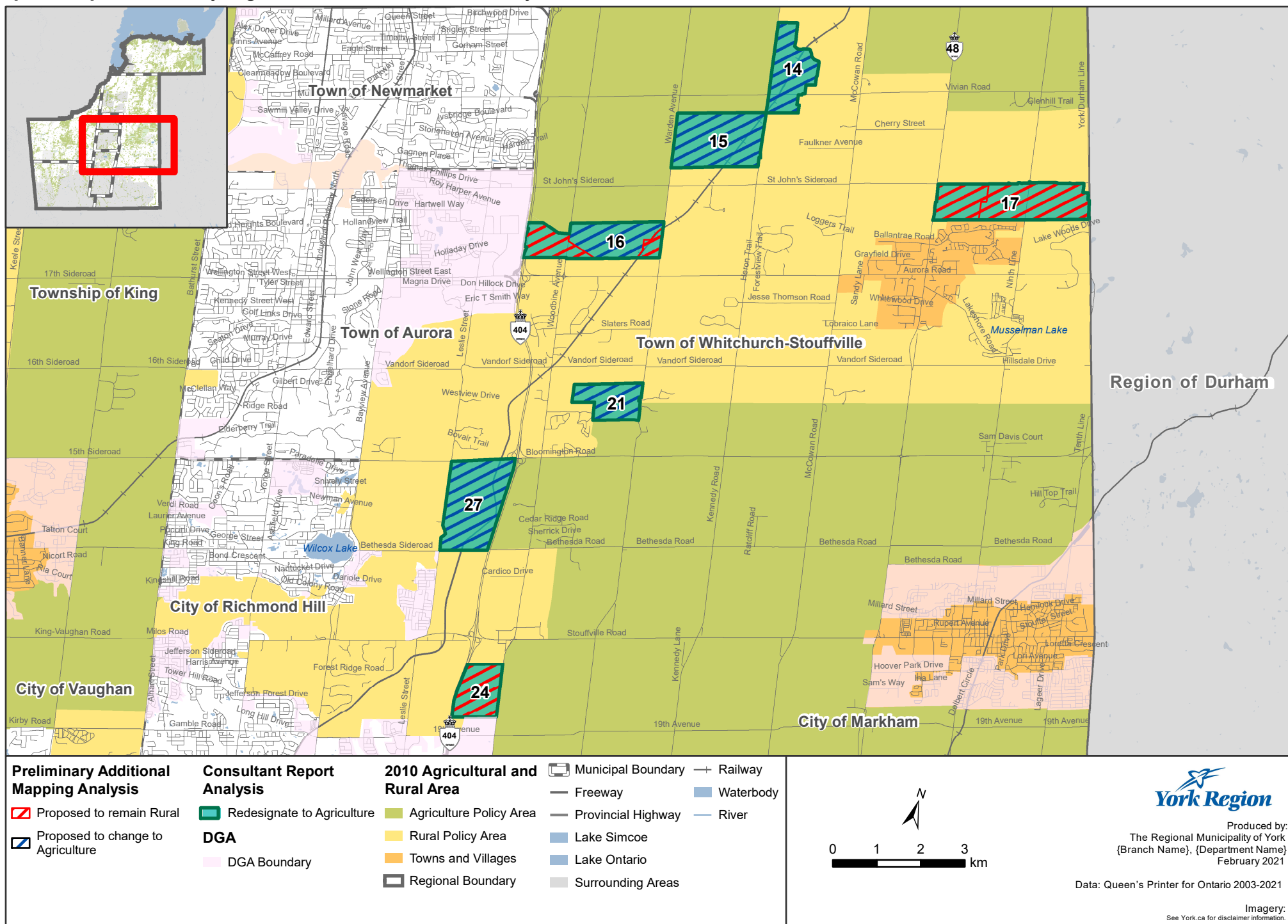
Produced by:  
The Regional Municipality of York  
{Branch Name}, {Department Name}  
February 2021

Data: Queen's Printer for Ontario 2003-2021

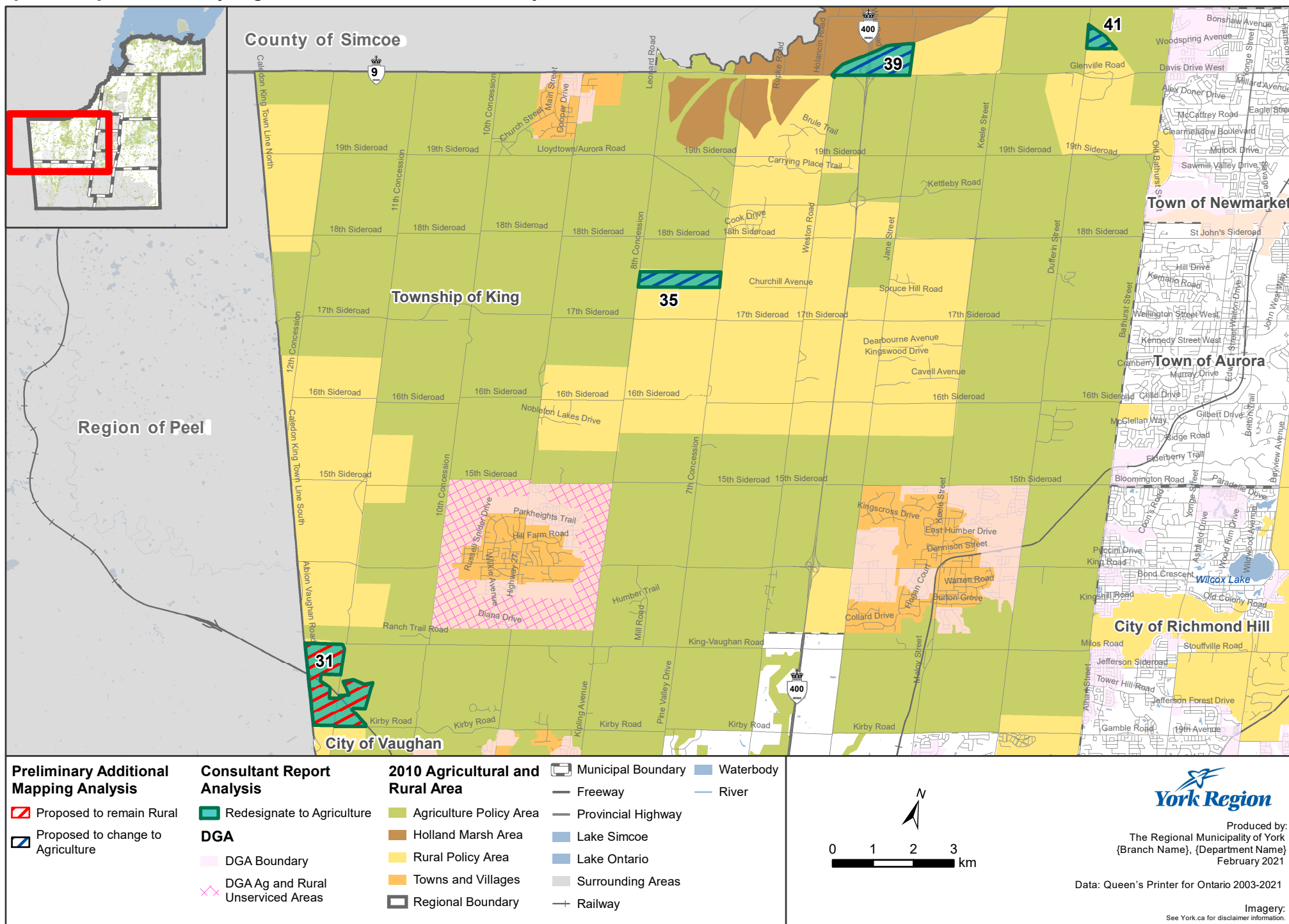
Imagery:  
See York.ca for disclaimer information.



# | East | Preliminary Agricultural Land Base Analysis



# | West | Preliminary Agricultural Land Base Analysis



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**From:** Switzer, Barbara <Barbara.Switzer@york.ca> **On Behalf Of** Regional Clerk

**Sent:** March 24, 2021 1:47 PM

**To:** Aurora Clerks General Inbox <Clerks@aurora.ca>; Aguila-Wong, Christine <caguila-wong@markham.ca>; clerks@newmarket.ca; EG Clerks General Inbox <clerks@eastgwillimbury.ca>; King Clerks General Inbox <clerks@king.ca>; Rachel Dillabough <rdillabough@georgina.ca>; Richmond Hill Clerks General Inbox <clerks@richmondhill.ca>; Vaughan Clerks General Inbox <clerks@vaughan.ca>; WS Clerks General Inbox <clerks@townofws.ca>

**Subject:** Regional Council Decision - Proposed 2051 Forecast and Land Needs Assessment

**CAUTION: This email originated from a source outside the City of Markham. DO NOT CLICK on any links or attachments, or reply unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.**

On March 18, 2021 Regional Council made the following decision:

1. Council direct staff to consult on the proposed forecast and land needs assessment as outlined in this report and attachments, including preliminary urban expansion mapping in Attachment 4, as part of the Municipal Comprehensive Review.
2. To support the highest share of growth in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area to 2051, Council require senior levels of government to provide funding for the Yonge North Subway Extension and to expand the Region's Bus Rapid Transit and enhance Regional GO rail systems to support transit integrated communities.
3. Following consultation on this report, staff report back on phasing policies necessary to manage growth over the 2051 planning horizon as part of the draft Regional Official Plan.
4. The Regional Clerk forward this report and attachments to the Clerks of the local municipalities and the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

The original staff report is attached for your information.

Please contact Paul Bottomley, Manager, Policy, Research and Forecasting at 1-877-464-9675 ext. 71530 if you have any questions with respect to this matter.

Regards,

**Christopher Raynor** | Regional Clerk, Regional Clerk's Office, Corporate Services

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The Regional Municipality of York | 17250 Yonge Street | Newmarket, ON L3Y 6Z1

O: 1-877-464-9675 ext. 71300 | [christopher.raynor@york.ca](mailto:christopher.raynor@york.ca) | [york.ca](http://york.ca)

Our Mission: **Working together to serve our thriving communities – today and tomorrow**

# The Regional Municipality of York

Regional Council  
Planning and Economic Development  
March 18, 2021

Report of the Commissioner of Corporate Services and Chief Planner

## Proposed 2051 Forecast and Land Needs Assessment

### 1. Recommendations

1. Council direct staff to consult on the proposed forecast and land needs assessment as outlined in this report and attachments, including preliminary urban expansion mapping in Attachment 4, as part of the Municipal Comprehensive Review.
2. To support the highest share of growth in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area to 2051, Council continue to advocate to senior levels of government for funding for the Yonge North Subway Extension and to expand the Region's Bus Rapid Transit and enhance Regional GO rail systems to support transit integrated communities.
3. Following consultation on this report, staff report back on phasing policies necessary to manage growth over the 2051 planning horizon as part of the draft Regional Official Plan.
4. The Regional Clerk forward this report and attachments to the Clerks of the local municipalities and the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

### 2. Summary

A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (Growth Plan) sets out population and employment forecasts and requires municipalities plan to achieve these forecasts by 2051. Part of this work includes determining if a settlement area boundary expansion is required to accommodate forecast growth. This report along with attachments 1 to 5 present land needs to 2051 as a result of completing the mandated provincial land needs assessment. Proposed population and employment forecasts by local municipality are presented for consultation as part of the Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR). This report is a summary of the content contained in Attachment 1 and provides an overview of the inputs, assumptions, and results of the provincial land needs assessment and distribution of population and employment to local municipalities.

#### Key Points:

- The Growth Plan directs York Region to support and plan for the highest share of growth in the GTHA

- Provincial Land Needs Assessment results in a need for 3,400 hectares of urban expansion, or 80% of the remaining Whitebelt, to accommodate growth to 2051
- Urban expansion needs are distributed by local municipality in line with Growth Plan criteria, Regional Official Plan policies, and an assessment of costs, risks, and opportunities in each geographic area
- Uncertainty regarding Provincial approval of the Upper York Water Reclamation Centre and timing of its phased implementation are key considerations when distributing growth
- Phasing infrastructure and development will be key to mitigate growth-related risks
- Given the history of significant growth directed to York Region by the Province, all Whitebelt lands will eventually be required at some point in time beyond the 2051 planning horizon and identifying the remaining Whitebelt as Future Urban is a consideration
- Consultation on the proposed forecast and land needs assessment will continue in Q2 and early Q3 in advance of a draft Regional Official Plan anticipated for Fall 2021

### 3. Background

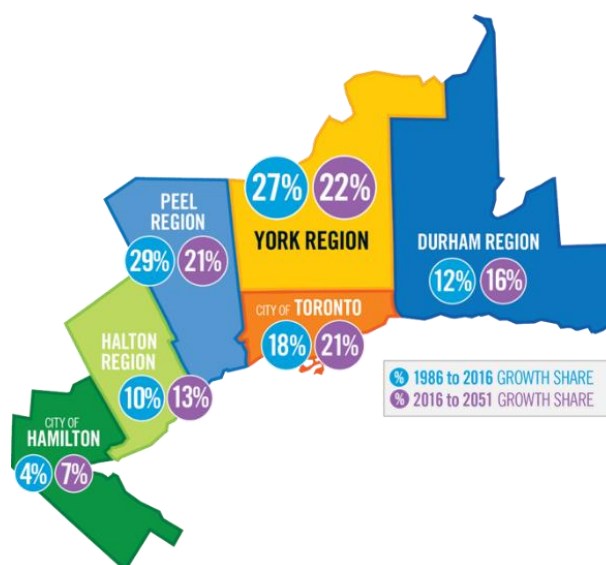
#### **York Region has a history of supporting and attracting significant growth**

Planning for and managing growth is a complex process taking into consideration Provincial growth targets, planning policy, socio-economic and demographic factors, market trends, as well as financial and servicing factors. Integrated land use, infrastructure, and financial planning has been undertaken in the Region since the 1994 Official Plan. Since then, several updates to the Regional Official Plan, regional forecasts, infrastructure Master Plans, and Development Charges by-laws have taken place. To ensure York Region continues to support and attract growth, Regional Council has invested more than \$4.8 billion in water and wastewater infrastructure and over \$2.8 billion in transportation, transit and rapid transit infrastructure, over the past 15 years.

#### **The Provincial Growth Plan forecasts a population of 2.02 million and 990,000 jobs for York Region by 2051**

The Growth Plan provides long-term direction to municipalities to plan for and manage growth, including where and how to grow, and includes population and employment forecasts upper- and single-tier municipalities must plan for. York Region is forecast to grow to a population of 2.02 million and 990,000 jobs by 2051. This represents growth of approximately 800,000 people and 345,000 jobs between 2021 and 2051. As shown in Figure 1, York Region is forecast to attract the highest share of growth of any Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA) municipality by 2051, accounting for 22% of GTHA population growth. The Region is also forecast to accommodate 25% of employment growth.

**Figure 1**  
**Distribution of Historical and Forecast Growth by GTHA Municipality**



Given the magnitude of assigned growth, the MCR requires the Region to assess the distribution and trajectory of growth to ensure it proceeds in a financially sustainable manner. The current MCR has had greater emphasis on a collaborative and iterative approach to population and employment distribution wherein infrastructure capacity and timing considerations play a more prominent role in distributing provincial growth forecasts to local municipalities. The 2019 [Growth and Infrastructure Alignment](#) report provides a series of principles focused on a more integrated approach to growth management.

Municipalities, including York Region, are required to use provincial forecasts and other policies in the Growth Plan predicated on building complete communities that are well integrated with infrastructure investment as the basis for land use planning and managing growth. Updating Regional forecasts to conform to the Growth Plan and distributing that growth to local municipalities are key components of the MCR.

### **Mandated Provincial Land Needs Assessment methodology determines the amount of land required to accommodate growth to 2051**

Municipalities are required to use the provincial Land Needs Assessment methodology to determine land needs to 2051. The methodology defines components, such as achieving the Growth Plan minimum intensification target, that must be assessed when determining the quantity of land needed to accommodate forecasted growth, including the need for any urban expansion. The land needs assessment methodology does not determine the location of these lands, rather this is informed by criteria in the Growth Plan and policies in the Regional Official Plan.

In addition to the Growth Plan, the Greenbelt Plan, Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan, and Lake Simcoe Protection Plan provide direction on where and how municipalities can and cannot grow. The Region's land needs assessment must conform with this provincial direction.

## **York Region has received 71 site-specific requests for urban expansion as well as requests from some municipalities**

Since the MCR began in 2014, prior to having to pause the process for significant Provincial policy updates, 71 written submissions have been received from landowners and consultants requesting re-designation of agricultural and rural land to allow for urban development. The Region has also received a Council resolution from the Town of East Gwillimbury requesting that the entirety of the Town's Whitebelt lands be re-designated for urban uses as well as requests from the City of Richmond Hill and the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville to re-designate areas of the protected countryside of the Greenbelt. In addition, the Township of King provided comments to the Province regarding the re-designation of the protected countryside of the Greenbelt. A map of all requests for urban expansion received through the MCR is found in Attachment 2.

## **York Region's forecast and land needs assessment is informed by several Municipal Comprehensive Review reports**

Provincial plans and the land needs assessment are implemented by the Region through a MCR and Regional Official Plan update. Between 2019 and 2021, a series of background reports were presented to Council addressing Employment Area Conversions, Planning for Intensification, Planning for Employment, Housing Opportunities and Challenges, Major Transit Station Areas, Planning for Density in New Communities, Natural Systems Planning, Planning for Agriculture, Aligning Growth and Infrastructure and Climate Change. Based on the foundational direction from Provincial Plans, these reports have informed the proposed forecast and land needs assessment presented in this report.

## **4. Analysis**

### **Land needs assessment incorporates Growth Plan targets, policy objectives, and market demand**

As outlined by the land needs assessment methodology, components municipalities must consider when planning for growth include market demand, Growth Plan policy targets for intensification and greenfield density, accommodating all employment types, determining community and employment land needs based on a demand-supply analysis, and planning for infrastructure needed to build complete communities to 2051.

To help inform the land needs assessment, Watson and Associates Economists Limited (Watson) was retained to undertake a detailed assessment of the Region's housing market. With input from Watson, the forecasts are informed by historical market trends as well as recent building permit activity, active development applications, socio-economic and demographic trends, as well as the demand for both rental and ownership housing. A critical consideration in defining the future market demand also includes housing affordability.



## Inputs and assumptions used in the Community Land Needs Assessment have been reviewed and supported by Watson Consulting

Community lands account for a significant share of the Region's settlement areas and are where the majority of residential, personal services, retail, cultural, recreational, and human services uses are located. The forecast for community lands is predicated on policy targets in the Growth Plan. Population growth of approximately 800,000 people between 2021 and 2051 is translated to growth of approximately 276,000 units. This unit growth is allocated to the Region's geographic land use categories, as outlined and defined in Attachment 1. The Growth Plan 50% intensification target determines units directed to the built-up area, a small amount of growth is assumed in the rural area, and the remaining growth is assigned to the designated greenfield area (Table 1).

**Table 1**  
**Housing Unit Forecast by Land Use Category (2021 – 2051)**

Land Use Category	Housing Growth	Growth Share
Built-up area	138,000	50%
Designated greenfield area	137,000	49%
Rural area	1,000	<1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>276,000</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: York Region Planning and Economic Development Branch

Watson's Housing Foundational Analysis Report (Executive Summary in Attachment 3) was an input to the Region's structure type forecast to determine 2051 community land needs in the land needs assessment. As outlined in their report, Watson provided a review of the Region's preliminary forecast to 2051 and commentary on the key assumptions. Watson has concluded that the Region's structure type forecast and associated 50% intensification target and designated greenfield area density assumptions:

- Recognize the long-term population forecast for the GTHA is aspirational and therefore appropriately supports York Region not exceeding the long term 2051 population forecast of 2.02 million
- Reflect recent and anticipated shifts in residential building activity in York Region from low-density dwellings toward medium and high-density housing forms
- Recognize that the aging population is likely to drive demand for a significant share of affordable higher-density rental and ownership housing
- Appropriately consider the need to expand the supply of affordable home ownership options in medium-density housing, particularly entry-level townhouse products geared to low- and middle-income households



## **Growth Plan 50% intensification target supports Council's infrastructure investment and is consistent with the York Region market**

A fundamental metric informing community land needs is the Growth Plan minimum 50% Region-wide intensification target which York Region must plan to achieve. In addition to being a requirement of the Growth Plan, past direction from Regional Council provides support to plan for the Growth Plan's minimum intensification target. Planning for 50% intensification also supports Council's priorities when managing and planning for growth in the Region's centres and corridors by supporting investments in infrastructure, by offering a mix and range of affordable housing options in compact transit supportive communities, and by supporting market demand. The target further supports and builds on the Region's economic development success by advancing the Region's city building objectives and by helping attract new businesses and jobs for residents.

Planning for half the Region's growth in the existing built-up area demonstrates a continued commitment by the Region to intensification. Not only does it support past infrastructure investments, but it substantiates investments that will continue to be required to support growth to 2051. Being the only municipality in the Greater Toronto Area outside of Toronto with access to an existing and future subway and with over \$3.2 billion having been invested in rapid transit infrastructure by all three levels of government over the past 15 years, York Region is well-positioned to achieve this target. Planning for 50% intensification positions the Region for a better return on this investment through development charges. A significant share of growth in intensification areas demonstrates to senior levels of government that York Region is invested in and committed to city building and sustainable transit-oriented development.

York Region has significant potential to accommodate growth in the built-up area to meet or exceed the minimum 50% target. In planning for 78 Major Transit Station Areas, the Region has the potential to accommodate 505,000 people and 195,000 jobs or more in these locations. The planned growth potential for these areas significantly exceeds the forecast demand in the built-up area by 2051. Further, as of mid-2020, York Region had an estimated supply of 70,000 units under application in the built-up area. If built, these units would account for approximately 50% of the total forecast to 2051.

An intensification rate of 50% is consistent with what the market has been delivering on an average basis since 2006. Achieving 50% intensification over a sustained period to 2051 does require a significant shift in family households (couples with or without kids, lone-parent, multi-family households) into medium and high-density structure types. Planning for a 50% intensification target provides for a balanced mix of ground-related and higher-density housing options for York Region residents. Moving forward, staff will carefully monitor the intensification rate, greenfield supply, and phasing of new communities to ensure the pace of growth is consistent with Regional Official Plan objectives while maintaining the Region's financial sustainability.

## **Watson has identified 50% intensification is appropriate over the long term**

Based on analysis from Watson and Associates (Attachment 3), a 50% housing intensification target appropriately reflects recent development trends, active residential

development plans, and evolving longer-term demographic and socioeconomic trends within York Region. Watson notes that the Region could exceed a 50% intensification target in the near to medium-term based on the current supply of active development applications. Once servicing constraints in the designated greenfield area, particularly across northern York Region have been addressed, the likelihood of achieving greater than 50% over the long term is less certain. Watson, therefore, conclude that a 50% allocation of housing growth to the built-up area is appropriate.

Through their assessment of the Region's forecast on housing affordability, Watson further identifies the appropriateness of the 50% intensification target in that it reflects a continued shift from low to medium- and high-density structure types across the GTHA. This shift, likely driven in part by growing affordability challenges in low density structure types, will continue to drive demand for a more diverse range of medium- and high-density options in the Region's built-up area. Planning for higher-density rental and ownership units, particularly in areas supported by transit and with access to amenities, will also help support the growing number of seniors anticipated over the forecast horizon.

### **Distribution of employment growth by type reflects the changing nature of employment**

The outlook for employment by type in the Region incorporates a range of anticipated economic and workplace changes over the coming decades. Future trends are discussed in the Region's 2019 [Planning for Employment background report](#). Considerations in the forecast to 2051 included an assessment of York Region's historical and future growth shares by employment type within the GTHA market, as well as estimates of employment growth by sector based on varying degrees of economic shifts and levels of automation. Employment growth will be driven by continued shifts toward knowledge-based jobs, growth in eCommerce, and increases in work from home employment. Attachment 1 provides more detail on assumptions used to generate York Region's employment forecast by type. The forecast employment by type results in the following distribution:

**Table 2**  
**Employment Forecast by Type (2021 – 2051)**

Employment Type	Job Growth	Growth Share
Major Office	92,000	26%
Employment Area	128,000	37%
Population Related	124,000	36%
Rural	1,500	<1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>345,500</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: York Region Planning and Economic Development Branch

## Provincial Land Needs Assessment has determined a need for 3,400 hectares of urban expansion

The key determinant for community and employment urban expansion needs is a demand supply analysis. A more detailed explanation of how urban expansion needs are determined is presented in Sections 4-6 of Attachment 1. A new component of the provincial methodology is for municipalities to consider additional lands beyond what is required by the demand-supply analysis in the form of a contingency. The intent is to account for long term vacancy and/or lands not being developed as planned over the 30-year horizon.

For community lands, the forecast demand in the designated greenfield area (greenfield areas as shown in Attachment 1) is compared with the potential for development (supply) by 2051 within existing designated greenfield areas. Designated greenfield area supply is determined based on active development applications, secondary plans for vacant lands with no application, and an estimate for apartment growth in those areas. Compared to the demand of 137,000 units in Table 1, the Region's designated greenfield area has an estimated supply potential of approximately 101,000 new units by 2051. Consistent with what the market is delivering as outlined in the [June 2020](#) Planning for Densities in New Communities report, a density of 60 people and jobs or 17 units per hectare was used to translate urban expansion needs from units to land area.

On the employment side, the determinant of an urban boundary expansion is a demand supply analysis in employment land areas. Employment area supply is informed by Council endorsed boundaries from [October 2020](#) as a result of Council's decisions on employment land conversion requests. Density assumptions on vacant lands and an estimate for employment growth within existing space then informed the potential for growth in approved employment areas. Compared to employment area demand of 128,000 jobs in Table 2, the Region's employment areas have capacity for approximately 90,000 new jobs.

Table 3 identifies the urban expansion lands needs resulting from applying the provincial land needs methodology.

**Table 3**  
**Community and Employment Urban Expansion Land Needs to 2051**

Geography	Land Need (Hectares)
Community Land	2,300
Employment Land	1,100
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,400</b>

Source: York Region Planning and Economic Development Branch

## **Timing and delivery of infrastructure are key considerations informing both the pace and distribution of growth to 2051**

Availability and timing of delivery of Regional infrastructure plays an important role informing the pace and distribution of growth to 2051, particularly in the short and medium term. As a result of significant investments made by Council over the last two decades, the Region can service population growth of approximately 223,000 people (or approximately 75,000 units) with infrastructure already in place. Capacity for growth exists in all nine local municipalities, within Centres and Corridors, as well as a number of greenfield communities throughout the Region.

Planning to accommodate growth of approximately 800,000 people and 345,000 jobs over a 30-year planning horizon requires significant investment in new infrastructure. Major infrastructure projects required to accommodate growth to 2051 include upgrades to the York Durham Sewage System conveyance and pumping stations, the initial construction and future expansion of the Upper York Water Reclamation Centre, northeast and west Vaughan water and wastewater upgrades, as well as the Yonge north subway extension.

The preliminary timing of these new large-scale projects has informed assumptions on the pace of growth to 2051. For example, projected timing for the Upper York Water Reclamation Centre, northeast and northwest Vaughan projects, and the Yonge North Subway Extension informed an anticipated increase in the pace of growth overall as well as in the affected municipalities over the next decade and beyond.

## **Upgrades to the Region's transportation and transit network are essential to accommodate planned growth**

In addition to the Yonge North subway extension, a \$5.6 billion investment scheduled to be operational by 2030, significant investments in roads, transit, and rapid transit is required to accommodate the provincial growth forecast for the Region. Based on a cursory analysis of growth to 2051, extensions to existing Highway 7 and Yonge Street Rapid Transit corridors as well as new Bus Rapid Transit infrastructure on Jane Street, Major Mackenzie Drive, and Leslie Street have been identified to serve the needs of both existing and future York Region residents. All of these bus rapid transit projects are currently unfunded and together translate to an estimated \$5.4 billion in new transit infrastructure. Assuming, on a preliminary basis, an estimated Regional contribution of 27% (based on Yonge Subway extension and existing Public Transit Infrastructure Fund agreements in Ontario), approximately \$1.4 billion of this cost is likely to be incurred by the Region.

Timing and delivery of these projects will be important to achieve the Region's 50% intensification target and to provide further opportunities for job growth and talent attraction in the Region. Particularly with the millennial workforce, access to transit and other amenities are necessary to attracting and maintaining talent.

Funding from Senior levels of government will be essential to enhance the Region's Bus Rapid Transit system through the projects listed above. Further expansions and upgrades to the GO rail network will also be important to support intensification as well as growth in greenfield and urban expansion areas to support transit integrated communities.

## **Planning for a designated greenfield area density target of 60 people and jobs per hectare reflects what the market is delivering and allows for more accurate infrastructure planning**

To forecast growth in the Region's urban expansion areas, the designated greenfield area density has implications on infrastructure timing and delivery, determining pipe size, planning for new roads and road improvements, and estimating future transit ridership. It also has impacts on how the Region calculates development charge rates and estimating development charge revenue and tax levy growth. If planned growth and densities do not match market realities, development charge rates may not achieve effective cost recovery. For these reasons, it is important to be as accurate as possible about densities and associated growth anticipated in urban expansion areas. As illustrated in the June 2020 [Planning for Density in New Communities](#) report, recently built communities in the Region's designated greenfield area are achieving an average of 62 people and jobs per hectare. Since the York Region market is delivering over 60 people and jobs per hectare in existing greenfield areas, assuming the minimum 50 density in the Growth Plan would not support infrastructure or financial planning compared to the market reality.

## **Opportunities, costs, and potential risks influence the location of urban expansion**

Over the long term, all the Region's Whitebelt lands will be needed to accommodate growth. Applying the Provincial land needs assessment methodology to the Region's Growth Plan forecast has determined that approximately 80% of Whitebelt lands are needed for anticipated growth to 2051. Available Whitebelt lands are shown in Attachment 1 and consist of three distinct geographies in southeast, southwest, and northern York Region. In consultation with local municipal staff, these lands were classified into potential community and employment areas based on their connectivity to existing community/employment areas and prioritizing lands adjacent to or near existing or provincially planned 400 series highways for employment purposes.

Considerations impacting the geographic distribution of urban expansion are discussed in detail in Section 6 of Attachment 1. Satisfying Growth Plan criteria, ensuring logical planning boundaries, building complete communities that provide for live and work opportunities, delivering fiscally sustainable infrastructure, and supporting the Regional structure are important considerations. A preliminary assessment of the costs, risks, and opportunities associated with each available geography is summarized below:

- Regional water, wastewater, and transportation infrastructure costs per capita (at full buildout) of Whitebelt lands are lowest in the southeast (\$4,600), higher in the southwest (\$6,900), and highest in northern York Region (\$7,600)
- Growth in the southeast capitalizes on downstream water and wastewater infrastructure the Region has invested in over the last 10 years as well as access to the expanded Highway 404 and planned GO expansion.
- Growth in the southwest also leverages the downstream water and wastewater infrastructure investment over the last 10 years. It also includes significant job growth

potential which builds on existing strengths in transportation/logistics along Highway 427 and the future GTA west corridor as well as recent GO rail expansion. That said, the timing of both residential and job growth in this location may be contingent on the timing of the GTA west corridor by the Province.

- Growth in northern York Region may provide more affordable housing options than southern York Region, particularly for specific market segments such as young families and seniors. There is uncertainty surrounding the timing of the delivery of the Upper York Water Reclamation Centre as the Region awaits approvals from the Province, and phased implementation of the Water Reclamation Centre is required to address full buildout of the remaining Whitebelt lands. Currently it is estimated that the Water Reclamation Centre would be in place by early 2028 (contingent on receiving approval no later than 2021) and an expansion would be required by the early 2040s, subject to a future Class Environmental Assessment.
- Lands in north and central East Gwillimbury and in southeast York Region were identified as most suitable for agriculture
- North York Region is located within the Lake Simcoe watershed. Since 2009, through the release of the Lake Simcoe Protection Plan, the Province has been committed to protecting the ecological health and natural heritage of the watershed. Additional protection and mitigation measures are required in this portion of the Region.

Based on this analysis, the proposed distribution of urban expansion is shown in Table 4. Detailed mapping is provided in Attachment 4. Site-specific requests for urban expansion were also considered - the results of which are presented in Attachment 2.

**Table 4**  
**Proposed Urban Expansion by Municipality to 2051 (Hectares)**

Municipality	Available Whitebelt	Proposed Urban Expansion	Community Land	Employment Land
East Gwillimbury	960	245	180	65
King	80	80	70	10
Markham	1,490	1,490	1,270	220
Vaughan	1,210	1,210	500	710
Whitchurch Stouffville	375	375	280	95
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,115</b>	<b>3,400</b>	<b>2,300</b>	<b>1,100</b>

Source: York Region Planning and Economic Development Branch

## **Location of urban expansion lands to meet the 2051 forecast are proposed in a way that minimizes potential risks to the Region**

The proposed distribution of urban expansion lands (Table 4) reflects Growth Plan and Regional Official Plan criteria, as well as the assessment of costs, risks, and opportunities in each potential whitebelt geography. The proposed distribution:

- Maximizes urban expansion in areas with higher certainty of timing of the provision of water and wastewater infrastructure
- Provides well-located future employment lands along Highway 427, the planned GTA West Corridor, Highway 404, and adjacent to the ROPA 3 employment lands in Markham
- Allows for the connection of the Green Lane Corridor, Sharon, and Holland Landing communities in East Gwillimbury
- Aligns the amount of growth in northern York Region with the ability to deliver the multi-phase infrastructure required to support it thereby reducing potential misalignment of development charges collections over the forecast period
- Supports ongoing agricultural uses to the extent possible given that lands in northern East Gwillimbury were identified as some of the most suitable remaining whitebelt lands for agricultural uses in the Region

## **Timing and uncertainty of servicing in northern York Region is a key factor informing the distribution of urban expansion land needs to 2051**

Growth in northern York Region is dependent on the Upper York Water Reclamation Centre. Conditional on timely provincial approvals, the Water Reclamation Centre is currently scheduled for completion in 2028 and will provide capacity for 90,000 people in East Gwillimbury and Northwest Newmarket while also freeing up capacity for growth in Newmarket and Aurora. The initial phase will service existing population as well as growth of approximately 45,000 people in East Gwillimbury's existing urban area but does not provide capacity for growth in the Town's Whitebelt lands.

An expansion of the Water Reclamation Centre is anticipated in the early 2040s and will provide capacity for growth of an additional 45,000 people in East Gwillimbury and Newmarket. The expansion is also required to provide wastewater capacity for some Whitebelt lands. A further expansion of the plant is likely to be required to achieve full buildout of the remaining Whitebelt lands in the Town. Timing of this expansion is not yet known but is likely to occur beyond 2051. The timing and uncertainty surrounding the initial stage of Upper York as well as future expansions present significant risks to the Region and have resulted in the proposed higher levels of Whitebelt growth in southern York Region where infrastructure is more certain and less costly to meet the amount of growth required by the Land Needs Assessment.

The proposed distribution of growth presented in Table 4 would not require the final expansion of the Upper York Water Reclamation Centre (likely beyond 2051), a project estimated at \$200 million. This distribution of growth also results in a more achievable growth

outlook for the Town of East Gwillimbury with respect to annual population growth and therefore allows the Region to plan for a more accurate recovery of development charges collections both within the 2051 horizon and beyond.

### **Growth is contemplated only where permitted by Provincial Plans and in locations with existing or planned water-wastewater capacity**

Requests have been received from the City of Richmond Hill, Township of King, and Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville requesting consideration of site-specific employment uses in the Protected Countryside of the Greenbelt. York Region's [Potential for Employment Lands along 400 Series Highways](#) report from October 2020 provides further information on these requests. As discussed in a [January 2021](#) memo, Provincial policy in the Greenbelt Plan and Oak Ridges Moraine Conversation Plan prohibits expanding settlement areas into the Protected Countryside of the Greenbelt. As such, these requests were not considered as part of the MCR. Further, the application of the Provincial Land Needs Assessment concludes that the Region can meet its employment land needs with existing urban lands and a portion of Whitebelt lands.

Population and employment growth beyond the existing and planned infrastructure capacity in Nobleton and Mount Albert have also not been considered. Preliminary estimates indicate that expanding the water and wastewater capacity in Nobleton beyond the 10,800 people currently contemplated in an ongoing Environmental Assessment would be cost prohibitive, requiring an infrastructure investment in the range of \$100 to \$200 million. This would not be financially sustainable given the amount of additional growth that could be realized. In addition, at the time of writing this report, discussions were ongoing between landowners, Town of East Gwillimbury staff, and York Region staff regarding the potential to expand the servicing capacity in Mount Albert from 6,000 to 8,000 population. However, because no agreement has been reached with respect to whether such an expansion would be feasible, the current servicing capacity of 6,000 has been maintained for the purposes of the proposed forecast.

### **Forecasts to 2051 for each local municipality reflect recent growth trends, Land Need Assessment urban expansion needs, vacant greenfield areas, and market demand for intensification**

Proposed 2051 population and employment forecasts for the nine local municipalities are shown in Table 5. Details on the method and background information used to prepare the forecasts is included in Section 8 of Attachment 1. The forecasts are the product of a number of assumptions based on recent demographic, market, and economic trends, housing and employment land supply, market demand for intensification, as well as regional and local policy. Regional staff have consulted with local municipal staff in preparation of the proposed forecasts and incorporated changes based on their feedback.



**Table 5**  
**2051 Population and Employment Forecasts by Local Municipality**

Municipality	2051 Population	2051 Employment
Aurora	84,900	41,000
East Gwillimbury	105,100	37,400
Georgina	71,900	21,900
King	49,600	16,400
Markham	619,200	309,200
Newmarket	110,700	57,600
Richmond Hill	317,000	122,600
Vaughan	568,700	352,000
Whitchurch Stouffville	92,900	31,900
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,020,000</b>	<b>990,000</b>

Source: York Region Planning and Economic Development Branch

The forecast update also includes proposed local municipal intensification targets, designated greenfield area density targets, and employment area density targets to 2051. These are found in Section 9 of Attachment 1. Through official plan updates, local municipalities are to plan to achieve these targets which are minimums. The Region's forecast distributes intensification across the nine local municipalities based on reasonable assumptions however the market will ultimately determine actual growth. Local municipalities should plan for intensification areas recognizing existing and planned investments in transit.

### **Addressing gaps in housing affordability through ownership and rental options will be important to meet the 2051 forecast**

As noted by Watson, shifting demographics and housing affordability continue to result in a greater proportion of growth occurring in GTHA Regions such as Durham and Peel and in municipalities outside of the GTHA such as Simcoe and Dufferin because of their ability to offer more affordable housing options. Watson has indicated that despite an anticipated shift in housing mix to medium and higher density forms of housing over the 2051 forecast horizon, housing affordability will continue to challenge the growth rate in York Region and could impact the Region's ability to achieve its 2051 forecast.

Despite identifying that a structure type mix shifting toward medium- and high-density structure types appropriately considers shifting demographic and affordability trends – particularly for young families and seniors, Watson identified a need for the Region to

increase its supply of medium-density housing, primarily entry-level townhouse products geared to low- and middle-income households. They also identified a significant need for rental housing over the 30-year horizon (close to 90,000 units) reinforcing the need for a comprehensive multi-stakeholder approach to increase the range and mix of affordable housing options. This builds on material presented to Council in [January 2020](#) and will continue following the MCR.

Affordability challenges and the need for significant increases in rental supply, infrastructure uncertainties that continue to exist in northern York Region, and recent slower than forecast growth rates highlight the importance of prudent growth management to mitigate potential impacts of slower than anticipated growth.

### **Integrated growth management is necessary to mitigate growth-related risk**

Planning for growth to 2.02 million people and 990,000 jobs over a 30-year planning horizon will require integrated and agile growth management. Achieving provincial forecasts requires average annual growth of 26,100 people per year. As shown in Table 6, this figure exceeds short term historical average annual growth (2010-2020) in York Region and is slightly above longer-term averages over the past 35 years.

**Table 6**  
**Forecast vs Historical Average Annual Population Growth**

Historical Short Term (2010-2020)	Historical Long Term (1986-2020)	2051 Forecast
16,500	24,900	26,100

Source: York Region Planning and Economic Development Branch

The Region's fiscal capacity is strongly tied to the pace of growth. As a result, there are a number of financial risks associated with planning for growth and paying for required infrastructure. Slower than anticipated growth could have the following impacts:

- Slower than anticipated cost recovery through development charges to pay down outstanding development charges debt and reduction in the amount of development charges revenue available to fund new infrastructure – for example a sustained 10% reduction in collections over ten years versus the forecast could require capital deferral of up to \$300 million
- Increased costs for operating infrastructure put in place too early to operate efficiently
- Tax levy or rate increases for existing residents and businesses to support ongoing operation and maintain service levels
- Reduction in contributions toward asset management reserves and insufficient funds for the Region's future capital replacement and rehabilitation

## **Phasing of urban expansion and agile growth management will help maintain financial sustainability**

Integrated growth management requires a phased and agile approach to growth. This involves regularly re-aligning Regional plans, programs, and processes with the Region's fiscal reality. Through MCRs every 5 to 10 years between now and 2051, Master Plan updates, and annual Capital Plan and budget reviews, there are opportunities to re-calibrate Regional plans and strategies with actual growth and development charges collections. Aligning capital spending with population thresholds targeted to specific years in the Capital Plan and capitalizing on existing infrastructure can help maintain borrowing capacity. Giving special consideration to projects which may have a shorter payback period is another consideration.

Phasing is a tool to manage the timing and location of growth, particularly over the extensive 30-year planning horizon. Based on the distribution of growth to each municipality in Table 5, and assuming a 27% share of anticipated Regional rapid transit costs, an estimated \$11.6 billion in new infrastructure would be needed by 2051. This means growth cannot happen everywhere at once. Through a collaborative and iterative approach to land use planning in line with the timing and availability of infrastructure, the Region's forecasts incorporate a phased approach to growth. The Region's ability to adapt to the changing nature and pace of growth and further adjust and/or phase capital spending as necessary to maintain fiscal sustainability will be important.

## **Phasing strategies for urban expansion areas will be enhanced in the draft Regional Official Plan and co-ordinated with infrastructure Master Plans**

The amount of urban expansion and associated population and employment growth to 2051 is unprecedented. To achieve its 2051 forecasts, York Region will be required to accommodate over 130,000 people and 50,000 jobs in new whitebelt areas. This is in addition to growth of 115,000 and 35,000 jobs in the Region's 2031 new community areas that were brought into the urban boundary through the 2010 Regional Official Plan for which construction is just starting. Together, these growth areas consist of almost one third of the Region's total growth to 2051 with most of these areas being dependant on new infrastructure. Ensuring this growth materializes in a controlled and phased manner will be critical to deliver complete communities for new residents with timely provision of services such as schools, libraries, community centres, and other personal services, in addition to roads, transit, and pipe infrastructure. It will also be important to support a return on previous infrastructure investments in the Region's intensification areas.

To properly manage this amount of growth across diverse geographies of the Region will require strong phasing policies in both Regional and local municipal Official Plans. A more detailed approach for phasing policies will be outlined in a third policy directions report in late Q2 2021. Preliminary considerations for phasing policies include staging urban expansion areas based on the alignment of capital spending, achievement of population thresholds, prioritizing areas which have a higher level of certainty to maximize return on investment, and a requirement to provide a logical progression of development. Consideration may also

be given to tying the timing of growth in urban expansion areas to the sustained achievement of the Region's annual intensification target.

### **Identifying the remaining Whitebelt as Future Urban beyond 2051 is a consideration**

With the Provincial Land Needs Assessment requiring 80% of the Region's Whitebelt to accommodate growth to 2051, it may be appropriate to clarify that the remaining 20% of Whitebelt lands will likely be needed for future growth beyond 2051. Eighty percent to 2051 can be supplied by existing and planned infrastructure investments, and more closely matches the ability to recover growth-related costs through development charges in the future. This also acknowledges the final phase of the Upper York Water Reclamation Centre will likely be required and is expected to be post 2051. Identifying the remaining 20% of the Whitebelt lands as "Future Urban" beyond 2051 acknowledges the reality of the future long-term function of these lands.

### **It will be important for public agency partners to support growth to ensure complete communities**

Cooperation by other public agencies and the private sector will be necessary to achieve the 2051 forecast. The Province, local municipalities, the development industry, Metrolinx, conservation authorities, and the public are important stakeholders in supporting and managing growth. Fast-tracking critical infrastructure to support growth in the Region will require action by the Province. The overdue approval of the Upper York Water Reclamation Centre is necessary to unlock population growth potential in northern York Region and required to accommodate the assigned growth to 2051. Continued funding for planned Bus Rapid Transit and Yonge North Subway Extension projects are necessary to accommodate higher-density growth in the Region's urbanizing areas.

The development industry can play an important role in mitigating financial risks to the Region by entering into prepaid development charges credit agreements in advance of Regional infrastructure in exchange for a development charges credit at the time of registration/site plan approval. This is one example of risk sharing the Region will consider moving forward.

### **Consultation on the draft forecast and provincial land needs assessment results will occur in advance of the draft Regional Official Plan anticipated for Fall 2021**

This report presents preliminary urban expansion mapping (Attachment 4) and population and employment forecasts by local municipality as a result of the 2051 Growth Plan forecast and outcome of the Provincial Land Needs Assessment. Over the spring and summer months, York Region staff will be consulting with local municipalities, the public, development industry, and other stakeholders on the information presented in this report. More detail on consultation is provide in Attachment 5.

The Regional Official Plan update will continue over the coming months. Forecasts by local municipality and urban expansion mapping will be finalized and presented with the draft Regional Official Plan. Final forecasts are required to align infrastructure with forecast growth

through Water Wastewater and Transportation Master Plans and to inform an updated Development Charges By-law.

## **5. Financial**

Regional population and employment forecasts will be updated to conform to Provincial 2051 forecasts. The growth forecast will be used to inform the next update of the Regional development charges bylaw; the current bylaw is set to expire in mid-2022. The misalignment of growth forecasts with infrastructure delivery and the actual rate of growth could result in financial implications to the Region and local municipalities, including impacts to the development charges bylaw.

Work associated with updated population and employment forecasts is included within the approved Planning and Economic Development budget. Consulting services from Watson and Associates Economists Limited to perform a Foundational Housing Analysis are being utilized as part of the approved MCR work plan and budget.

## **6. Local Impact**

The Region's forecast and land needs assessment to 2051 have direct implications on local municipalities. As presented in Table 5, a key component of the MCR involves distributing updated population and employment forecasts to local municipalities. The results of the Provincial land needs assessment methodology identified a need for 3,400 hectares of urban expansion across five of the Region's nine local municipalities.

Local municipalities are key stakeholders in their forecast assignments and planning for future communities in growth areas. Local municipal staff are working alongside the Region to update local official plans to reflect the policies in the Regional Official Plan generated through the Regional MCR once approved. Under the Planning Act, local municipal official plans are required to be updated to conform to the Regional Official Plan within one year of it coming into effect. Detailed planning for urban expansion areas will be the responsibility of the local municipalities, in consultation with the Region. It remains important that the Region and local municipalities plan for these areas to be complete communities.

## **7. Conclusion**

Planning for and managing growth is a complex process that involves many considerations. Growth forecasts are developed and allocated to the Region's nine local municipalities based on the Provincial Growth Plan growth targets, planning policy, demographic factors, market trends, as well as financial and servicing factors. Results of the Provincial land needs assessment methodology identify a need for 2,300 hectares of community land and 1,100 hectares of employment land to accommodate growth to 2051. This equates to approximately 80% of the Region's Whitebelt lands.

Planning for this growth will require a more focused and financially sustainable approach to managing growth and infrastructure delivery. Further, staging and phasing of capital investments in line with actual rather than forecast growth will be necessary for a more agile and coordinated approach to achieving the Region's long-term vision of building strong, caring, safe complete communities in a financially sustainable manner.

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For more information on this report, please contact Paul Bottomley at 1-877-464-9675 ext. 71530. Accessible formats or communication supports are available upon request.



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March 5, 2021  
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PROPOSED **2051**  
**FORECAST** and  
**LAND NEEDS**  
ASSESSMENT

MARCH 2021

## 1.0 SUMMARY

A fundamental component of the Region's Municipal Comprehensive Review is assessing land needs to accommodate Provincial Growth Plan population and employment forecasts for York Region to 2051 and the distribution of this growth by local municipality. A Place to Grow – Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2020 (Growth Plan) requires the Region to update the Regional Official Plan to be consistent with the Schedule 3 forecasts and use the prescribed Provincial Land Needs Assessment methodology. This report provides the background analysis for the Region's draft forecast and land needs assessment. It also outlines a proposed integrated growth management strategy to align growth and infrastructure planning to 2051. This report:

- Summarizes Provincial, Regional, and local municipal policy context for growth management
- Discusses market considerations and affordability issues with respect to the Region's housing forecast
- Summarizes key assumptions, steps, and results of applying the Provincial Land Needs Assessment methodology for both community and employment lands
- Proposes a distribution of growth and locations for urban expansion required to accommodate population and employment growth to 2051
- Provides local municipal population and employment forecasts to 2051
- Proposes minimum local municipal residential intensification and designated greenfield area density targets
- Proposes an integrated growth management strategy for aligning growth and infrastructure to maintain financial sustainability

The report includes the following key findings:

- York Region is well positioned to meet or exceed the Growth Plan minimum 50% intensification and 50 residents and jobs per hectare density targets
- 3,400 hectares of urban expansion are required to accommodate the Region's forecast to 2051 based on the Provincial land needs assessment
- The forecast meets the requirements of the Provincial Policy Statement, Growth Plan, and Regional Official Plan with respect to criteria for assessing locations for urban expansion while also minimizing growth-related risks to the Region
- An integrated approach to growth management is needed. Focusing growth in areas with existing infrastructure capacity and phasing infrastructure projects needed to accommodate new growth will be important in maintaining financial sustainability.
- Consultation on the proposed forecast and land needs assessment will occur in Q2 and early Q3 in advance of a draft Regional Official Plan anticipated for Fall 2021.



## Contents

1.0 SUMMARY .....	i
2.0 BACKGROUND .....	1
2.1 Provincial Policy Context .....	1
2.2 Regional Policy Context.....	4
2.3 Local Municipal Context.....	5
2.4 Stakeholder Consultation.....	6
3.0 CONTEXT – GROWTH MANAGEMENT IN YORK REGION .....	7
3.1 York Region has a strong foundation for accommodating growth .....	7
3.2 Infrastructure alignment and fiscal sustainability .....	9
3.3 Market Considerations.....	12
3.4 Housing Affordability .....	14
3.5 Planning for Intensification and Density .....	16
4.0 PLANNING FOR POPULATION .....	18
4.1 Overview .....	18
4.2 Population and housing growth to 2051 .....	19
4.3 Determining community land need.....	26
5.0 PLANNING FOR EMPLOYMENT .....	28
5.1 Overview .....	28
5.2 Employment growth by type to 2051 .....	29
5.3 Determining employment land need .....	32
6.0 URBAN EXPANSION CONSIDERATIONS .....	34
6.1 Available lands for Urban Expansion .....	34
6.2 Site specific requests for urban expansion.....	36
6.3 Considerations in developing options for urban expansion .....	36
6.4 Opportunities and risks associated with different urban expansion geographies.....	37
6.5 Proposed Distribution of Urban Expansion land needs to deliver the results of the Provincial Land Needs Assessment .....	40
7.0 KEY CONSIDERATIONS WHEN PLANNING TO ACHIEVE 2051 FORECASTS and MITIGATING GROWTH-RELATED RISK .....	45
7.1 Balancing Council priorities, Growth Plan policy, and market objectives .....	45
7.2 Integrating land use, infrastructure, and financial planning .....	46
7.3 Market considerations.....	51

7.4 Housing affordability .....	53
8.0 LOCAL MUNICIPAL POPULATION AND EMPLOYMENT FORECASTS TO 2051 .....	56
8.1 Population forecasts to 2051 .....	56
8.2 Employment forecasts to 2051 .....	61
9.0 INTENSIFICATION AND DENSITY TARGETS BY LOCAL MUNICIPALITY .....	66
9.1 Intensification Targets.....	66
9.2 Designated Greenfield Area Density Targets.....	69
10.0 INTEGRATED APPROACH TO GROWTH MANAGEMENT .....	70
10.1 Managing growth-related risks.....	70
10.2 Phasing and staging of growth.....	73
11.0 CONCLUSIONS AND NEXT STEPS .....	75

## 2.0 BACKGROUND

### 2.1 Provincial Policy Context

#### **The Provincial Policy Statement directs municipalities to plan for efficient and fiscally responsible land use patterns**

The Provincial Policy Statement, 2020 (PPS) provides overall policy direction on matters of provincial interest related to land use and development in Ontario and applies to municipalities throughout Ontario, including the Greater Golden Horseshoe (GGH), except where the Growth Plan or another provincial plan provides otherwise.

The PPS provides policy direction on several growth management-related areas. These include:

- Promoting efficient development and land use patterns which sustain the financial well-being of the Province and municipalities
- Accommodating an appropriate affordable and market-based range and mix of residential housing types, employment, institutional, recreation, park and open space and other uses to meet long-term needs
- Basing land use patterns within settlement areas on densities and a mix of land uses which efficiently use the available or planned infrastructure and public service facilities and avoid the need for their unjustified and/or uneconomical expansion
- Planning for settlement areas that are transit supportive where transit exists, is planned, or may be developed, and that also support active transportation
- Identifying appropriate locations and promoting opportunities for transit-supportive development and accommodating a significant supply and range of housing options through intensification and redevelopment based on availability of infrastructure.

#### **The Growth Plan provides Regional population and employment forecasts to 2051**

The Growth Plan provides Provincial policy direction on how and where to grow. The Growth Plan identifies that the population and employment forecasts contained in Schedule 3 or such higher forecasts as established by upper- or single-tier municipalities in the GGH through a Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR) be used for planning and managing growth to 2051. York Region is forecast to reach a population of 2.02 million and 990,000 jobs by 2051.

The Growth Plan principles related to growth management that:

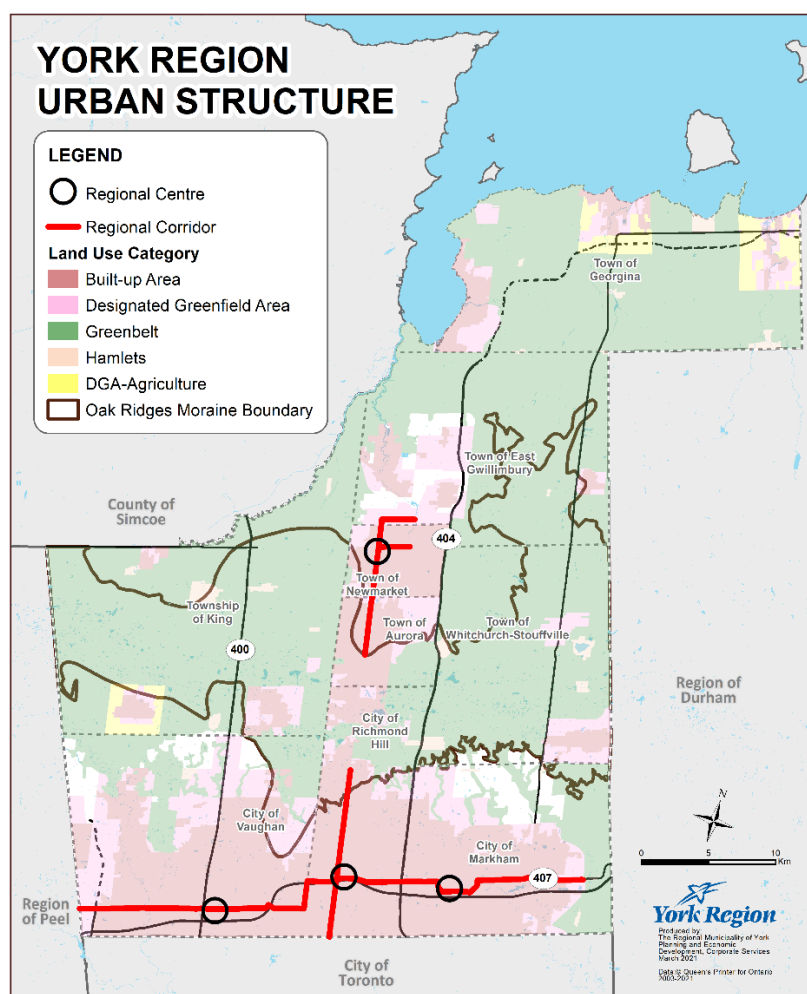
- Support the achievement of complete communities
- Prioritize intensification and higher densities in strategic growth areas to make efficient use of land and infrastructure and support transit viability
- Support a range and mix of housing options to serve all sizes, incomes, and ages of households

- Improve the integration of land use planning with planning and investment in infrastructure and public service facilities

### **Growth Plan intensification and density targets are inputs to the forecast and land needs assessment**

The Growth Plan establishes minimum intensification and density targets for upper and single-tier municipalities to support the achievement of growth management objectives for the GGH. York Region is required to plan for a minimum Region-wide intensification target of 50% and a minimum density target of 50 residents and jobs per hectare in the designated greenfield area. Figure 1 shows York Region land use categories. The built-up area must accommodate at least 50% of all new housing units constructed in the Region on an annual basis. By 2051, the density of designated greenfield and whitebelt areas (if required by the land needs assessment) must collectively meet a minimum density target of 50 residents and jobs per hectare.

**Figure 1**  
**York Region Land Use Categories**



Source: York Region Planning and Economic Development Branch

### **York Region's land needs are determined using the mandatory Provincial Land Needs Assessment methodology**

In May 2018, the Province issued a standardized approach for assessing land needs in the form of the [Land Needs Assessment Methodology for the Greater Golden Horseshoe](#). A revised Land Needs Assessment Methodology was issued in August 2020, providing a common method to determine the quantity of land needed to accommodate forecast population and employment growth. It does not determine the location of any potential settlement area boundary expansions. All upper and single-tier municipalities in the GGH, including York Region, are required to use the Land Needs Assessment Methodology to determine land needs to 2051.

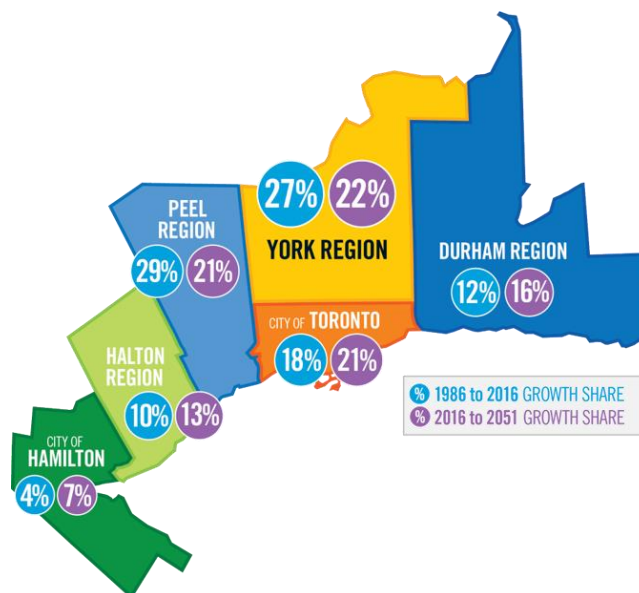
### **Settlement area boundary expansions may only occur through a Municipal Comprehensive Review**

Under the Growth Plan, settlement area boundary expansions may only occur through a MCR where it has been demonstrated through applying the Provincial Land Needs Assessment that sufficient opportunities to accommodate forecasted growth are not available through intensification and through the designated greenfield area. In addition, a settlement area boundary expansion may occur in advance of a MCR subject to Growth Plan criteria, including the specification that the amount of the expansion is no larger than 40 hectares. York Region is currently undertaking its MCR, therefore, the latter policy is not applicable.

### **The Province continues to forecast the highest share of growth to York Region among all municipalities in the Greater Golden Horseshoe**

The Growth Plan forecasts continue to recognize York Region as a prime location for attracting significant population and employment growth. As shown in Figure 2, York Region is forecast to accommodate the highest share (22%) of population growth of any municipality in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA) over the 2016 to 2051 planning horizon. The forecasts build on the historical trend that saw York Region attract 27% of the GTHA's population growth between 1986 and 2016 – second only to Peel Region for that period. During the 2016 to 2051 period, York Region is also forecast to accommodate 25% of GTHA employment growth.

**Figure 2**  
**Distribution of historical and forecast growth by GTHA municipality**



Source: York Region Planning and Economic Development Branch

Similar to other municipalities in the GTHA, population growth in York Region is anticipated to be driven by strong immigration to Canada. York Region is also anticipated to build on its economic success with its existing diverse economic base, healthy supply of employment lands, and investments in major transit infrastructure including the Toronto-York Spadina Subway Extension to Vaughan and the planned extension of the Yonge North Subway Extension to Richmond Hill.

## 2.2 Regional Policy Context

### Forecasts provide the foundation for infrastructure and financial planning

Population and employment forecasts at the Regional, local municipal, and small area geography level (e.g. traffic zones) are used for a range of infrastructure and financial planning purposes. Growth forecasts, generated through an iterative process, are integral to ensure financially sustainable planning of water and wastewater and transportation infrastructure projects to accommodate growth in the Region, including the determination of required servicing capacity, timing, and location of projects. Costs associated with these projects along with forecasts of residential and non-residential development are used as inputs to the Region's development charges background study and for projecting annual development charge revenue. The Region's population and employment forecasts are also used for a wide range of Regional and local municipal service planning and programs.

### York Region's forecast and land needs assessment are informed by other MCR studies

The Growth Plan is implemented by York Region and other upper and single-tier municipalities through a MCR and Regional Official Plan update. Throughout 2019 and 2020, background

reports were presented to Regional Council on Employment Area Conversions, Planning for Intensification, Planning for Employment, Major Transit Station Areas, Planning for Density in New Communities, Natural Systems Planning, Planning for Agriculture, and Aligning Growth and Infrastructure. These reports have informed the proposed forecast and land needs assessment presented in this report.

### **Vision 2051, the York Region Official Plan, and the Strategic Plan provide principles for forecasting growth in the Region**

Vision 2051 sets out the long-term blueprint for York Region's future. A series of goals and actions inform decisions of Regional Council, corporate strategies, and the work of the Region. The eight goal areas in Vision 2051 articulate the vision for York Region in 2051. A number of these goal areas are related to growth management including: Liveable Cities and Complete Communities, Living Sustainably, Appropriate Housing for All Ages and Stages and an Innovation Economy, among others.

The Regional Official Plan implements goals of Vision 2051, providing land use planning, resource protection, and growth management policies to guide how the Region will grow. The York Region Official Plan is based on achieving the triple bottom line objectives of fostering a sustainable natural environment, healthy communities, and economic vitality. Regional Official Plan policies, including those related to growth management and forecasting, are being updated as part of the MCR.

Building upon the Regional Official Plan, the Region's Strategic Plan 2019 to 2023 sets out four key priorities which also provide direction on how the Region should grow. These priorities include increasing economic prosperity, supporting community health, safety, and well-being, building sustainable communities and protecting the environment, and delivering trusted and efficient services. The principles embodied in the Regional Official Plan and Strategic Plan are reflected in the Region's forecast and land needs assessment.

## **2.3 Local Municipal Context**

### **The Region distributes population and employment growth to local municipalities**

The Growth Plan population and employment forecast to 2051 is distributed by York Region to the nine local municipalities through the MCR and update of the Regional Official Plan. Local municipalities are required to update their official plans to be in conformity with the updated forecasts within one year of the Regional Official Plan being approved by the Province. This requirement emphasizes the need for continued collaboration between Regional and local municipal staff in developing the local municipal forecasts.

### **Local municipalities must plan to achieve minimum intensification and density targets identified in the updated Regional Official Plan**

As part of the MCR, the Region assigns minimum intensification targets to each local municipality to contribute to the Region meeting the Growth Plan minimum 50% target. Local municipalities are required update intensification targets in official plans to be consistent with the new target and undertake any additional official plan and/or secondary plan updates that may be required in order to meet or exceed the minimum target.

The Growth Plan also requires that the Region assign a designated greenfield area density target to each local municipality to ensure the minimum 50 residents and jobs per hectare target is achieved in designated greenfield areas across the Region. This target will be incorporated into local municipal official plans and implemented through secondary plans, as required.

## **2.4 Stakeholder Consultation**

### **Local municipal forecasts were prepared in consultation with local municipalities, the building industry, and the Region's Planning Advisory Committee**

#### **Local Municipalities**

Local municipal staff were consulted on inputs and assumptions to the Region's forecast and land needs assessment including: intensification and density assumptions, preliminary local municipal intensification targets, designated greenfield area housing supply, employment area conversions, employment area density targets, infrastructure planning opportunities and constraints, and urban expansion considerations. Consultations occurred through individual meetings and as part of the regular Regional MCR Local Municipal Working Group meetings.

Several municipalities requested a higher local municipal intensification target while others expressed general agreement with the proposed targets. Some municipalities expressed the desire for higher population forecasts that would require servicing solutions beyond those currently contemplated as being financially sustainable. Other comments included the need to justify the Region-wide annual rate of growth to 2051 given the recent slow pace of growth, that the overall Regional intensification target is too low, and that the Region should prioritize infrastructure investment that provides capacity to local municipalities with the highest shares of intensification and greenfield growth. Some concern was also expressed with the concept of identifying lands not required for growth to 2051 as 'Future Urban', as discussed later in the report.

In December 2019, Town of East Gwillimbury Council endorsed a report recommending the remainder of the whitebelt lands in the Town be included as Urban Area as part of the MCR in order to allow the Town to comprehensively plan for future employment and residential growth.

#### **Building Industry and Land Development Association (BILD)**

The development industry, through BILD, was consulted through the BILD York Region Chapter, BILD Advisory Group, and the BILD Technical Working Group where draft forecast assumptions were presented. BILD's primary comment was the need to provide sufficient urban expansion land to provide a market-based range of housing types. There was general agreement on the concept of enhancing the alignment of growth and infrastructure to support the financial sustainability of the Region.

#### **Planning Advisory Committee**

Regional staff presented the draft forecast and Land Needs Assessment to the York Region Planning Advisory Committee on February 17, 2021. Planning Advisory Committee members



inquired about the potential for assuming a higher rate of intensification to capitalize on infrastructure investments and planned growth in Regional Centres and discussed how a diversity and inclusion lens could be applied to implementing and achieving 2051 forecasts.

Extensive consultation on the proposed forecast and land needs assessment will take place following release of this report. Please see Attachment 5 for further details.

### **3.0 CONTEXT – GROWTH MANAGEMENT IN YORK REGION**

#### **Population and job growth are fundamental to economic vitality and community well-being**

Population and job growth in the right locations are critical factors in developing complete communities that provide opportunities to live, work, learn, and play locally. Complete communities improve health outcomes, reduce impacts on the environment, and reduce reliance on personal vehicle use by offering improved transit access and greater active transportation. Communities that offer a mix of land uses and alternatives to the automobile offer optimal conditions to support employment growth and to attract highly skilled and talented employees. A region that can attract and keep high quality jobs across a range of sectors will enhance economic stability for the entire community and raise the overall standard of living. Population and employment growth also ensure financial stability by growing the tax base and financing high quality capital infrastructure and community services to improve the overall standard of living for residents.

#### **3.1 York Region has a strong foundation for accommodating growth**

##### **York Region has strategic locational advantages within the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area to attract and retain population and employment growth**

York Region is one of the fastest growing municipalities in Canada and is an integral part of the GTHA market area. York Region's diverse communities, emerging urban centres, competitive industries, attractive natural environment, and strategic location in the GTHA continue to attract both population and employment growth. Attributes are listed below:

- The Region benefits from core underlying demographic and economic attributes of strong population and employment growth, a highly educated labour force, and a high quality of living. In addition to being Ontario's fastest growing large municipality and third largest business hub, York Region's median household income ranks second only to Halton Region among all municipalities in Ontario (2016 Census).
- The Region's location in the GTHA is strategic from a goods movement perspective. York Region is within a one-day drive to the United States market with over 140 million people and a one-hour flight to global markets such as New York, Philadelphia, Boston, Chicago, and Detroit. It is located in close proximity to Toronto Pearson Airport, is home to both the CP intermodal facility and the CN MacMillan rail yard, and has a strong network of 400- series highways which connect the Region to both the broader provincial and national markets as well as the United States border.

- Transportation infrastructure such as the Viva Bus Rapid Transit system and Toronto-York Spadina Subway Extension to the Vaughan Metropolitan Centre (VMC) support significant office and residential construction. The future extension of the Yonge subway line to Richmond Hill, the anticipated arrival of two-way all day GO transit service, and continued construction on Bus Rapid Transit corridors will continue to be a catalyst for residential and office development in the Region's Centres and Corridors.

As the Region's urban structure continues to evolve and the Regional Centres and Corridors mature, these core attributes will help maintain and promote continued competitiveness for York Region as a top location in the Greater Toronto Area.

### **Regional Official Plan provides a policy framework for supporting and managing growth**

The 2010 Regional Official Plan provides a strong foundation for planning for population and employment growth in the Region by supporting a long-term vision for building healthy complete communities in a way that preserves the natural heritage and agricultural systems. Regional Official Plan policies have shaped the development of the Region's residential communities through an urban structure based on centres and corridors surrounded by the urban area and a number of rural towns of villages as well as retail and commercial nodes and employment lands. Each of these areas play a role in accommodating forecasted growth.

Policy directions in the Regional Official Plan fundamental to growth management include:

- A planned urban structure anchored by centres and corridors that provides a focus for intensification, mixed use development, and live/work opportunities
- Transit supportive and pedestrian oriented, complete communities
- Protection of the Greenbelt, Oak Ridges Moraine, and a robust agricultural system
- Transit investment to support intensification
- Timely delivery of required water and wastewater infrastructure
- Fiscal responsibility
- Job creation to match labour force growth and protection of employment areas
- Housing diversity and affordable housing to offer Regional residents housing choices and for attracting a diverse and skilled labour force

Updates to the Regional Official Plan aim to build upon and strengthen the existing policy framework. Updates will address changes to the Growth Plan and reflect the changing nature of population and employment in the Region as a result of historical and future trends.

### **Planning framework and pattern of growth has changed since the current Regional Official Plan was approved in 2010**

Since the Regional Official Plan was last updated in 2010 with forecasts to 2031, a variety of trends and factors have changed pace and structure of growth in the Region. These factors include:

- The pace of population and employment growth in York Region has been slower in recent years than both the Growth Plan and Regional Official Plan anticipated.
- External factors have resulted in a growth distribution across the Region that differs from what was forecast in 2010. For example, the Upper York Water Reclamation Centre has been delayed to 2028 at the earliest, impacting the timing of growth in East Gwillimbury, Newmarket, and Aurora.
- The Toronto-York Spadina Subway Extension completed in 2017 has resulted in unprecedented growth in the VMC, with current planning applications surpassing 2031 forecasts for this area. The Yonge North Subway Extension scheduled for completion in 2030 is anticipated to be a further catalyst for growth in the Region.
- The introduction of Major Transit Station Areas through the Growth Plan has placed a greater emphasis on intensification and re-enforced the symbiotic relationship between transit investment and transit-oriented development.
- As a result of several factors, the Region's 2010 New Community Areas have only recently received secondary plan approval and most are ready to start delivering complete communities in the coming years, adding a significant amount of greenfield development opportunity.
- While the Region has continued to see healthy levels of job growth over the last 10 years, there has not been the corresponding growth in new employment related construction in either employment areas or new office space. The City of Toronto has attracted a significant share of office development in the GTHA in recent years.
- The continued emergence of e-commerce was expected but has been accelerated with the current COVID-19 crisis. E-commerce is changing the retail landscape across the GTHA and is also increasing demand for low density warehouse and distribution centres in employment areas.
- The Region's employment land base is under increased pressure for conversion to non-employment uses as evidenced by the 70 conversion requests received as part of the current MCR, 40 of which were approved by Regional Council in [October 2020](#).

### **3.2 Infrastructure alignment and fiscal sustainability**

#### **The municipal comprehensive review is a fully integrated initiative that aligns land use planning, infrastructure investment, and financial sustainability**

The Growth Plan requires growth management be undertaken through an integrated approach which coordinates land use, infrastructure, and financial planning. Infrastructure investment is leveraged by directing growth to intensification areas, delivering transit supportive densities and prioritizing servicing capacity in strategic growth areas. The distribution of growth should be supported by infrastructure master plans, watershed planning, and other relevant studies.

These principles are translated into the Region's forecast and land needs assessment to 2051 by implementing a comprehensive approach to land use planning which aims to optimize existing infrastructure and consider financial implications. Through the MCR, there has been

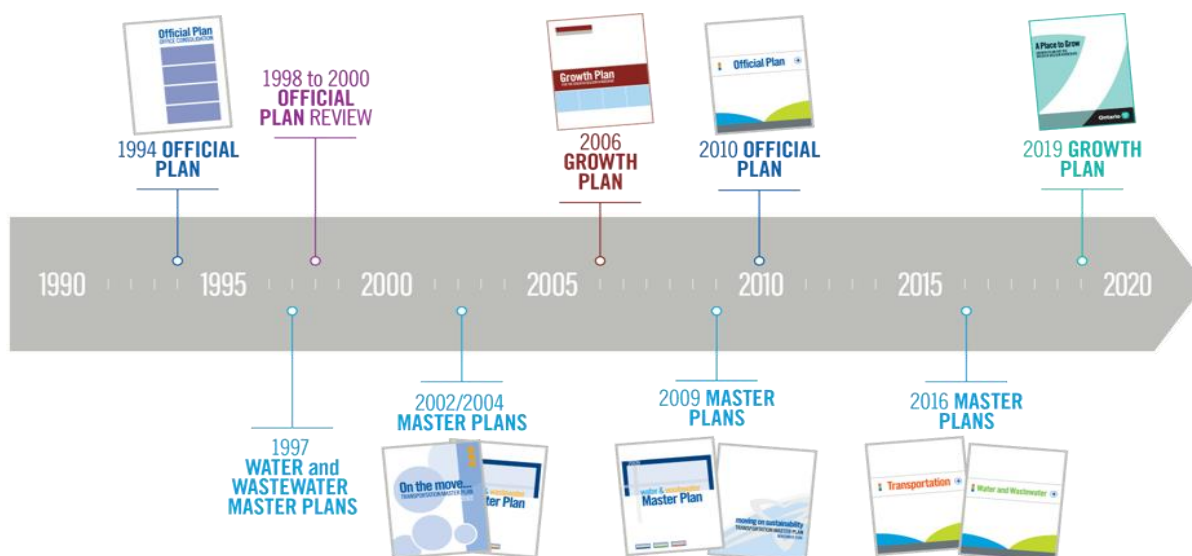
emphasis on a collaborative and iterative approach to population distribution and staging to align with infrastructure in a financially sustainable manner. Under this approach, infrastructure capacity and timing considerations play a prominent role in distributing provincial growth forecasts to the local municipalities.

### **Integrated planning has been undertaken in York Region since 1994**

The concept of comprehensive and integrated planning that incorporates infrastructure and financial planning considerations along with growth forecasts is not a new concept for York Region. Councils' significant transportation, transit, water and wastewater infrastructure investments have led to the Region's economic success and have set the stage for continued success moving forward. As shown in Figure 3, this includes updates to Regional forecasts, infrastructure Master Plans, and development charges background studies. Since 2006, this process has been guided by the Provincial Growth Plan forecasts and growth management policy directions. The MCR provides an opportunity to re-assess the Region's growth trajectory and distribution to ensure that growth is financially sustainable.

**Figure 3**

### **Integrated Planning in York Region**

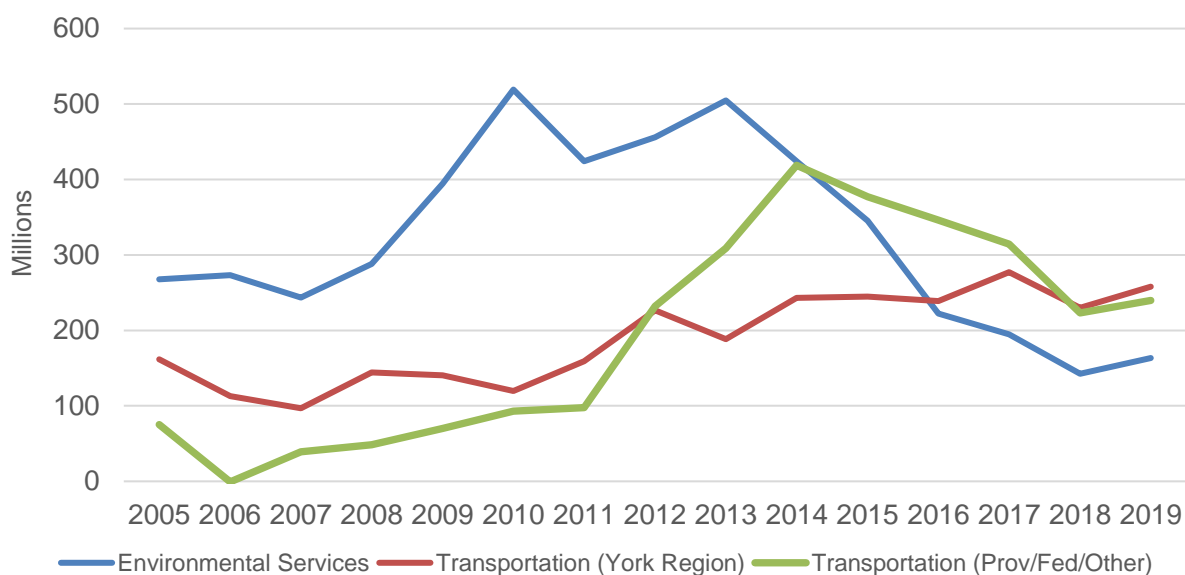


Source: York Region Planning and Economic Development Branch

### **York Region has made significant water, wastewater, and transportation infrastructure investment to support growth**

Regional Council and federal, provincial, and local municipal governments have made significant investments in major infrastructure to support growth in York Region. As of 2020, the total replacement value of the Region's assets was approximately \$15 billion. As shown in Figure 4, over the past 15 years, the Region has invested more than \$4.8 billion in water and wastewater infrastructure mainly for servicing growth, but also for asset rehabilitation and replacement. Optimizing the use of this existing infrastructure investment will create fiscal capacity to finance the additional infrastructure investment needed to support growth to 2051.

**Figure 4**  
**Infrastructure Investments 2005-2019**



Source: York Region Planning and Economic Development Branch

Since 2005, the Region and third-party partners have also invested over \$2.0 billion in road infrastructure and \$3.7 billion in transit infrastructure, including York Region Transit capital improvements, the Bus Rapid Transit system, and the Toronto-York Spadina Subway Extension. These investments have acted as catalysts for growth in the Region's Centers and Corridors, most notably in VMC. The Yonge North Subway Extension to Richmond Hill is another significant transit investment and will unlock the full development potential of Richmond Hill Centre, Langstaff Gateway, and southern Yonge Street corridor.

**Infrastructure investments have been fundamental to the Region's economic success and support continued growth essential to maintaining fiscal sustainability**

The Region's capital investments since the early 2000s, along with the long-range integrated planning, have formed the foundation for supporting significant growth. Between 2001 & 2019, employment increased by 270,000 jobs. The Region is also home to over 52,000 businesses including over 500 foreign companies. With over 4,300 Information and Communications Technology (ICT) companies, York Region is the second largest technology cluster in Canada, and largest on a per capita basis.

As a result of these significant investments, the Region continues to have significant capacity for growth in the Region without requiring any new infrastructure. York Region can service 223,000 people (approximately 75,000 units) with this existing infrastructure already in place. Capacity for growth exists in all nine local municipalities as well as in key growth areas of the Region including Centres and Corridors and a number of greenfield communities.

### **York Region is entering a mature state of growth**

While Council has committed significant investments to infrastructure, the Region has also been experiencing a lower than forecast rate of growth over the last number of years. To help keep growth affordable, a Fiscal Strategy was adopted in 2014 to address escalating debt stemming from lower growth than anticipated and the subsequent lower development charge revenues.

Significant progress has been made in stabilizing the Regions' financial situation since instituting the Fiscal Strategy. Several growth-related projects have been deferred in recent years to better align with revised development charge collection forecasts. The annual budget process provides an opportunity for the Region to better align infrastructure projects with actual growth and development charges collections to mitigate the impacts of slower growth.

If the Region continues to experience lower than forecast growth – a trend that may continue in the short term as a result of the current economic downturn associated with coronavirus disease (COVID-19) – it is increasingly important to capitalize on existing infrastructure before making new investments and to stage investments according to the actual pace of growth.

## **3.3 Market Considerations**

### **Watson's Foundational Housing Analysis provides recommendations on how to balance the market with policy objectives**

The Provincial Growth Plan, PPS, and Land Needs Assessment Methodology have placed greater emphasis on the role of the market and meeting market demand when determining housing forecasts to meet 2051 population forecasts. Watson & Associates Economists Limited (Watson) was retained to help understand the impact of the market on population growth. Their work was focused on assessing all factors impacting the Region's recent and future rate of growth, including supply and demand factors, as well as housing affordability. An important consideration in the development of the 2051 forecast is the need to balance market demand, Provincial Growth Plan targets and policy objectives, housing supply, and housing affordability to help achieve the forecast and continue to work towards complete communities for the Region's residents.

Watson has undertaken a Foundational Housing Analysis for the Region. The analysis consisted of two deliverables:

- A Preliminary Findings Brief discussing factors impacting recent slow growth in the Region and the link to housing affordability.
- A Final Report which provided a review/commentary of the Region's preliminary forecast in the context of the market and the potential impacts of affordability on the future market. This report also provided commentary on the opportunities and challenges with meeting 2051 forecasts and recommendations on how to balance market, housing affordability, and policy objectives in the Region's work.

**Foundational Housing Analysis identifies a number of factors and trends impacting the market which were important considerations in preparing updated forecasts**

Through their Preliminary Brief, Watson identified many factors currently influencing the housing market that were important considerations informing the Region's updated forecasts and land needs assessment. The following were considerations for staff when preparing updated forecasts:

- The long-term growth outlook remains positive
- The housing market will continue to steadily shift from low-density to medium- and high-density housing forms
- The Region's major transit investments combined with planning and economic development initiatives will be key to the Region's success related to intensification
- Townhouses represent a more affordable option in the ground related market compared to detached homes as these products are an average of 40% less expensive.
- Employment growth opportunities will be increasingly knowledge-driven
- The aging population is putting downward pressure on population growth and labour force participation
- Affordable housing supply constraints are impeding the Region's growth outlook
- Working with public and private partners to provide a more diverse supply of housing, including purpose-built rental housing options, will be important

**COVID-19 is likely to have profound near-term impacts as well as potential long-term impacts on the pace and nature of growth**

The recent impacts associated with COVID-19 on global and national economic conditions have been severe. Canada's G.D.P. declined by approximately 39% in the second quarter of 2020 (April to June) and although job growth has since begun to recover, employment levels are expected to remain below pre-COVID levels until at least late 2021. Immigration levels to Canada are also anticipated to remain low because of travel restrictions. This has the potential to reduce population growth levels and soften the housing market in areas of Ontario where population growth is heavily dependent on immigration. Within the GGH, the City of Toronto, Peel Region, and York Region are likely to be the most heavily impacted. In addition to its broader impacts on the economy, COVID-19 is also anticipated to accelerate changes in work and commerce because of technological advances which were already occurring prior to the pandemic. These trends are anticipated to have a direct influence on commercial and industrial real estate needs over both the near and longer terms.

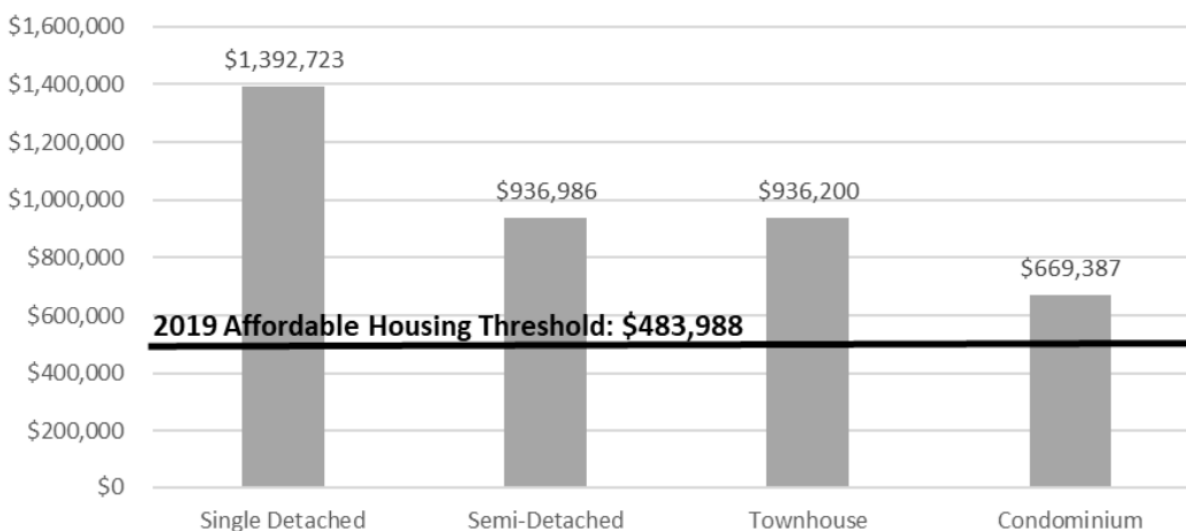
In light of these anticipated trends, staff considered the likely impacts to the nature of employment in updated forecasts to 2051. That said, given the full impacts of the pandemic are unlikely to be known for some time, most adjustments were within forecast periods early in the planning horizon. Significant variations to both the pace and structure of population and employment growth were not contemplated.

### 3.4 Housing Affordability

#### Annual Measuring and Monitoring shows York Region becoming increasingly unaffordable

To apply the provincial definition of affordable for ownership purposes, household income is calculated at the 60th percentile to set the affordable housing threshold (i.e. the maximum house price that the lowest earning 60% of households can afford). The affordability of new ownership housing and the supply of new purpose-built rental housing is monitored annually. The [2019 monitoring report](#) advised Council that only 11% of new ownership housing units were affordable, 99% of which were studio or 1-bedroom condominiums and not suitable for families. The report also advised that only 3% of new housing was classified as purpose built rental housing. In 2019 the affordable housing threshold was approximately \$484,000. As shown in Figure 5, the average cost of all new housing types is greater than this threshold, and the gap between the affordable housing threshold and average market prices is a barrier to home ownership in York Region for many households.

**Figure 5**  
**York Region Average House Prices(new), 2019**



Source: York Region Planning and Economic Development Branch

Housing affordability was an important consideration in the development of the Region's structure type forecast. Ensuring a range and mix of affordable housing options through both technical assumptions in the land needs assessment as well as implementation of plans and programs following the MCR will be important in the Region's ability to achieve its 2051 forecast.

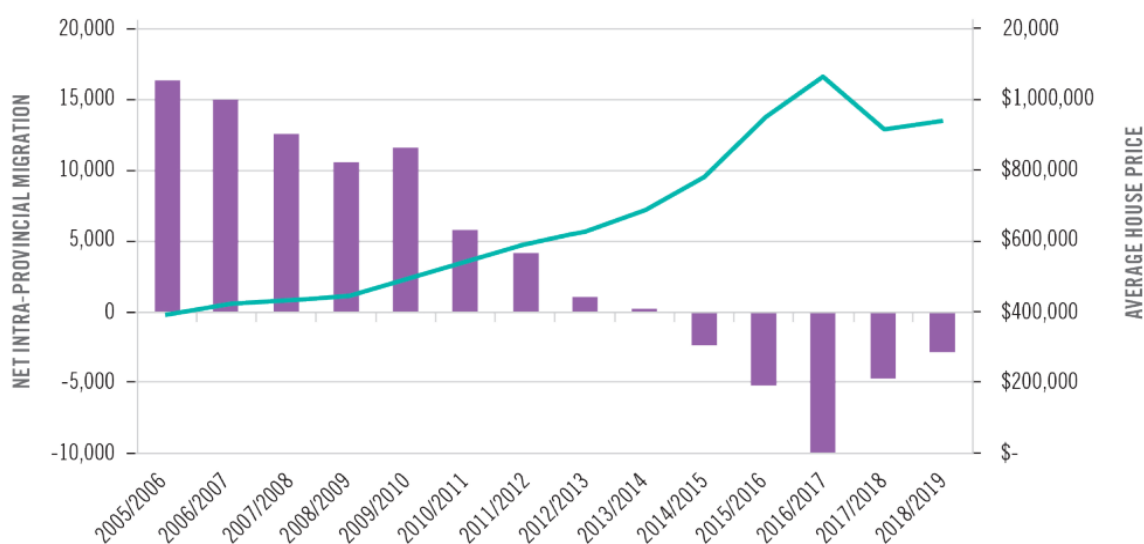


**Watson has identified that a direct correlation can be drawn between housing affordability and slow growth**

Based on their research, Watson determined that a lack of housing options across York Region, most notably affordable low-density housing and purpose-built rental, has likely contributed to limiting the Region's recent population growth. As shown in Figure 6, Watson have drawn a direct correlation between house prices and intra-provincial migration, traditionally a strong driver of population growth in York Region.

**Figure 6**

**York Region House Prices vs Net Intra-Provincial Migration, 2006-2019**



Source: York Region Planning and Economic Development Branch

Key findings from Watson's Preliminary Brief with respect to housing affordability include:

- York Region has a declining share of residential development activity and is the only municipality in the GGH likely to experience a slower annual population growth rate between 2016 and 2021 compared to the previous 5-year period
- Lower population growth in combination with the aging population has resulted in increased need to attract younger families for economic development purposes. The accommodation of a skilled labour force and attraction of new businesses are strongly linked and positively reinforce one another.
- While there has been a decline in ground related development, high density ownership units have seen increased activity. That said, these units are generally smaller sized and may not be suitable for families.
- The high-density rental market is limited by few new rental developments and low vacancy of existing rental units

- Durham Region and Simcoe County have the most affordable new single-detached homes in the broader regional market area, with average costs 54% and 40% of the average cost in York Region respectively, likely drawing demand from York Region for this product type
- Townhouse units may provide more affordable ground related housing options, particularly in northern York Region.
- Housing affordability is a key component of quality of place and directly linked to population and economic growth potential as well as municipal competitiveness.

Through their Preliminary Brief, Watson identified that future growth and development opportunities may also be impacted by affordability challenges. Watson identified that addressing the interconnection between the Region's competitive economic position and its longer-term housing needs by market segment is important in realizing the Region's 2051 population and employment forecast. Potential impacts directly related to the Region's 2051 forecast are explored further in Watson's Final Report (Executive Summary in Attachment 3) and discussed in Section 7 below.

### **3.5 Planning for Intensification and Density**

#### **Growth Plan 50% intensification target supports Council's infrastructure investment and is consistent with the York Region market**

A fundamental metric informing community land needs is the Growth Plan minimum 50% Region-wide intensification target which York Region must plan to achieve. In addition to being a requirement of the Growth Plan, past direction from Regional Council provides support to plan for 50% intensification. Planning for 50% intensification also supports Council's priorities when managing and planning for growth in the Region's centres and corridors by supporting investments in infrastructure, by offering a mix and range of affordable housing options in compact transit supportive communities, and by supporting market demand. The target further supports and builds on the Region's economic development success by advancing the Region's city building objectives and by helping to attract new businesses and jobs for residents.

Planning for half the Region's growth in the existing built up area demonstrates a continued commitment by the Region to intensification. Not only does it support past infrastructure investments, but it substantiates investments that will continue to be required to support growth to 2051. Being the only municipality in the Greater Toronto Area outside of Toronto with access to an existing and future subway and with over \$3.2 billion having been invested in rapid transit infrastructure by all three levels of government over the past 15 years, York Region is well-positioned to achieve this target. Planning for 50% intensification positions the Region for a better return on this investment through development charges. A significant share of growth in intensification areas also demonstrates to senior levels of government that York Region is invested in, and committed to, city building and sustainable transit-oriented development.

York Region has significant potential to accommodate growth in the built-up area to meet or exceed the minimum 50% target. In planning for 78 Major Transit Station Areas, the Region has the potential to accommodate 505,000 people and 195,000 jobs or more in these locations. The

planned growth potential for these areas significantly exceeds the forecast demand in the built-up area by 2051. Further, as of mid-2020, York Region had an estimated supply of 70,000 units under application in the built-up area. If built, these units would account for approximately 50% of the total forecast to 2051.

An intensification rate of 50% is consistent with what the market has been delivering on a sustained basis since 2006. Achieving 50% intensification over a sustained period to 2051 does require a significant shift in family households (couples with or without kids, lone-parent, multi-family households) into medium and high-density structure types. Planning for a 50% intensification target provides for a balanced mix of ground-related and higher-density housing options for York Region residents. Moving forward, staff will carefully monitor the intensification rate, greenfield supply, and phasing of new communities to ensure the pace of growth is consistent with Regional Official Plan objectives while maintaining the Region's financial sustainability.

#### **Watson has identified 50% intensification is appropriate over the long term**

Based on analysis from Watson and Associates (Attachment 3), a 50% intensification target appropriately reflects recent development trends, active residential development plans, and evolving longer-term demographic and socioeconomic trends within York Region. Watson notes that the Region could exceed a 50% intensification target in the near to medium-term based on the current supply of active development applications. Once servicing constraints in the designated greenfield area, particularly across northern York Region have been addressed, the likelihood of achieving greater than 50% over the long term is less certain. Watson, therefore, conclude that a 50% allocation of housing growth to the built-up area is appropriate.

Through their assessment of the Region's forecast on housing affordability, Watson further identifies the appropriateness of the 50% intensification target in that it reflects a continued shift from low to medium and high-density structure types across the GTHA. This shift, likely driven in part by growing affordability challenges in low density structure types, will continue to drive demand for a more diverse range of medium- and high-density options in the Region's built-up area. Planning for higher-density rental and ownership units, particularly in areas supported by transit and with access to amenities, will also help support the growing number of seniors anticipated over the forecast horizon.

#### **Planning for a designated greenfield area density target of 60 people and jobs per hectare reflects what the market is delivering and allows for more accurate infrastructure planning**

To forecast growth in the Region's urban expansion areas, the designated greenfield area density has implications on infrastructure timing and delivery, determining pipe size, planning for new roads and road improvements, and estimating future transit ridership. It also has impacts on how the Region calculates development charge rates and estimates development charge revenue and tax levy growth. If planned growth and densities do not match market realities, development charge rates may not achieve effective cost recovery. For these reasons, it is important to be as accurate as possible about densities and associated growth anticipated in urban expansion areas. As illustrated in the June 2020 [Planning for Density in New](#)

[Communities](#) report, recently built communities in the Region's designated greenfield area are achieving an average of 62 people and jobs per hectare. Since the York Region market is delivering over 60 people and jobs per hectare in existing greenfield areas, assuming the minimum 50 density in the Growth Plan, would not support infrastructure or financial planning compared to the market reality.

## 4.0 PLANNING FOR POPULATION

### 4.1 Overview

#### **Proposed forecast meets the land need determined by applying the Provincial Land Needs Assessment Methodology**

Municipalities are required to use the provincial Land Needs Assessment methodology in determining land needs to 2051. The methodology provides municipalities with the requirements that must be completed as part of the MCR to determine the total quantity of land needed to accommodate forecasted growth to the Plan horizon, including the need for any settlement area boundary expansions. The land needs assessment methodology does not determine the location of these lands. The location of urban expansion is determined by criteria in the Growth Plan and policies in the Regional Official Plan.

The methodology provides municipalities with the key components as part of the land needs assessment process. These include considering market demand and Growth Plan policy targets for intensification and density, accommodating all employment types, determining community and employment land needs based on a demand-supply analysis, and planning for infrastructure that is needed to meet complete communities objectives to 2051.

#### **Community land need premised on achieving minimum intensification and density targets**

Community lands account for a significant share of the Region's settlement areas and are where residential, personal services, retail, cultural, recreational, and human services uses are located. Determining whether additional land is required to accommodate growth to 2051 in community lands is a function of two key Growth Plan targets:

- Minimum 50% intensification in the built-up area
- Minimum of 50 people and jobs per hectare in the designated greenfield area

The intensification target refers to the share of unit growth that is required to be accommodated in the built-up area (Figure 1) each year between the time the MCR is approved and 2051. A target of 50% is higher than the current Official Plan target of 40% but is consistent with what the Region has been achieving, on average, since 2006.

The designated greenfield area density target reflects the minimum number of people and jobs that are required to be accommodated on a per hectare basis in the Region's designated greenfield area. The Region's existing Official Plan sets an overall designated greenfield area density target of 50 people and jobs per hectare and a 70 people and jobs per hectare density

target in New Community Areas, however this was based on a different provincial methodology applicable at that time. An important difference in the Growth Plan, 2019 is that designated greenfield area density is calculated only on community lands rather than a combined density on community and employment lands. This is a fundamental difference in the new methodology as densities in employment areas are traditionally lower than those in community areas.

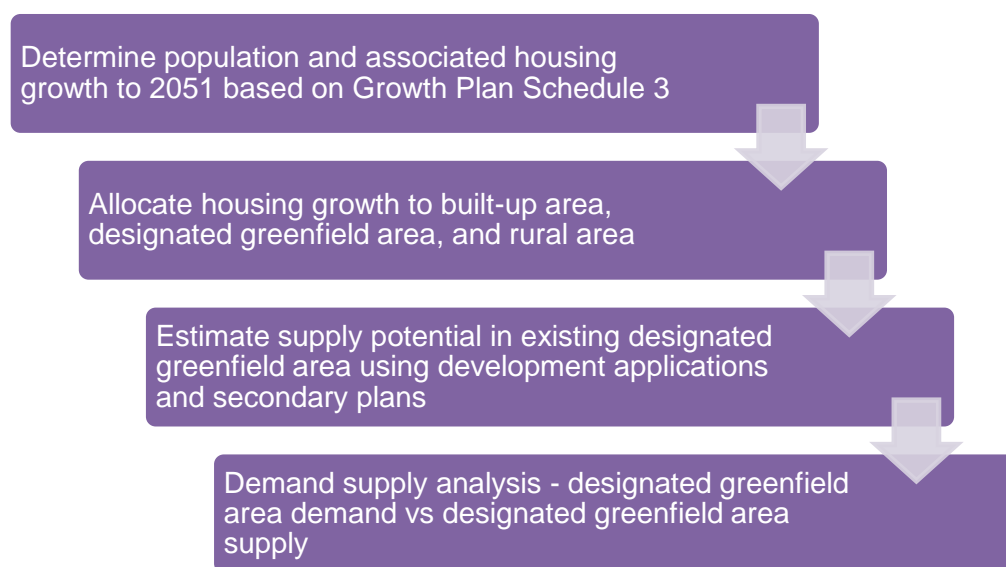
This change results in existing designated greenfield area densities being higher than those previously assumed in the 2010 Regional Official Plan. As a result, and at the direction of Regional Council, staff have reviewed the 70 people and jobs density target for new community areas and have used a density target of 60 people and jobs per hectare in New Community Areas for the purposes of land needs assessment. 60 people and jobs per hectare is what the market has been delivering in recently planned or developed communities.

### **There are four key steps to assessing community land needs**

The Provincial Land Needs Assessment methodology for determining community land needs can be broken down to the following four main tasks, outlined in Figure 7.

**Figure 7**

### **Community Land Needs Assessment Methodology**



Source: York Region Planning and Economic Development Branch

## **4.2 Population and housing growth to 2051**

### **Housing unit growth required to accommodate 876,000 people by 2051 is informed by demographic inputs**

Overall population growth to reach the Region's Growth Plan 2051 target is generated using the 2016 Census as the base year. According to Statistics Canada, the Region's population was 1,144,000 in 2016, resulting in a forecast growth of 876,000 people by 2051.

To translate this growth into units, the Region uses the cohort (age group) survival method to age the population and calculate future growth based on assumptions related to fertility rates, mortality rates, and net migration. Among these factors, net migration is the most sensitive and will continue to play a key role in population growth in York Region and the broader GTHA.

Age-specific household formation rates are then applied to the population by age in 2051 to estimate total housing demand. Different rates are used for family (couples with or without kids, lone-parent, multi-family households) and non-family (one person or two or more person non-census family households) households with an overall shift throughout the forecast to a higher share of non-family households in line with recent trends.

Based on an observation that non-family household formation rates are generally lower in York Region than elsewhere in the GTHA, rates were assumed to increase (from an average of 6.5% to 9%) over the forecast horizon.

### **Household growth by structure type balances market-based inputs and policy objectives**

York Region's forecast by structure type considered several different inputs. While a housing propensity analysis based on 2016 housing demand by age and structure was used as the preliminary step in the analysis, these assumptions were adjusted based on recent trends. These trends have seen housing demand by age and structure type shift significantly over the past 10 years toward medium- and high-density structure types, particularly in younger age groups and likely influenced by housing affordability. The structure type forecast was further adjusted to account for recent building permit activity, short-and medium-term housing supply in the development pipeline, and finally long-term projected impacts of housing affordability and infrastructure investments on the Region's housing market. Table 1 displays the resulting structure type forecast.

**Table 1**  
**York Region Household Forecast by Structure Type**

<b>Period</b>	<b>Singles</b>	<b>Semis</b>	<b>Rows</b>	<b>Stacked Rows</b>	<b>Apartments</b>	<b>Duplex</b>	<b>Total</b>
2016 (actual)	228,000	22,100	44,400	2,200 (est)	45,700	14,500	356,900
2016-2051 (growth)	80,400	7,300	66,200	16,500	128,900	5,500	304,800
2051 (forecast)	308,400	29,400	110,600	18,700	174,600	20,000	661,700

Source: York Region Planning and Economic Development Branch

Consistent with the Region's analysis, Watson confirms that while a housing demand analysis based on population age and housing structure type using baseline data from Statistics Canada represents a useful starting approach in developing long-term assumptions by structure type, a number of additional factors need to be considered. These include more recent (e.g. last 15 years) housing demand, housing affordability, housing demand by tenure (i.e. rental vs. ownership housing), lifestyle decisions, health, mobility, Regional infrastructure investments, as well as the Growth Plan minimum 50% intensification target and a designated greenfield area

target of 60 residents and jobs per hectare, both of which are consistent with what the market is currently delivering in York Region.

### **Pace of growth determined by demographics, the market, and timing of infrastructure delivery**

While land needs are determined based on growth to 2051, an important component of York Region's MCR forecast is to allocate growth by 5-year period both for infrastructure and fiscal planning purposes. A range of factors are considered in distributing growth by 5-year period between 2016 and 2051, including but not limited to, demographics, infrastructure timing, and market factors related to available residential supply. Population growth by five-year period is presented in Table 2. Historical growth has also been provided for context.

**Table 2**  
**York Region Population Growth by Five-Year Period**

<b>Period</b>	<b>Population Growth</b>
2006-2011 (historical)	133,000
2011-2016	78,700
2016-2021 (forecast)	82,600
2021-2026	105,300
2026-2031	115,700
2031-2036	132,100
2036-2041	138,400
2041-2046	150,600
2046-2051	151,400
<b>Total (2016-2051)</b>	<b>876,100</b>

Source: York Region Planning and Economic Development Branch

Growth to 2021 is based on estimates of housing development that has occurred since 2016 and units currently under construction. As a result of construction timing, ground-related and apartment units that will be occupied by mid-2021 are already under construction. As a result of the high level of certainty associated with unit growth to 2021, the first period of the forecast does not reflect the 50% intensification target, rather 55% to reflect actual growth and units that are built, under construction, and/or well advanced in the planning process.

The timing of growth between 2021 and 2051 reflects expected increases in the level of migration over the forecast period – particularly beyond 2026 when major infrastructure projects are expected to release new growth areas in the Region. Major infrastructure projects expected to increase the pace of growth beyond 2031 include upgrades to the York Durham Sewage System conveyance and pumping stations and Duffin Creek treatment plant, the initial construction and future expansion of the Upper York Water Reclamation Centre, northeast and west Vaughan water and wastewater upgrades, as well as the Yonge North Subway Extension.

The anticipated timing and capacity of infrastructure delivery was a critical input to the Region's housing forecast by 5-year period; however, it should be noted that preparation of Regional forecasts is an iterative process that may result in changes as infrastructure planning, including timing, is confirmed through Regional Master Plans. Given that the Region is now planning to a 2051 planning horizon, additional infrastructure will be needed beyond what was previously contemplated by Water and Wastewater and Transportation Master Plans.

### **Household growth to 2051 reflects higher PPUs in new units**

An assumption in the Region's forecast is a higher persons per unit (PPU) assumption for growth in new units. This approach is similar to the approach taken in Development Charges studies. The methodology also reflects a projected shift toward a greater number of families moving into higher density structure types. This shift is driven by affordability challenges that are likely to persist in ground-related structure types, increasing demand in the Region's evolving Centres and Corridors, as well as the policy shift required to achieve the Growth Plan minimum 50% intensification target.

In deriving PPU assumptions by structure type, key inputs include:

- Observed growth in new units over the past 35 years based on Statistics Canada data
- Detailed analysis of shifting occupancy patterns as input to predicting a reasonable estimate for higher density structure types

A comparison of PPU in new units to 2051 with the previous 35-year average is provided in Table 3. An overall Regional PPU by structure type was generated prior to assessing geographic differences by local municipality. Local municipal PPU values were used to derive growth by local municipality shown in Section 8.

**Table 3**

#### **York Region PPU in new unit assumptions – historical and forecast**

<b>Period</b>	<b>Singles</b>	<b>Semis</b>	<b>Rows</b>	<b>Stacked Rows</b>	<b>Apartments</b>	<b>Duplex</b>
1981-2016	3.52	3.31	2.91	N/A	1.83	3.29
2016-2051	3.55	3.35	3.05	2.68	2.15	3.15

Source: York Region Planning and Economic Development Branch

### **PPUs in new units for rows and apartments informed by analysis of composition of households**

While PPU in new low density (single, semi-detached units) were assumed to be consistent with historical trends, PPUs for new medium- and high-density structure types were informed by a detailed analysis of historical and future household composition. The analysis provided the following observations:

- Non-family households, with lower PPUs, are assumed to continue to account for a large share of apartment growth.

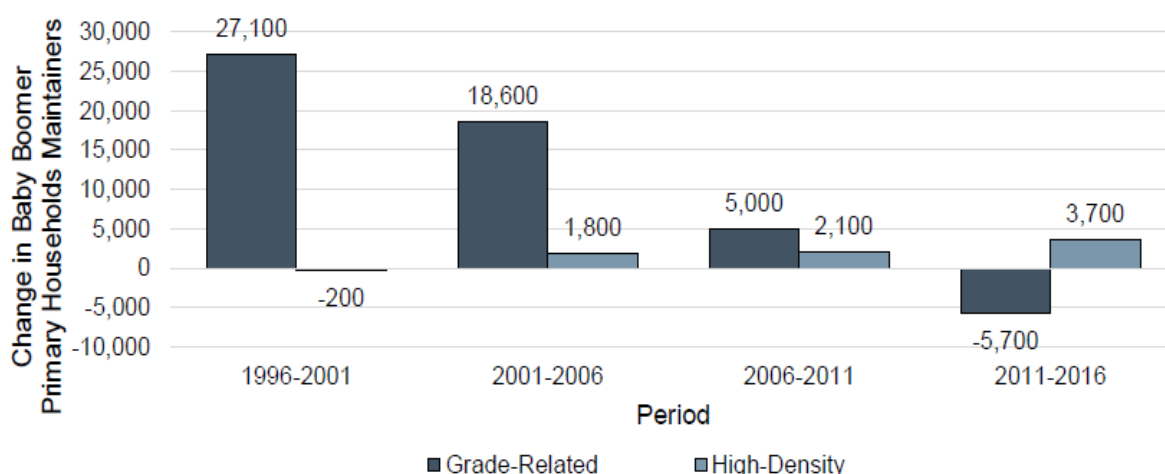


- Family households consisting of couples without kids (many of which are likely to be seniors according to analysis from Watson) are likely to account for a more significant share of the shift to high density units than family households with kids.
- Family households with kids were assumed to be more likely to shift from low density to medium density alternatives such as rows and stacked rows – more affordable options that continue to provide for more space than the average apartment unit.

Supported by work from Watson, York Region's PPU assumptions do not assume a significant decline in the existing base over the forecast horizon – a trend that diverges from what has been observed historically. A large driver of this assumption is as a result of the aging population. Just as this demographic is likely to increase demand for high density structure types over the forecast horizon as a result of health, mobility, and income needs, this same trend is likely to result in a number of low density units "turning over" to younger, larger families. As shown in Figure 8 from Watson, this trend has already been occurring over the past 15 years and is expected to continue throughout the forecast period. Watson estimates that upwards of 40,000 low density units may "turn over" during the 35-year planning horizon.

**Figure 8**

**York Region total housing growth by structure type associated with the "Baby Boomer" generation, 1996-2016**



Note: Figures have been rounded.

Grade-related includes low-density (singles and semis) and medium-density (rows and apartments in duplexes) households. High-density includes bachelor, 1 and 2+ bedroom rental and condo apartments.

Source: Derived from Statistics Canada Census data, 1996 to 2016, by Watson & Associates Economists Ltd., 2020.

As a result of the assumptions above, and as shown in Table 3 above and Table 4 below, PPUs in new units and overall PPUs in medium and high-density structure types are expected to increase. The forecast assumes that a shift will occur that results in apartment units being occupied by 60% families compared to 50% today.

**Table 4**  
**York Region Average Persons per Unit Assumptions**

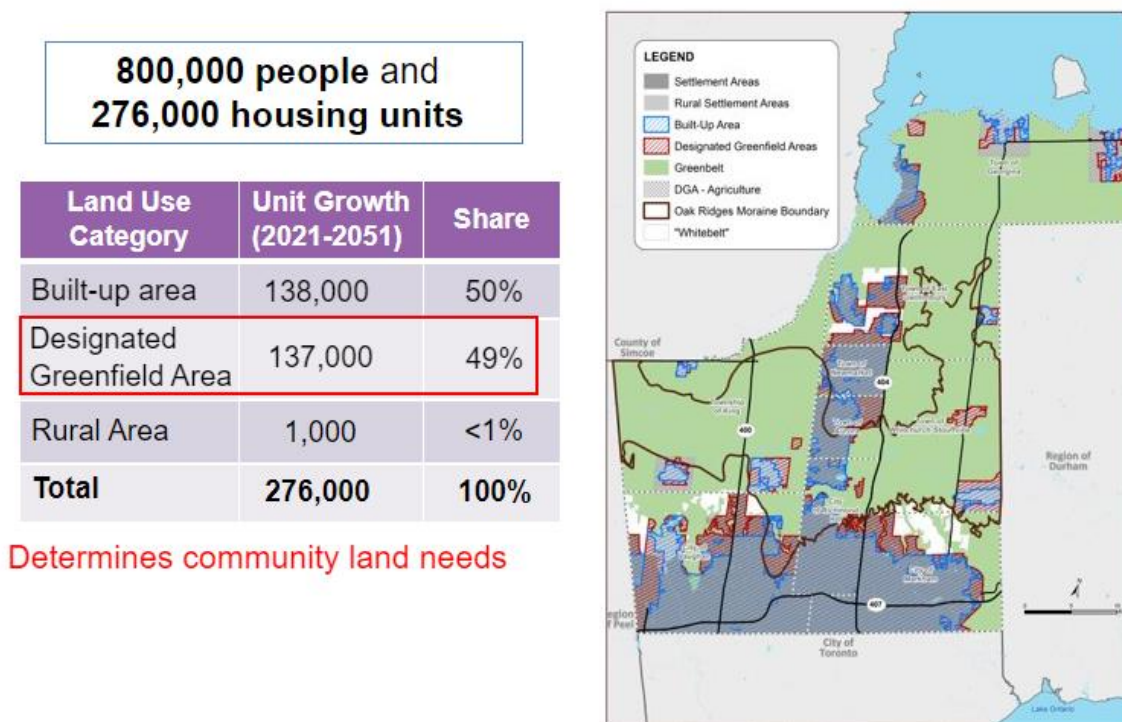
Period	Singles	Semis	Rows	Stacked Rows	Apartments	Duplex
2016 (actual)	3.37	3.23	2.89	N/A	1.82	3.05
2051 (forecast)	3.40	3.24	2.98	2.64	2.06	3.06

Source: York Region Planning and Economic Development Branch

### Household growth is distributed by land use category in accordance with Growth Plan requirements

Housing unit growth by structure type to 2051 is distributed to three land use categories in accordance with Growth Plan targets. Based on the Region's monthly population estimates and units under construction as of 2020, the Region's population is estimated at approximately 1,225,000 people in 2021, translating to growth of just under 800,000 people, or 276,000 units to 2051. Figure 9 provides a summary of the process as well as the result. The first step is to allocate 50% of forecast unit growth to the built-up area. Next, a small assumption is made in the rural area to reflect minor housing growth outside the settlement area. In the case of York Region, less than 1% of unit growth was assumed to be in the rural area. Finally, the remaining units in the forecast are assumed in the designated greenfield area. The designated greenfield area is the primary determinant of an urban expansion.

**Figure 9**  
**Community Land Needs Assessment**



Source: York Region Planning and Economic Development Branch

**Household growth by structure type in each land use category is informed by existing supply and Growth Plan and Regional Official Plan policy objectives**

Distribution by land use category varies by structure type and is informed by units under application, secondary plan estimates for greenfield and intensification areas, as well as the Region-wide minimum intensification target of 50%. The 2021-2051 distribution of growth by structure type and land use category is summarized in Table 5.

**Table 5**

**Unit Growth by Structure Type and Land Use Category (2021 – 2051)**

<b>Land Use Category</b>	<b>Singles</b>	<b>Semis</b>	<b>Rows</b>	<b>Stacked Rows</b>	<b>Apartments</b>	<b>Duplex</b>	<b>Total</b>
Built-up area	5,600	1,100	20,200	6,600	101,500	3,000	138,000
Designated greenfield area	62,900	5,600	39,400	9,600	17,500	2,000	137,000
Rural area	1,000	0	0	0	0	0	1,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>69,500</b>	<b>6,700</b>	<b>59,600</b>	<b>16,200</b>	<b>119,000</b>	<b>5,000</b>	<b>276,000</b>

Source: York Region Planning and Economic Development Branch

While the built-up area is assumed to accommodate a significant share (85%) of the Region's high density unit growth over the forecast period, the majority of the low density (singles & semis) unit growth (90%) is assumed in the designated greenfield area where more vacant land exists. Medium density units (rows, stacked rows, duplex) have been distributed throughout the Region. As identified by Watson, row units are the most affordable ground-related product in the Region. Delivering these units in both the built-up area and the designated greenfield area will therefore be important in delivering complete communities with housing more affordable to medium-income households.

Unit growth by structure type in the designated greenfield area reflects planned growth through existing applications and approved secondary plans. The land needs assessment requires municipalities to estimate a 2051 buildout of the designated greenfield area. An assumption in the Region's forecast is that while the majority of planned ground-related supply in the designated greenfield area supply is assumed to build out by 2051, just over 50% of apartments are assumed to be built and occupied by 2051. This assumption is driven by the fact that apartment growth is likely to be concentrated in the built-up area because access to rapid transit is more readily available.

**Approximately one in four units required to meet the 50% intensification target are projected to be ground related**

Despite a comparatively lower share of ground-related unit growth in the built-up area, the Region's built up-area provides infill opportunities for both low and medium density units. For example, a number of golf courses in the Region are expected to redevelop over the forecast horizon, providing a significant volume of low and medium density units. Townhouse redevelopment projects are another form of redevelopment in the Region's built up area that is becoming increasingly prominent. As such, over 25% of units required to meet the 50% intensification target are projected to be ground related.

### **Watson concludes the Region's forecast by structure type and land use category is reasonable**

Through its review of the Region's proposed forecast, Watson concluded that the Region's structure type forecast of 27% low density, 30% medium density, and 43% high density is reasonable. They identified that the structure type forecast:

- Appropriately recognizes recent shifts in residential building permit activity in York Region from low density dwellings toward medium and high-density housing forms.
- Embraces further anticipated shifts toward medium and high-density residential development which are exhibited in active residential plans.
- Recognizes that the aging population is likely to continue to drive demand for a significant share of high-density ownership housing demand associated with older seniors (75+) with lower household incomes.
- Appropriately considers housing affordability risks and the need to expand the supply of affordable home ownership in the medium-density market as well as smaller, more compact grade-oriented housing including back-to-back and stacked townhouses in both build-up area and greenfield locations.

## **4.3 Determining community land need**

### **Demand supply analysis in designated greenfield area determines need for community land urban expansion**

A demand supply analysis undertaken in the designated greenfield area determines whether urban expansion is required to accommodate forecast growth to 2051. The minimum number of residents that can be accommodated in the existing designated greenfield area at the forecast horizon (supply) is determined independently of the demand. If the forecast demand exceeds the existing supply an urban expansion is required. The quantum of urban expansion required is determined based on the designated greenfield area density assumption. A new component of the provincial methodology is for municipalities to consider additional lands beyond what is required by the demand-supply analysis in the form of a contingency. The intent is to account for long term vacancy and/or lands not being developed as planned over the 30-year horizon.

### **Existing designated greenfield area supply potential is based on development applications and approved local municipal secondary plans**

The following identifies the method undertaken to determine the minimum designated greenfield area supply:

1. Identify designated greenfield area as of July 1, 2017
2. Identify lands deemed "undevelopable" in accordance with the Growth Plan (natural features, infrastructure corridors etc.)
3. Based on municipal supply information (existing base, plans of subdivision, secondary plans etc.) determine the minimum number of units already planned for on these lands

Community area jobs that are in the designated greenfield area also contribute to the achievement of the designated greenfield area density target.

**Density assumption for urban expansion areas is consistent with existing communities and current market trends**

To translate additional housing need required through urban expansion into the quantum of land required, a density assumption is used. As indicated in the [Planning for Density in New Communities](#) report in June 2020, 12 recently built or under construction communities in the Region's designated greenfield area averaged approximately 62 residents and jobs per hectare as of 2016. As such, as articulated in that report, for the purposes of land needs assessment, Regional staff have assumed a density of 60 residents and jobs per hectare, or 17 units per hectare, in new community areas.

**Designated greenfield area demand supply analysis results in need for 2,300 hectares of community land to 2051**

Comparing the forecast demand for designated greenfield areas with the 2051 estimated supply potential in the Region's existing designated greenfield areas and applying the density assumption above yields the following results shown in Figure 10. A contingency assumption of approximately 200 hectares was then added to community area land needs to account for units that are planned but might not materialize over the 30-year horizon. Together, these assumptions result in a need for 2,300 hectares of community land by 2051.

**Figure 10**

**Determining Community Area Land Needs (2021-2051)**

$$\begin{aligned}
 & \mathbf{137,000 \text{ units}} \text{ (Demand)} \text{ } - \text{ } \mathbf{101,000 \text{ units}} \text{ (Supply)} \\
 & \quad = \frac{\mathbf{36,000 \text{ units}}}{\mathbf{17 \text{ units/Ha}}} \\
 & \quad = \mathbf{2,100 \text{ Ha}} + \text{Contingency (200 Ha)} \\
 & \quad = \mathbf{2,300 \text{ Ha}}
 \end{aligned}$$

Source: York Region Planning and Economic Development Branch

### **Overall designated greenfield area density target of 60 conforms with the Growth Plan and reflects the market**

As outlined in the [June 2020 report](#), Planning for Density in New Communities, the Designated Greenfield Area is comprised of three categories: built areas, areas under construction or under application, and areas being planned including those areas with and without secondary plans (including urban expansion). The Region's designated greenfield area density at 2051 is an output of a calculation that includes all three categories described above. By 2051, it is estimated that the Region's entire designated greenfield area would be built at a density of approximately 60 residents and jobs per hectare. While this exceeds the minimum density target of 50 people and jobs per hectare required by the Growth Plan, it is consistent with what the market in the Region is currently delivering.

## **5.0 PLANNING FOR EMPLOYMENT**

### **5.1 Overview**

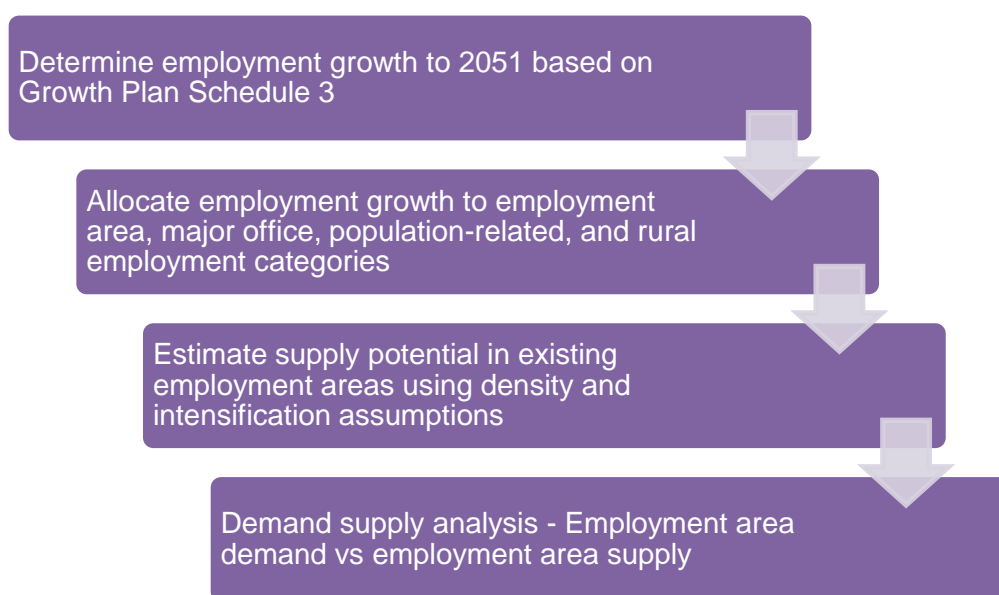
This section of the report provides the growth forecast for employment for the Region, the distribution of employment growth by four types, and associated land needs. Schedule 3 in the Growth Plan forecasts 990,000 jobs for York Region by 2051.

#### **There are four key steps to assessing employment land needs**

The Provincial Land Needs Assessment methodology for determining employment land needs can be broken down to the following four main tasks – outlined in Figure 11:

**Figure 11**

#### **Employment Land Needs Assessment Methodology**



Source: York Region Planning and Economic Development Branch

### **Employment is forecast by four main types**

The Region's employment forecast to 2051 is categorized into four employment types: employment area, major office, population-related, and rural employment. The focus of the Land Needs Assessment methodology, to determine if an urban expansion is required, is on employment area land needs.

- **Employment area:** employment located in the Region's proposed designated employment areas (as show in Figure 12 below), excluding major office employment. Employment area employment includes activities such as manufacturing, research and development, warehousing and ancillary retail, office, and service uses.
- **Major office:** employment in freestanding office buildings 20,000 square feet or greater (excluding city or town halls, hospitals or school board offices and other local municipal serving office uses).
- **Population-related:** jobs within existing and proposed settlement areas and outside of employment areas, except major office buildings, that serve the local population. This employment category includes retail, service, education, municipal government, community services, other institutional jobs, and home-based businesses.
- **Rural:** jobs outside settlement areas and outside employment areas, including agricultural and rural-based jobs and incorporates a small component for home-based businesses.

## **5.2 Employment growth by type to 2051**

### **Employment growth of 390,000 jobs to be allocated to four employment types between 2016 and 2051**

The Land Needs Assessment methodology provides some flexibility in deriving the 2016 employment base. For York Region, the annual employment survey is the most comprehensive estimate of employment in 2016 and is used as the basis for determining employment growth to 2051. As such, a 2016 employment base of just under 600,000 jobs results in growth of approximately 390,000 jobs to reach the Growth Plan 2051 forecast of 990,000 jobs.

### **Employment growth by type to 2051 reflects analysis on changing nature of employment**

Based on actual observed growth to 2019 and estimated changes in employment to 2021, employment in York Region is estimated at 645,000 jobs in 2021. This translates to growth of approximately 345,000 jobs between 2021 and 2051.

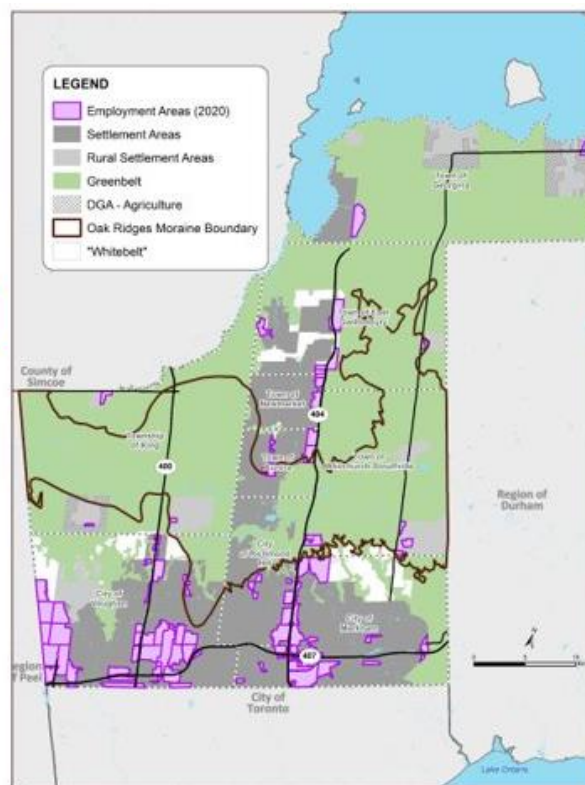
The outlook for employment in the Region by type incorporates a range of anticipated economic and workplace changes. In generating forecasts for employment growth by type, a number of different factors and outcomes were considered. Many of these trends are outlined in more detail in the Region's 2019 [Planning for Employment background report](#). These include top-down considerations such as York Region's historical market shares and shares of GTHA employment by type as well as bottom-up estimates of employment growth by sector based on varying degrees of economic shifts and levels of automation. The employment by type forecast is shown in Figure 12.



**Figure 12**  
**Employment Land Needs Assessment**

Employment Category	Job growth (2021-2051)	Share
Rural	1,500	0.5%
Population Related	124,000	36%
Employment Area	128,000	37%
Major Office	92,000	26%
<b>Total</b>	<b>345,500</b>	<b>100%</b>

Determines employment land needs



Source: York Region Planning and Economic Development Branch

At a high level, assumptions in the employment forecast are as follows:

- A rising share of employment in major office to reflect the continued shift to service and knowledge-based jobs. This has, however, been tempered by the continued high share of growth in GTHA office employment growth occurring in Downtown Toronto in the short to medium term as well as a growing share of office activities within flex office space and repurposed industrial buildings. Major office employment is expected to increase over the forecast in line with the completion of the Yonge-North Subway Extension and the evolving strength of the Toronto-York Spadina Subway Extension, Regional Bus Rapid Transit, and GO network.
- A relatively steady ratio of population-related employment to population as the demand for many services such as health care and education is anticipated to grow faster than employment overall, while retail growth is anticipated to slow as this sector continues to restructure as a result of e-Commerce.
- A declining, yet significant, share of employment area employment. The forecast reflects decreasing overall shares of employment in goods-producing sectors such as manufacturing but is offset by the increasingly more diverse mix of employment uses in



employment areas, including growth in office activities through knowledge-based sectors in industrial condominiums. The employment area employment forecast also reflects expected rapid growth in warehouse and distribution centres as a result of e-Commerce but with low employment densities as a result of anticipated impacts of automation in this and other goods-producing sectors.

- Increases in work from home and e-Commerce have been forecasted for many years. While COVID-19 may have accelerated and/or created a short-term shift in this regard, any potential long-term shift in trends require further analysis following recovery from the pandemic. Subsequent adjustments, as necessary, will be made through future municipal comprehensive reviews.
- A declining share of employment in rural areas.

Table 6 shows the change in the distribution of employment over forecast period.

**Table 6**  
**Shares of York Region Total Employment by type**

	Major Office	Employment Area	Population-Related	Rural
2016	15%	39%	43%	3%
2051	20%	38%	40%	2%

Source: York Region Planning and Economic Development Branch

#### **Timing of employment growth based on GTHA labour force, GTHA market, infrastructure delivery, and anticipated impacts of COVID-19**

Similar to population, employment growth by five-year period is used to inform long term infrastructure and fiscal planning. The overall timing of employment growth in the Region is generally tied to the GTHA and York Region labour force and the pace of population growth anticipated in the Region. Other GTHA market-based factors and timing of infrastructure delivery also impact employment growth by employment type (major office, employment area, population-related, and rural). Timing estimates for major water wastewater infrastructure and future transportation corridors such as the GTHA west and Bradford Bypass inform the pace and geographic distribution of employment growth in the Region. Employment growth by five-year period is illustrated in Table 7:

Table 7

**York Region Employment Growth by Employment Type by Five-Year Period**

Period	Major Office	Employment Land	Population-Related	Rural	Total Growth
2006-2011	6,400	7,800	33,500		47,700
2011-2016	19,700	21,300	48,100		89,100
2016-21	10,500	18,700	15,900	400	45,500
2021-26	12,900	21,000	17,600	300	51,800
2026-31	12,500	20,000	17,300	300	50,100
2031-36	14,400	21,000	19,600	300	55,300
2036-41	15,900	21,400	21,100	300	58,700
2041-46	17,900	22,400	23,600	0	63,900
2046-51	18,400	23,000	24,300	0	65,700
<b>Total</b>	<b>102,900</b>	<b>147,500</b>	<b>139,000</b>	<b>1,600</b>	<b>391,000</b>

Source: York Region Planning and Economic Development Branch

COVID-19 has had significant negative impacts on global and national economies. Particular economic sectors including travel and tourism, accommodation and food, manufacturing, and energy have felt the strongest impacts. As a result, employment growth in the 2016-2021 forecast period was adjusted downward to account for these impacts. Employment levels in York Region are anticipated to recover back to 2019 levels by 2022. Employment growth is anticipated to increase as the economy recovers from the impacts of COVID-19, remain relatively stable, and then increase gradually after 2031 as a result of anticipated labour force trends and higher population growth forecast for these periods.

### 5.3 Determining employment land need

Employment land needs are determined by undertaking a demand-supply analysis comparing the supply potential of the Region's existing employment areas against employment area demand (Figure 12).

#### **Employment area supply potential is based on vacant land, an intensification assumption and takes account of Council endorsed employment area conversions**

The estimate of supply potential in the Region's existing employment areas is based on the following factors:

- Employment area boundaries in Figure 12, reflecting Regional Council decisions in [October 2020](#) on employment area mapping and site-specific employment conversion requests.
- Projected employment densities on vacant employment lands. Employment densities vary significantly in the Region and are a function of geographic location and the nature

of existing uses. Densities range from as low as 20 jobs per hectare in west Vaughan because of the presence of warehouse/distribution type uses to 85 jobs per hectare in higher density employment areas near Highway 7 and 404. Projected densities also considered approved secondary plans.

- An intensification assumption has been made in employment areas, as required by the Growth Plan, to reflect job growth that occurs without absorption of new land. Based on detailed analysis, a conservative estimate of 10% of employment area employment growth is anticipated to occur within existing built space. This compares to close to 60% observed over the past five years as the economy recovered from the 2008/2009 recession. Additional potential has been assumed through new buildings or expansions to existing buildings on built parcels.
- While it is a policy objective of the Regional Official Plan to direct major office development to the Region's Centres and Corridors, a portion of the Region's forecast major office growth is anticipated to occur in employment areas. The land area occupied by major office development is removed from the vacant employment area supply in the calculation of employment area supply potential.

**Approximately 1,100 hectares of urban expansion employment lands are required to 2051**

Comparing the forecast demand in employment areas and the supply potential of the Region's existing employment areas yields the following results shown in Figure 13 below.

**Figure 13**

**Determining Employment Land Needs (2021-2051)**

$$\begin{aligned}
 & \mathbf{128,000 \text{ jobs}} \text{ (Demand)} \quad \mathbf{-} \quad \mathbf{90,000 \text{ jobs}} \text{ (Supply)} \\
 & \mathbf{= \frac{38,000 \text{ jobs}}{40 \text{ jobs/Ha}}} \\
 & \mathbf{= 950 \text{ Ha} + \text{Contingency (150 Ha)}} \\
 & \mathbf{= 1,100 \text{ Ha}}
 \end{aligned}$$

Source: York Region Planning and Economic Development Branch

Consistent with the Regional Official Plan, a density assumption of 40 jobs per hectare is assumed for any urban expansion employment areas that may be required. This density assumption reflects both the potential for lower density warehouse/distribution employment uses as well as future employment areas which will accommodate higher density employment uses including some office and service uses in industrial buildings. A contingency factor is also incorporated in the land needs assessment calculation to account for long-term vacancy. In total, there is a need for an additional 1,100 hectares of employment land by 2051.

## 6.0 URBAN EXPANSION CONSIDERATIONS

The Provincial Land Needs Assessment determined that 2,300 hectares of community land and 1,100 hectares of employment land are required to accommodate growth in the Region to 2051. This section of the report assesses geographic options for urban expansion and recommends a proposed distribution.

### 6.1 Available lands for Urban Expansion

#### **York Region has approximately 4,100 developable hectares of available whitebelt lands**

Lands located outside the Region's existing Urban Area and outside of the Greenbelt are available for urban expansion and are commonly referred to as 'whitebelt' lands. York Region has an estimated 4,100 developable hectares of whitebelt lands. Whitebelt lands in the Region are in East Gwillimbury, King, Markham, Vaughan, and Whitchurch-Stouffville.

#### **Whitebelt lands are identified for potential future community and employment uses**

In order to protect an appropriate ratio of employment and community lands to maintain the Region's targeted activity rate (1 job for every 2 people), and in consultation with local municipal staff, whitebelt lands were classified into potential future community and employment areas. Considerations for locating future employment areas include proximity to existing and future 400 series highways, being contiguous with existing designated employment areas in the Region, distribution of expected population growth throughout the Region, and past York Region Council resolutions. For the identification of potential future community lands, factors include connectivity with existing and future community areas and areas being of sufficient size to allow for comprehensive planning.

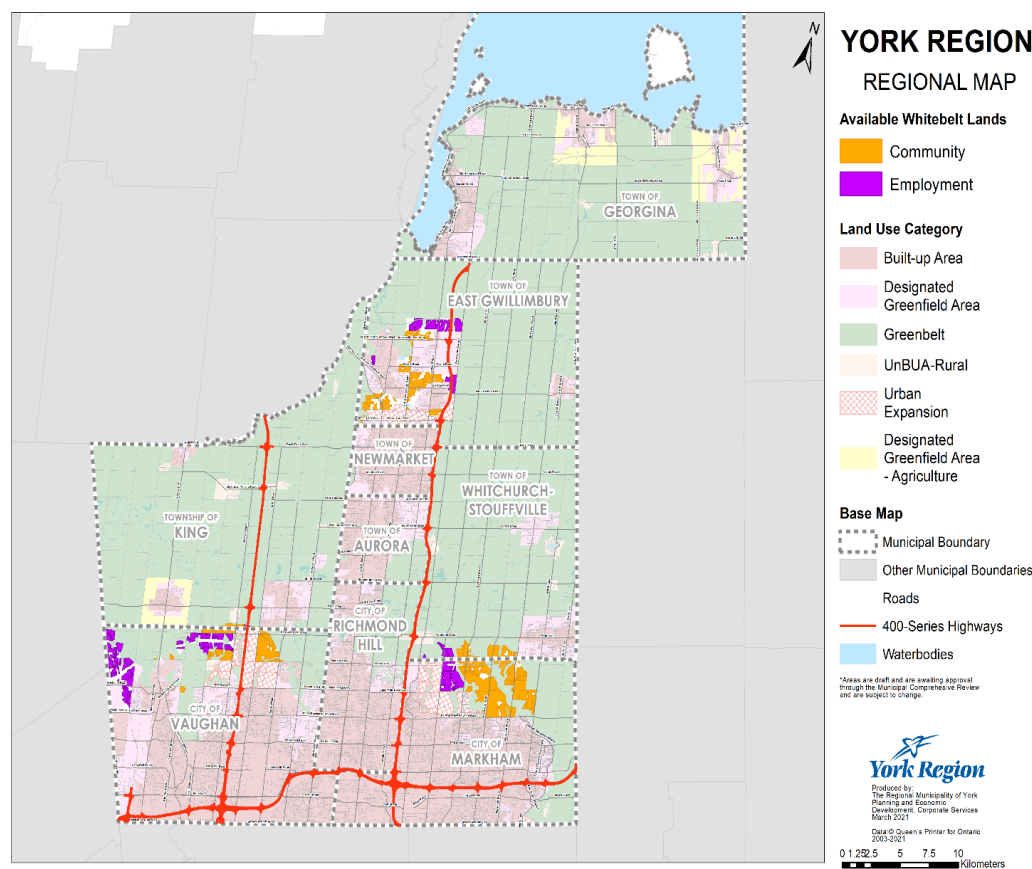
Potential future employment areas are comprised of the following areas – shown in Figure 14:

- In Vaughan, future employment areas are identified in northwest Vaughan, building upon existing designated employment areas, the CP intermodal terminal, and the future GTA West Corridor and Highway 427 extension. This is consistent with a York Region Council resolution from November 2015 which requested staff report back on the merits of including remaining developable vacant lands in northwest for employment purposes as part of the MCR.
- Potential future employment areas are also identified in Vaughan adjacent to the GTA West Corridor, just west of the Highway 400 North employment area.

- In King, a small area is identified for potential employment purposes fronting Highway 400 immediately north of the Highway 400 North employment area in Vaughan.
- In Markham, a potential future employment area is identified north of Elgin Mills Road East and east of Warden Avenue, building upon the ROPA 3 employment lands immediately to the west. Identifying these lands for employment uses will help support significant population growth potential through community urban expansion lands in the City of Markham and increase live-work opportunities in southeast York Region.
- Future employment lands are identified in Whitchurch-Stouffville immediately north of the ROPA 3 employment area and potential future employment area in Markham.
- In East Gwillimbury, potential future employment areas are identified adjacent to the future Bradford By-Pass, along Highway 404, and a small section of Holland Landing, adjacent to an existing employment area.

The remaining Whitebelt lands have been identified as potential community lands.

**Figure 14**  
**Available Whitebelt Lands**



Source: York Region Planning and Economic Development Branch

### **Growth is contemplated only where permitted by Provincial Plans and in locations with existing or planned water-wastewater capacity**

Through the MCR, requests have been received from the City of Richmond Hill, Township of King, and Town of Whitchurch Stouffville requesting consideration of site-specific employment uses in the Protected Countryside of the Greenbelt. York Region's [Potential for Employment Lands along 400 Series Highways](#) report from October 2020 provides further information on these requests. As discussed in a [January 2021](#) memo, Provincial policy in the Greenbelt Plan and Oak Ridges Moraine Conversation Plan prohibits expanding settlement areas into the Protected Countryside of the Greenbelt. As such, these requests were not considered as part of the MCR. Further, the application of the Provincial Land Needs Assessment concludes that the Region can meet its employment land needs with existing urban lands and a portion of Whitebelt lands.

Population and employment growth beyond the existing and planned infrastructure capacity in Nobleton and Mount Albert have also not been considered. Preliminary estimates indicate that expanding the water and wastewater capacity in Nobleton beyond the 10,800 people currently contemplated in an ongoing Environmental Assessment would be cost prohibitive, requiring an infrastructure investment in the range of \$100 to \$200 million. This would not be financially sustainable given the amount of additional growth that could be realized. In addition, at the time of writing this report, discussions were ongoing between landowners, Town of East Gwillimbury staff and York Region staff regarding the potential to expand the servicing capacity in Mount Albert from 6,000 to 8,000 population. However, because no agreement has been reached with respect to whether such an expansion would be feasible, the current servicing capacity of 6,000 has been maintained for the purposes of the proposed forecast.

## **6.2 Site specific requests for urban expansion**

Since the MCR began in 2014, 71 written submissions have been received from landowners and consultants requesting re-designation of agricultural and rural land to allow for urban development. The Region has also received a Council resolution from the Town of East Gwillimbury requesting that the entirety of the Town's Whitebelt lands be re-designated for urban uses as well as requests from the City of Richmond Hill, Town of Whitchurch Stouffville, and Township of King to re-designate areas of the protected countryside. Submissions were reviewed and responses are provided in Attachment 2. Forty properties being requested for inclusion in the Urban Area are within the area proposed for urban expansion to accommodate residential and employment growth to 2051.

## **6.3 Considerations in developing options for urban expansion**

The need for approximately 2,300 hectares of community lands and 1,100 hectares of employment land equates to approximately 80% of total developable whitebelt lands in the Region. In determining the preferred configuration for urban expansion, several factors were considered, including:

- Timing and availability of water/wastewater and transportation infrastructure
- Financial impacts to the Region

- Contiguity with existing urban areas
- Logical planning boundaries
- Building complete communities that provide for both living and working opportunities
- Protecting valuable agricultural areas
- Supporting the Regional structure

In time, all the Region's whitebelt lands will be needed to accommodate growth in the Region. Planning for 80% of the whitebelt allows the Region to take a focused approach to planning for growth to 2051 and allows for leveraging of existing infrastructure investments, staging and phasing of new infrastructure, and growing in a financially sustainable manner.

#### 6.4 Opportunities and risks associated with different urban expansion geographies

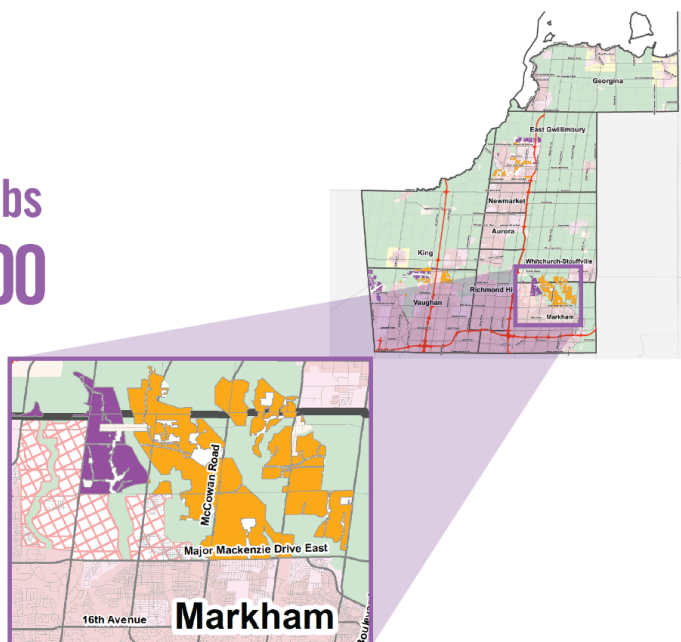
The Region has three geographic areas that can accommodate urban expansion, each with associated costs, opportunities, and risks. Preliminary estimates for anticipated population, employment, and water and wastewater and transportation infrastructure costs (based on 2016 Master Plans) to support full buildout of each area are provided in Figure 15. This formed the basis for the preliminary assessment of how to distribute the 80% of the Whitebelt required to support growth to 2051.

**Figure 15**

#### **Costs\*, Opportunities, and Risks Associated with Full Buildout of Different Urban Expansion Options**

##### Growth in Southeast

Total Infrastructure Cost  
**\$480 Million**  
 Supports Population of  
**85,000** and **20,000 jobs**  
 Infrastructure cost per capita **\$4,600**



**Opportunities:**

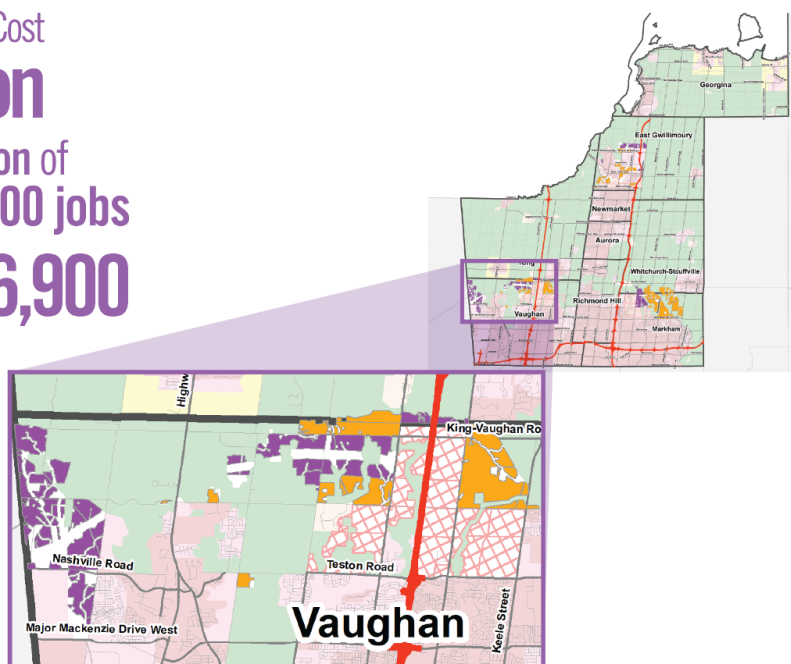
- Supports long-term BRT investment on Major Mackenzie, expanded Highway 404, GO expansion and arterial road investments
- Leverages existing wastewater infrastructure investment - closest proximity to downstream water wastewater infrastructure in which the Region has made significant investments over the past two decades

**Risks:**

- Though prevalent across all of York Region, housing affordability poses a more significant risk in southern locations of the Region. The price of housing may present significant affordability challenges to market segments such as young families, which may impact the pace of growth and recovery of development charges in this location.

**Growth in Southwest**

Total Infrastructure Cost  
**\$900 Million**  
 Supports Population of  
**90,000** and **40,000 jobs**  
 Infrastructure cost per capita **\$6,900**

**Opportunities:**

- Builds upon existing strengths in transportation/warehousing in West Vaughan
- Leverages strong employment growth potential along Highway 427 and the future GTA west corridor
- Leverages existing downstream wastewater infrastructure investment made by the Region over the past two decades

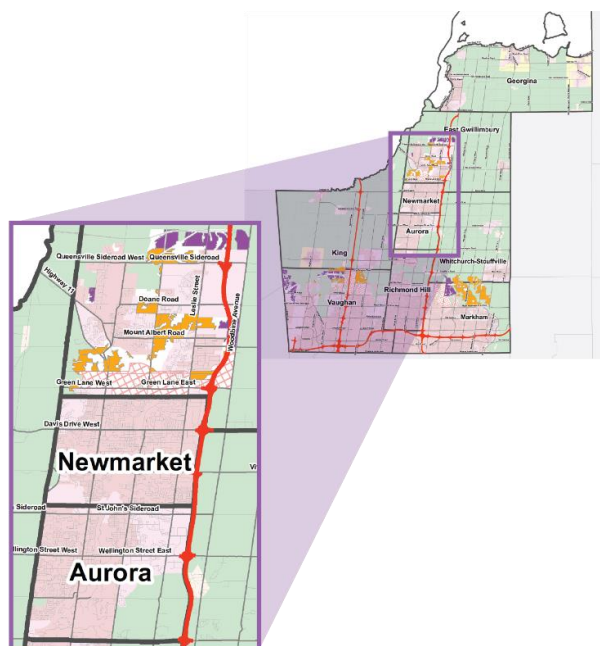


**Risks:**

- The amount of job growth potential in southwest York Region could take longer to materialize which may impact the pace of development charges collections
- Similar to the southeast, housing affordability poses a more significant risk in southern locations of the Region
- Some growth may be contingent upon the timing of the GTA west corridor

**Growth in North**

Total Infrastructure Cost  
**\$1.6 Billion**  
 Supports Population of  
**150,000** and **55,000 jobs**  
 Infrastructure cost per capita **\$7,600**

**Opportunities:**

- Potential to provide more affordable housing options relative to southern York Region

**Risks:**

- Requires an entirely new investment in wastewater treatment infrastructure (Upper York Water Reclamation Centre) that will require multiple phases to achieve full population and employment buildout in East Gwillimbury
- Timing of the Upper York Water Reclamation Centre is uncertain and is contingent on approvals from the Provincial government
- Future phases of the Upper York Water Reclamation Centre will be contingent on a new Environmental Assessment and interim phosphorous monitoring
- Fewer opportunities for higher order transit investment

\*Based on 2016 Master Plans

Source: York Region Planning and Economic Development Branch

## 6.5 Proposed Distribution of Urban Expansion land needs to deliver the results of the Provincial Land Needs Assessment

Based on the analysis in Sections 6.1 to 6.4, the proposed distribution of urban expansion is shown in Table 8. Detailed mapping is provided in Attachment 4. Site-specific requests for urban expansion were also considered - the results of which are presented in Attachment 2.

**Table 8**

### **Proposed urban expansion land needs by municipality to 2051 (hectares)**

Municipality	Available Whitebelt	Proposed Urban Expansion	Community Land	Employment Land
East Gwillimbury	960	245	180	65
King	80	80	70	10
Markham	1,490	1,490	1,270	220
Vaughan	1,210	1,210	500	710
Whitchurch Stouffville	375	375	280	95
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,115</b>	<b>3,400</b>	<b>2,300</b>	<b>1,100</b>

Source: York Region Planning and Economic Development Branch

### **Location of urban expansion lands required by the Provincial Land Needs Assessment to meet the 2051 forecast are proposed such that potential risk to the Region is minimized**

The three potential urban expansion geographies described in the previous section were assessed using the principles outlined in Section 6.3 of this report. The proposed distribution of urban expansion lands (Table 8) reflects Growth Plan and Regional Official Plan criteria, as well as an assessment of costs, risks, and opportunities in each potential whitebelt geography. The proposed distribution:

- Maximizes urban expansion in areas with higher certainty of timing of the provision of water and wastewater infrastructure
- Provides well-located future employment lands along Highway 427, the GTA West Corridor, Highway 404 and adjacent to the ROPA 3 employment lands
- Allows for the connection of the Green Lane Corridor, and Holland Landing communities in East Gwillimbury
- Aligns growth in northern York Region with the ability to deliver the multi-phase infrastructure required to support it by providing the opportunity for growth unlocked by new infrastructure to be realized within the forecast period to reduce potential misalignment of development charges collections within and beyond the forecast period.

- Supports ongoing agricultural uses to the extent possible given that lands in northern East Gwillimbury were identified as some of the most suitable remaining whitebelt lands for agricultural uses in the Region
- Minimizes, to the extent possible, impacts on the Region's agri-food network and agricultural operations, owing to the quantum of lands required

**Timing and uncertainty of servicing in northern York Region was a key factor informing the proposed distribution of urban expansion land needs to 2051**

Growth in northern York Region is dependent on the Upper York Water Reclamation Centre. Conditional on timely provincial approvals, the Water Reclamation Centre is currently scheduled for completion in 2028 and will provide capacity for 90,000 people in East Gwillimbury and Northwest Newmarket while also freeing up capacity for growth in Newmarket and Aurora. The initial phase will service existing population as well as growth of approximately 45,000 people in East Gwillimbury's existing urban area but does not provide capacity for growth in the Town's Whitebelt lands.

An expansion of the Water Reclamation Centre is anticipated in the early 2040s and will provide capacity for growth of an additional 45,000 people in East Gwillimbury and Newmarket. The expansion is also required to provide water wastewater capacity for some Whitebelt lands. A further expansion of the plant would be required to achieve full buildout of the remaining Whitebelt lands in the Town. Timing of this expansion is not yet known but is likely to occur beyond 2051. The timing and uncertainty surrounding the initial stage of Upper York as well as future expansions present significant risks to the Region and have resulted in the proposed higher levels of Whitebelt growth in southern York Region where infrastructure is more certain and less costly to meet the amount of growth required by the Land Needs Assessment.

The proposed distribution of growth presented in Table 8 would not require the final expansion of the Upper York Water Reclamation Centre (likely beyond 2051), a project estimated at \$200 million. This distribution of growth also results in a more achievable growth outlook for the Town of East Gwillimbury with respect to annual population growth and therefore allows the Region to plan for a more accurate recovery of development charges collections both within the 2051 horizon and beyond.

**Growth Plan and Regional Official Plan urban expansion criteria are being met**

Both the Growth Plan and Regional Official Plan contain criteria related to undertaking settlement area boundary expansions and considerations for locations for expansions. Section 2.2.8.2 of the Growth Plan requires that settlement area boundary expansions only occur through a MCR subject to the following conditions which have been addressed:

- The need for a settlement area boundary expansion has been demonstrated through the forecast and land needs assessment outlined above which is consistent with the Provincial methodology. The forecast is based on the minimum intensification and reflects on the ground densities in the designated greenfield area (exceeding the minimum Growth Plan target).

- Sufficient opportunities are not available through intensification and in the current designated greenfield area to accommodate the required population and employment growth to 2051
- The proposed urban expansion will provide sufficient lands to accommodate growth not exceeding the 2051 planning horizon of the Growth Plan
- The timing of the proposed expansion and phasing of development will not affect the achievement of intensification and density targets.

The Growth Plan criteria for assessing locations for urban expansion as outlined in Section 2.2.8.3 are summarized below along with a brief description of how the recommended scenario meets each consideration.

- 1) Sufficient servicing capacity exists in existing or planned infrastructure and the expansion is financially viable
  - The planned infrastructure needed to accommodate growth in the Region to 2051 as described earlier in this report would be sufficient to service the proposed growth, including the urban expansion lands.
  - While preliminary analysis has been undertaken to assess infrastructure required to assess costs of growth, updates to the Region's Water and Wastewater and Transportation Master Plans along with a future fiscal impact analysis of the Region's growth forecast will address the financial viability of required infrastructure and public service facilities for urban expansion lands required to 2051.
- 2) Expansion is informed by the applicable water and wastewater master plans and stormwater master plans
  - The proposed forecast has been prepared in consultation with Regional staff from Environmental Services, Transportation, and Finance. As stated above, the water and wastewater master plan update process was recently initiated and will be consistent with the MCR forecast work. The Region does not prepare stormwater master plans as these are more appropriately undertaken at the secondary planning stage.
  - The Region will work in collaboration with Conservation Authorities and local municipalities to ensure the approach to Stormwater Management Plans utilizes best management practices that minimize and mitigate impacts to watersheds and water resources system.
- 3) Expansion, including the associated water, wastewater and stormwater servicing would be planned to avoid or minimize and mitigate any potential negative impacts on watershed conditions and the water resource system, including the quality and quantity of water.
  - The required water, wastewater, and stormwater servicing will be appropriately planned through the Master Plan update and the secondary planning process to avoid or minimize and mitigate any potential negative impacts on watershed

conditions and the water resource system.

- 4) Key hydrologic areas and the Natural Heritage System for the Growth Plan should be avoided where possible
  - The forecast accounts for Natural Heritage features and systems being protected from development in accordance with Provincial and Regional policies.
  - Key hydrologic areas and the Natural Heritage System for the Growth Plan will be protected in the detailed planning of urban expansion areas and will not be assumed to accommodate development.
- 5) Prime agricultural area should be avoided where possible
  - The majority of the Region's whitebelt areas are prime agricultural lands; thereby making it impossible to avoid these lands as part of any urban expansion. The PPS provides further direction in this regard in Policy 1.1.3.8 by stating that if prime agricultural lands cannot be avoided, lower priority lands should be considered first.
  - As part of the Region's MCR work undertaken in November 2015, a scoped agricultural assessment of the Region's whitebelt areas was prepared by Planscape consultants. A high-level Land Evaluation Area Review (LEAR) analysis was undertaken consisting of a land evaluation assessing soil capability and an area review which considered criteria related to fragmentation, lands under production, and conflicting land use. Most of the lands not proposed to be part of the distribution of urban expansion (located in northern East Gwillimbury) had LEAR scores in the highest category.
- 6) Urban expansion area is in compliance with minimum distance separation formulae
  - Applicable minimum distance separation formulae would be applied through the more detailed secondary planning process to ensure appropriate separation of uses from livestock facilities.
- 7) Any adverse impacts on the agri-food network, including agricultural operations, would be avoided or if not possible, minimize and mitigated
  - Expansion of the urban boundary to accommodate growth to 2051 will result in impacts to the Region's agri-food network and agricultural operations, owing to the quantum of lands required. Impacts, where possible, will be minimized and mitigated as determined through an agricultural impact assessment.
- 8) Policies in Sections 2 and 3 of the PPS are applied
  - Section 2 of the PPS deals with Building Strong Healthy Communities and contains policies related to efficient land use patterns, employment areas, housing, open space, infrastructure, energy conservation, air quality and climate change. Section 3 of the PPS addresses resource use and management including natural heritage, water, agriculture, minerals, mineral aggregate resources and cultural heritage and archaeology. Through meeting the requirements of the Growth Plan for the forecast

and lands needs assessment and the settlement area boundary expansion, many of the policy objectives of the PPS are also addressed. Other policy areas will be appropriately addressed through local municipal planning, including the secondary planning process, for the different urban expansion geographies.

- 9) Expansion would meet any applicable requirements of the Greenbelt, Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation, Niagara Escarpment, and Lake Simcoe Protection Plans and any applicable source protection plan
  - Proposed distribution of urban expansion is consistent with policy directions in applicable Provincial Plans.
  - York Region's growth needs to 2051 will be accommodated without intruding on lands identified for protection by Provincial Plans.
  - Through the Regional Official Plan review and the secondary planning process for urban expansion areas, appropriate municipal policy designations will be put in place to protect the water resource system and its functions.
- 10) Criteria for lands located within the protected Countryside in the Greenbelt Area
  - This requirement is not applicable as there are no lands being proposed to be brought into the Urban Area within the Protected Countryside Area of the Greenbelt.
  - The Provincial Growth Plan sets out very limited circumstances under which the Region can expand a settlement area boundary into the Protected Countryside Area of the Greenbelt Plan. In accordance with Provincial policy, the only opportunity to expand into the Protected Countryside through the MCR applies to existing Towns & Villages (i.e. not urban areas or Hamlets). In that instance, only a very limited expansion is permitted being up to 5% of the current land area of the Towns & Village's designated area to a maximum of 10 hectares.
  - Expansions to Town and Villages are not contemplated to address growth to 2051.

The Regional Official Plan also contains requirements for considering expansions of the Urban Area in Section 5.1.12. The proposed urban expansion meets these criteria as shown below:

- The Regional Greenlands system will continue to be protected and proposed urban expansion areas are outside of the Greenbelt Plan Area boundary
- Each urban expansion geography is of sufficient size and has clear and logical planning boundaries
- Urban expansion geographies being proposed are contiguous with the Region's existing Urban Area.
- The infrastructure required to service the proposed urban expansion can be provided in a financially and environmentally sustainable manner through the adoption of an integrated approach to growth management that aligns growth and infrastructure and will be determined through master plan, capital planning, annual budget, and development charge background study processes.

- Proposed urban expansion areas support the Region's urban structure in terms of the provision of well-located employment areas adjacent to 400 series highways and/or contiguity with existing designation employment areas.

## **7.0 KEY CONSIDERATIONS WHEN PLANNING TO ACHIEVE 2051 FORECASTS and MITIGATING GROWTH-RELATED RISK**

### **7.1 Balancing Council priorities, Growth Plan policy, and market objectives**

#### **Forecasts to 2051 achieve Council priorities, Growth Plan, and Regional Official Plan policy objectives, while balancing the market**

As outlined by the Land Needs Assessment Methodology, components that municipalities must consider when planning for growth include market demand, Growth Plan policy targets for intensification and density, accommodating all employment types, determining community and employment land needs based on a demand-supply analysis, and planning for infrastructure needed to build complete communities to 2051.

The York Region Official Plan provides the foundation for delivering complete communities through a network of transit supportive Centres and Corridors to accommodate intensification, a diverse supply of high-quality employment opportunities, and sustainable greenfield communities with a mix of land uses and multi-modal transportation options. These objectives are predicated on achieving Council priorities of building strong, caring, safe communities, providing a balanced housing mix with affordable housing options, supporting investment in infrastructure, supporting continued economic development success, and protecting and enhancing the natural environment.

The Region's proposed forecast supports these objectives by:

- Planning for a minimum 50% intensification to encourage a positive return on transit and water wastewater investment as well as to create high quality locations along Centres and Corridors critical for attracting talent, employment, and population growth
- Directing a significant amount of population and employment growth towards the built up area, planning to continue to realize densities consistent with what the market is already delivering in new community areas or higher, and recommending 80% of the whitebelt be identified as urban expansion to 2051 (in line with the results of the Land Needs Assessment) to continue to protect the natural environment as well as ongoing agricultural uses.
- Supporting ongoing agricultural uses to the extent possible given that the majority of the lands that are not part of the recommended allocation of urban expansion (located in northern East Gwillimbury) had LEAR scores in the highest category.
- Phasing forecast growth in line with infrastructure timing.

- Continuing to plan for a broad mix of jobs while incorporating anticipated shifts in the nature of employment – including the potential for automation.
- Planning to continue to deliver a balance of population and jobs in existing and new community areas throughout the Region.

To help understand the market and inform the land needs assessment, Watson was retained to perform a detailed assessment of the housing market. Based on Watson's review, the Region's forecast to 2051 appropriately balances historical market trends (including recent slower than forecast growth) with recent building permit activity, active development applications, socio-economic, demographic, and migration trends as well as the demand for both rental and ownership housing. Based on a detailed review of the Region's draft forecast from the perspective of housing affordability, Watson has also concluded that the Region's structure type forecast and associated minimum 50% intensification and designated greenfield area density assumptions:

- Recognize that unaffordability of housing in the GTHA relative to the GGH Outer Ring and a growing and strengthening economy across the GGH Outer Ring translates to the long-term population forecast for the GTHA being aspirational. In this context the Growth Plan 2019 population forecast for York Region of 2.02 million and 990,000 jobs is the preferred long-term growth outlook and a higher forecast is not a likely long-term outcome.
- Reflect recent and projected shifts in residential building permit activity in York Region from low-density dwellings toward medium and high-density housing forms.
- Recognize that the aging population is likely to continue to drive demand for a significant share of high-density rental and ownership housing options associated with older seniors (75+) with lower household incomes.
- Appropriately consider the need to expand the supply of affordable home ownership options in medium-density housing, particularly entry-level townhouse products geared to low- and middle-income households.

## 7.2 Integrating land use, infrastructure, and financial planning

### **Slower than forecasted growth poses a risk to being able to afford new infrastructure**

As mentioned in Section 3.0, maintaining fiscal sustainability is a Regional priority. The Region has made significant investments in infrastructure to support growth. York Region has also entered a mature stage of growth where a slower than forecast rate of growth has resulted in the need for a Fiscal Strategy which has taken steps to mitigate the impacts of slower growth. Core to the Fiscal Strategy is the need to better align infrastructure projects with actual growth and development charges collections.

Development charges are critical to funding new infrastructure and paying down associated debt. It is important to understand that development charges fluctuate year over year as shown in Figure 16. That said, the Region is required to pay a certain amount of principal and interest



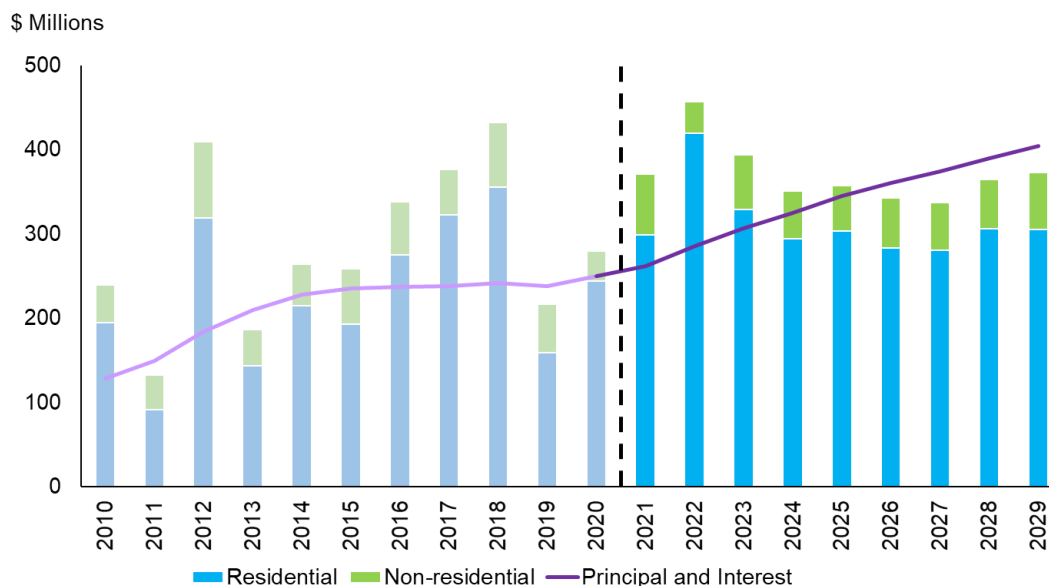
each year to pay down existing debt. The remaining amount of development charges collections is available to support new growth-related capital infrastructure.

As illustrated by Figure 16, between 2010 and 2020, development charges averaged \$285 million annually, enough to cover average annual principal and interest payments of \$213 million. There were, however, some years where development charges collections fell below the required payment for principal and interest. Looking forward, the Region's existing 10-year Capital Plan is based on an average development charges collection forecast of \$370 million per year of which approximately 75% (or \$330 million) is required to pay for principle and interest on existing debt. Even if growth materializes as expected, this only leaves approximately \$40 million available each year to support new investments.

The development charges collections forecast also shows that starting in 2026 there are several years where development charge collections could also fall below annual principal and interest payments. If this plays out as forecast, the early 2020's could cover for the lower development charge collection years in the latter part of the decade. The Region's ability to continue to invest in growth related infrastructure therefore requires development charge collections to exceed debt servicing costs on a sustained basis.

**Figure 16**

**Historic and Forecast Development Charge Collections and Principal and Interest**



Source: Fiscal Sustainability: 2020 Update Report

If the existing trend of slower than projected growth continues, this poses a significant risk on the Region's ability to afford new infrastructure. The average annual development charge collections forecast of \$370 million is based on a growth rate of approximately 7,900 new residential units or 22,000 people per year over the next ten years. If that forecast is not

achieved, new growth-related infrastructure investments will need to be deferred. The following represent potential scenarios should growth not materialize as forecast on a sustained basis:

- A sustained 10% reduction over a ten-year period could result in a need for the Region to defer new infrastructure projects in the order of \$300 million.
- A sustained 20% reduction over a ten-year period – a level of development activity consistent with that experienced in 2020 – would mean that development charges collections would not cover principle and interest payments on existing debt and development charges reserves would be required to borrow from other internal funding sources. It would also require deferring new infrastructure projects in the order of approximately \$600 million.

The risk of slower than forecast growth is therefore significant and has required careful consideration in the Region's updated forecast and distribution of growth to the nine local municipalities.

### **Significant investment in new infrastructure is required to support growth to 2051 and beyond**

As indicated in Section 6.4 above, to assess the impacts of the results of the land needs assessment and provide input to the proposed distribution of urban expansion lands for 80% of the whitebelt required to 2051, an exercise was completed to assess costs for building out all the whitebelt lands. The remaining 20% of the whitebelt lands not required by 2051 can accommodate an additional 75,000-100,000 people above and beyond the 2.02 million required by the Growth Plan. Assuming the full build out of all the whitebelt lands requires over \$12 billion in new infrastructure based on a preliminary analysis.

Included in this figure are projects identified in Table 9. While additional water and wastewater and transportation projects will be required, this table includes significant infrastructure investments required to support the next generation of growth in the Region over the 30-year planning horizon and beyond. A number of these projects are already in the Region's Capital Plan, totaling approximately \$4 billion.

It should be noted that these are preliminary projects and costs based on best available data from the 2016 Water Wastewater Master Plan and the York Region Rapid Transit Corporation and are subject to change through updates to both the Water and Wastewater and Transportation Master Plans in late 2021/ 2022. That said, the relative expense of the various projects will not change significantly, and it was that relativity and the overall magnitude which were important considerations supporting the proposed forecast and urban expansion locations.

**Table 9**  
**Next Generation of Infrastructure Projects Needed to Service Growth**

<b>Project</b>	<b>Estimated Completion Date</b>	<b>Preliminary Cost (\$ millions)</b>
<b>Water and Wastewater</b>		
Duffin Creek Outfall Expansion	2021-2026	\$15
Primary Trunk Twinning	2026-2031	\$200
Duffin Creek Plant Expansion	Unknown	\$700
Upper York Water Reclamation Centre	2026-2031	\$640
Upper York Water Reclamation Centre Expansion	Post 2041	\$190
Upper York Water Reclamation Centre Final Expansion	Unknown	\$200M
Northeast Vaughan Servicing	2021-2026	\$265
West Vaughan/ Peel Diversion Servicing	2026-2031	\$310
North Markham Servicing	2031-2036	\$90
New 14 <sup>th</sup> Avenue sewer	Unknown	\$240
<b>Transit</b>		
Yonge North Subway Extension	2026-2031	\$5,600 (Total) \$1,300 (Regional*)
Highway 7 East Bus Rapid Transit Corridor	Unfunded	\$437 (Total) \$118 (Regional*)
Highway 7 West Bus Rapid Transit Corridor	Unfunded	\$297 (Total) \$80 (Regional*)
Jane Street Bus Rapid Transit Corridor	Unfunded	\$313 (Total) \$85 (Regional*)
Leslie Street Bus Rapid Transit Corridor	Unfunded	\$470 (Total) \$127 (Regional*)
Major Mackenzie Bus Rapid Transit Corridor	Unfunded	\$1,250 (Total) \$338 (Regional*)
Yonge Street Bus Rapid Transit (Central York)	Unfunded	\$713 (Total) \$193 (Regional*)
Yonge Street Bus Rapid Transit (North of Davis Drive)	Unfunded	\$184 (Total) \$50 (Regional*)
Other Future BRT	Unfunded	\$1,690 (Total) \$455 (Regional*)

\*Regional share based on preliminary estimated 27% share of total cost – for discussion purposes at this time.

Source: 2016 Water and Wastewater Plan and [York Region Rapid Transit Corporation](#)

In addition to the \$5.6 billion Yonge North Subway Extension, approximately \$5.4 billion in bus rapid transit investment is required to accommodate growth to 2051. Successful implementation of these projects will require funding from senior levels of government. Further expansions and

upgrades to the GO rail network will also be important both in supporting urban expansion as well as accommodating growth in greenfield and whitebelt areas. The Regional contribution, if any, to bus rapid transit projects and to GO rail improvements such as grade separated road-rail crossings at Regional roads is unknown at this time. Assuming, on a preliminary basis, an estimated Regional contribution of 27% (based on the Yonge North Subway Extension and existing Public Transit Infrastructure Fund agreements in Ontario), approximately \$1.4 billion of future Bus Rapid Transit costs is likely to be incurred by the Region. The Region should continue to advocate to senior levels of government for funding to enhance the Region's Bus Rapid Transit system through the projects listed above.

### **50% intensification and proposed distribution of urban expansion results in cost savings and improves alignment of infrastructure delivery with anticipated return on investment**

The minimum 50% intensification assumption for growth to 2051 required by the Growth Plan and the pace of growth assumed in the Region's proposed forecast support the principles in the Region's [Growth and Infrastructure Alignment report](#) in that existing transit and water wastewater infrastructure is optimized, setting the stage for financially sustainable growth. The proposed forecast by five-year period considers recent infrastructure delays and trends in slower than previously forecasted growth and accordingly assumes a slower pace of growth in the short and medium-term. The pace of growth then increases over the medium-to long term as major infrastructure projects are anticipated to come online and unlock future growth potential. For example, anticipated delivery of the Upper York Water Reclamation Centre, northeast and northwest Vaughan projects, and the Yonge North Subway Extension within the next 10 years informed a forecast increase in both the pace of growth overall as well as in the affected municipalities in the late 2020s. Until such time, existing capacity for growth through existing infrastructure investments was an important consideration when allocating growth to the nine local municipalities to optimize return on past investments and recover development charges.

The 50% intensification assumption required by the provincial land needs assessment also plays an important role in improving alignment with infrastructure and financial sustainability. Significant investments in both water and wastewater infrastructure have been made to support growth in the Region's built-up area and more specifically in Centres and Corridors. Directing a significant share of growth to these areas through the draft forecast supports a positive return on this investment. It also positions the Region well to provide further opportunities for talent attraction in the Region. Particularly with the millennial workforce, access to transit and other amenities are critical to attracting and maintaining talent.

Finally, with respect to allocation of urban expansion, the timing and uncertainty surrounding both for the initial stage of Upper York Water Reclamation Centre as well as future expansions present significant risks to the Region and have resulted in the proposed distribution for higher levels of Whitebelt growth in southern York Region where infrastructure is both more certain and less costly. The proposed distribution of growth presented in Table 8 would not require the final expansion of the Water Reclamation Centre (likely beyond 2051), a project estimated at \$200 million, and would reduce the number of transportation projects required by 2051. Rather than

the over \$12 billion referred to above, it is estimated that growth to 2051 could carry a preliminary cost of \$11.6 billion.

This distribution of growth also protects highly productive agricultural lands and results in a more achievable growth outlook for the Town of East Gwillimbury with respect to annual population growth. It therefore allows the Region to plan for a more accurate recovery of development charges collections both within the 2051 horizon and beyond.

### **7.3 Market considerations**

#### **Shift in housing mix toward higher density housing forms reflects a continuation of recently observed shifts**

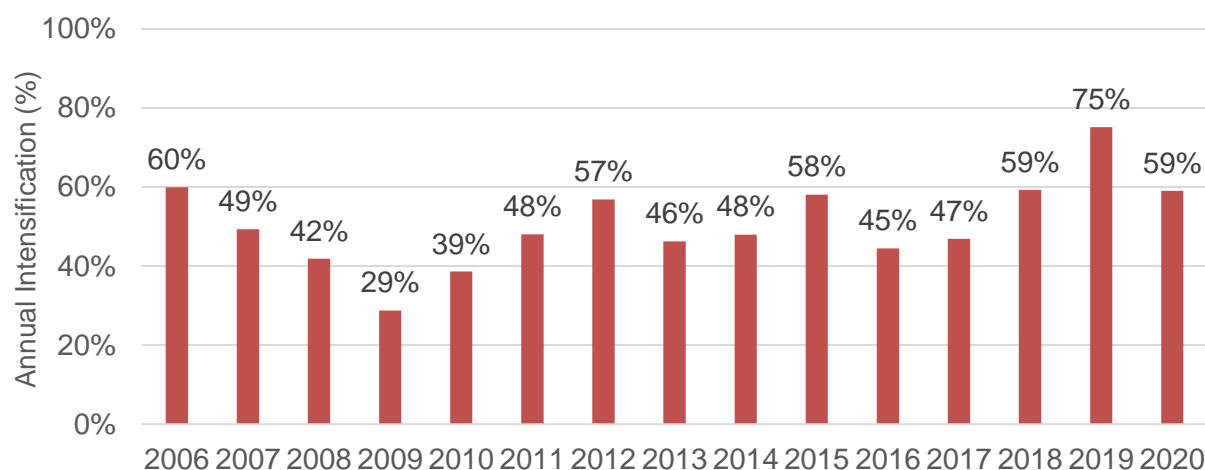
Inherent in the Region's housing forecast to 2051 is a continued shift from low density to medium and high-density housing forms. While this shift considers recent trends over the past 15 years and existing applications in the development pipeline, it also reflects changing demographics throughout the Region. According to Watson, over the 2021 to 2051 forecast period, approximately two-thirds (55%) of future high-density housing demand in York Region is anticipated to be generated from households maintained by persons aged 75 years of age and older who typically have less disposable income compared to other segments of the working-age population.

Despite the projected shift, ground-related units continue to be the dominant form of housing growth to 2051 and are anticipated to account for 74% of total units in 2051 compared to 87% in 2016.

#### **Intensification rate of 50% reflects recently observed trends and is aligned with recommendations from Watson**

As mentioned above and as shown in Figure 17, York Region is well positioned to meet or exceed its 50% intensification target to 2051. Since 2006, the Region has been averaging approximately 50% intensification, with rates averaging 55% over the last five years.

**Figure 17**  
**York Region historical intensification, 2006-2020**



Source: York Region Planning and Economic Development Branch

As shown in Table 9, the significant investments in water and wastewater and transit infrastructure anticipated over the forecast horizon also position the Region well for continued success. In addition to the \$5.6 billion Yonge North Subway Extension, approximately \$5.4 billion in total investment for additional Bus Rapid Transit has been identified on a preliminary basis to support growth to 2051. Federal and/or provincial funding will be required to support this investment. These investments are anticipated to act as significant catalysts for high density growth. In turn, planning to achieve intensification in these locations is critical to supporting these investments and recovering associated development charges infrastructure.

Both the Growth Plan and Land Needs Assessment require that the ability to accommodate growth through intensification be identified in relation to the 50% intensification target. York Region has significant potential to accommodate growth in the built-up area to meet or exceed the minimum 50% target. In planning for 78 Major Transit Station Areas, York Region has the potential to accommodate minimum growth of 505,000 people and 195,000 jobs. While achievement of these targets is permitted to occur beyond 2051, the potential for growth in these areas significantly exceeds the forecast demand in the built-up area by 2051. Further, as of mid-2020, York Region had an estimated supply of 70,000 units under application in the built-up area. If built, these units would account for approximately 50% of the total forecast to 2051.

Further, according to Watson, recent trends regarding residential building permit activity and active residential plans support the appropriateness of the York Region draft intensification forecast by structure type. Watson anticipates that the Region could exceed its 50% residential intensification target in the near to medium-term (i.e. next 5 to 10 years) based on the current supply of active development applications in registered unbuilt, draft approved and proposed plans. Watson does; however, note that as servicing constraints in the designated greenfield area, particularly across northern York Region, are addressed, a greater share of greenfield

housing development is anticipated. Over the long term, Watson identifies that a 50% allocation of housing growth to the built-up area is appropriate.

An intensification rate of 50% is also supported from an affordability perspective. The price of housing is expected to continue to present affordability challenges for York Region residents – particularly for non-family households, young families, and seniors. Providing a more diverse range of medium and high density options in the Region's built-up area, particularly in areas supported by transit and with access to amenities, will help support increasing demand likely to be driven by the growing number of seniors in the Region over the 30-year planning horizon.

### **A balance of small and family sized high density units will be required to accommodate growth to 2051**

In order to accommodate the growing shift toward high density structure types to 2051, the Region will need to work with the development community and local municipal partners to promote the development of both small (bachelor and 1-bedroom) and large (2+ bedroom units) condominium units. While smaller units will be important to accommodate non-family households, the growing seniors' population, and low- to moderate- income households, larger units will be required to accommodate a growing number of families. As mentioned above, achieving 50% requires a modest shift in families into higher density structure types relative to the distribution today. Working with partners and building on existing financial incentives to build these units will be important to adequately house future residents in a manner which balances the market, policy objectives of the Growth Plan, as well as existing and planned investments in transit.

## **7.4 Housing affordability**

### **More affordable home ownership options, particularly in the form of medium density structure types, will be required to 2051**

From a built-form perspective, while the forecast provides for a broader range of what are considered more affordable products through increased housing options anticipated in medium and high density structure types, Watson identifies that affordability is expected to remain a significant challenge for the Region to 2051. Based on a review of the Region's draft forecast, Watson notes the following with respect to housing affordability:

- While the potential supply of low-density housing is generally well-aligned with anticipated demand, low density ownership housing options are highly concentrated in high-income households that can afford premium priced homes priced above an average of \$950,000. With respect to more affordable low-density housing needs, more market choice of housing will be needed for low-density units in the \$650,000 to \$950,000 price point to accommodate anticipated demand.
- Relative to low-density households, York Region offers a greater supply of medium-density housing to accommodate anticipated demand associated with high-income households. That said, the Region has experienced a significant price appreciation in medium-density housing, making them increasingly unaffordable to middle-income families – the demographic in which the demand is greatest.

- While the need for condominium units is anticipated to be driven by a significant share of high-density ownership housing demand associated with older seniors (75+) with lower household incomes seeking smaller, traditionally more affordable units, condominium units are not anticipated to provide an affordable alternative for larger households seeking 3- to 4- bedroom units.
- Without further initiatives to address housing affordability, the Region may have difficulty meeting its long-term population and housing forecast to 2051.

Watson's recommended actions are as follows:

- Expand the supply of purpose-built rental housing across the Region. This includes a provision for affordable rental units catering to lower-income households.
- Expand the supply of affordable home ownership in the medium-density market, targeting units priced below \$650,000. This includes expanding the supply of smaller, more compact grade-oriented housing including entry level townhouses in both the built-up area and greenfield locations.
- Expand the supply of low-density home ownership options priced between \$650,000 and \$950,000 by encouraging smaller detached homes.

Following the MCR and building on the [Housing Opportunities and Challenges](#) report from January 2021, options to address housing affordability will continue to be explored with public and private partners.

**The need for rental, including purpose built rental, is expected to be significant to 2051**

As shown in Figure 18, as of 2016, the share of rental housing in York Region was 14%, significantly lower than the GTHA average, excluding the City of Toronto, at 21%. According to Watson, York Region's rental housing propensity rates (by age group) are expected to increase over the forecast period from 14% in 2016 to 22% in 2051. This assumption builds on the broader regional growth trends in the GTHA rental market as well as demographic and socio-economic trends.



**Figure 18**  
**Share of rental housing by GTHA municipality, 1991-2016**

Upper/Single-Tier Municipality	1991	2016	1991-2016
Toronto	63%	47%	42%
Peel	32%	24%	15%
Hamilton	45%	32%	15%
York	18%	14%	12%
Halton	26%	19%	11%
Durham	25%	19%	9%
<b>GTHA</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>29%</b>
<b>GTHA Excl. Toronto</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>13%</b>

Source: Watson and Associates

Based on Watson's analysis, rental housing growth in York Region is expected to increase from 59,000 units in 2021 to 145,000 units in 2051. This represents growth of approximately 86,000 units, accounting for an estimated 32% of total housing growth over the forecast period. Rental housing need in the Region is expected to average 2,700 units per year over the 2021 to 2051 period, notably higher than the 1,800 units averaged over the 2006 to 2016 period.

Watson further identifies that an increasing share of renter household growth, particularly in high density dwellings, will need to be accommodated through the primary rental market in the form of purpose-built rental. It is recommended that 40% of overall renter household growth over the 2021 to 2051 period be accommodated through the primary rental market including half (50%) of the high-density renter-occupied unit demand and 20% of the medium-density renter-occupied unit demand. This will require approximately 33,000 additional purpose-built rental units to be constructed over the 2021 to 2051 period to meet forecast demand representing an average annual increase of approximately 1,100 per year. To meet anticipated needs, purpose-built rental housing development activity across York Region will need to be approximately seven times greater over the next 30 years when compared to what has been provided across the Region over the past decade.

Working with public and private partners to provide opportunities for rental housing, particularly in the form of purpose build rental, will therefore have a significant impact on the achievability of the Region's forecast. Watson recognizes that significantly increasing the supply of rental housing in the market will likely require greater participation by the private-sector development community and non-profit organizations to construct purpose-built rental housing.

**Affordability presents a significant risk to the Region's ability to achieve its 2051 forecast**  
 Watson have identified several potential risks if York Region's housing supply is not well aligned with anticipated affordability needs of existing and future residents. If the Region is unable to address the housing affordability gaps, including satisfying the need for increased rental housing, the following outcomes are likely:

- An increasing share of lower-and middle-income households will need to spend greater than 30% of household income on shelter costs in York Region
- Households may need to settle for housing arrangements that meet their affordability needs but do not necessarily meet their functional needs which may impact quality of life. This could include living arrangements in smaller than desired dwellings
- An increased percentage of young adults would be expected to defer entry into the rental or ownership housing market, combined with an overall increase in multiple family/multi-generation living arrangements
- A greater share of lower- and middle-income households will likely rent and not purchase, placing greater pressure on both the primary and secondary rental markets
- An increasing share of lower-and middle- income households will need to spend a greater than 30% share of household income on shelter costs in York Region.
- Households may consider less expensive housing options in other locations within the broader regional market area outside York Region. If the Region is unable to attract target market segments such as young families and seniors, the Region will have difficulty in meeting its long-term population and housing forecast to 2051.

## **8.0 LOCAL MUNICIPAL POPULATION AND EMPLOYMENT FORECASTS TO 2051**

### **8.1 Population forecasts to 2051**

#### **York Region housing growth is distributed to nine local municipalities**

Population growth is distributed to the nine local municipalities by structure type and policy area. Built-up area housing growth is distributed based on each local municipality's intensification target (discussed in Section 9 of this report) as well as considerations related to historic and anticipated Regional market shares by housing type. Designated greenfield area and rural housing growth is distributed based on housing supply estimates and forecasts for rural growth by local municipality. Housing supply estimates are derived from planning applications and estimates of remaining development potential based on secondary plans.

#### **Population by local municipality is generated based on applying persons per unit assumption to forecast local municipal housing growth**

Consistent with the approach for the Region, local municipal population growth is determined by applying persons per unit assumptions against forecast housing growth by type. Persons per unit assumptions for ground-related housing growth are generally based on observed persons per unit in new units by local municipality over the last 35 years while high density persons per unit estimates are assumed to increase over time. The 2016 population base for each local municipality is declined at the same rate as the Regional assumption.

### Infrastructure timing and market factors affect the timing of local municipal forecasts

The capacity and timing associated with new infrastructure projects is a key input to forecast growth by local municipality. For example, anticipated timing for the Upper York Water Reclamation Centre, northeast and northwest Vaughan projects, and the Yonge North Subway Extension informed an anticipated increase in the pace of growth in affected municipalities in the late 2020s. This is particularly true for Newmarket, Aurora, and East Gwillimbury where capacity for growth is currently limited in advance of the Upper York Water Reclamation Centre, currently scheduled for completion in 2028.

### Majority of Region's population growth forecasted for Markham, Vaughan, and Richmond Hill

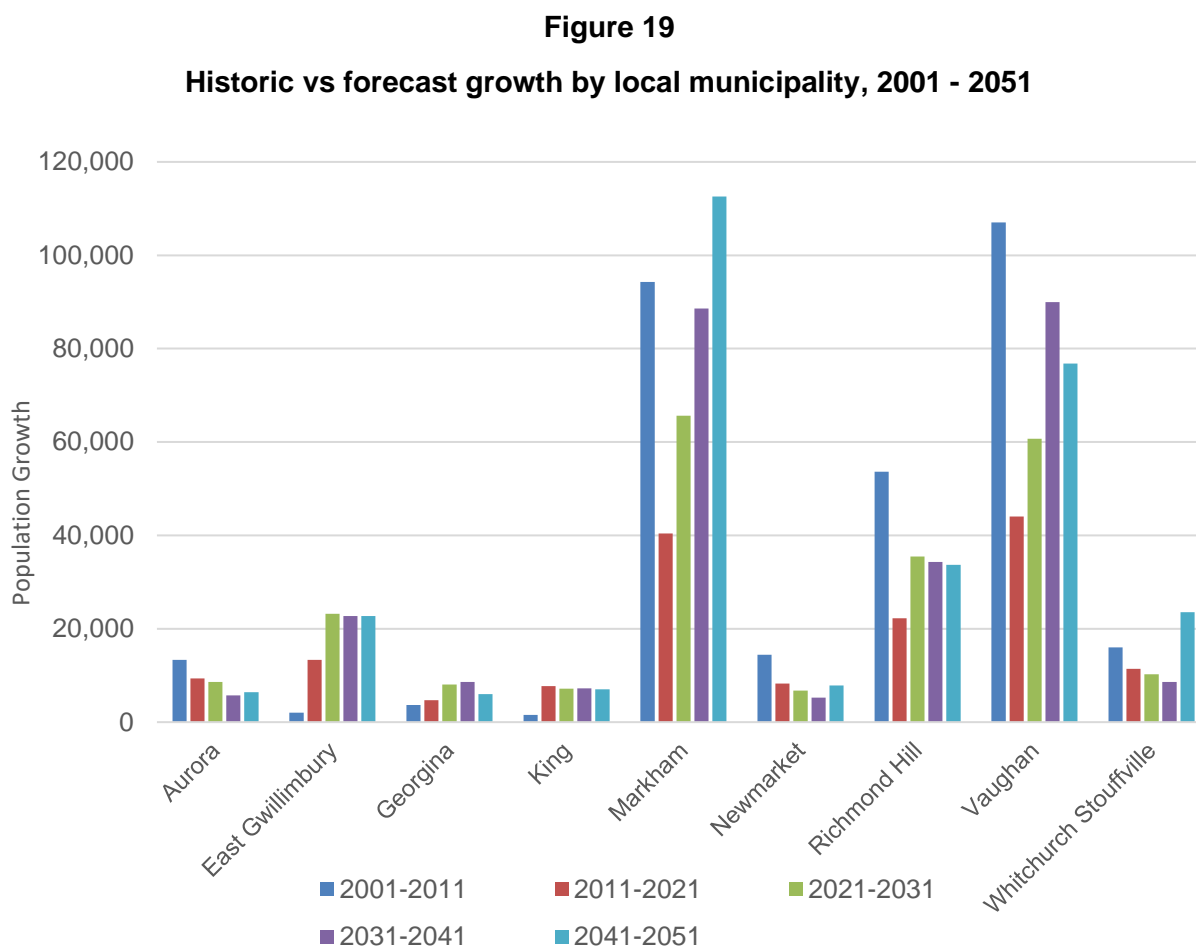
Table 10 provides a summary of York Region's proposed forecast by local municipality.

**Table 10**  
**Proposed York Region Population Forecast by Local Municipality**

<b>Municipality</b>	<b>2016 Population</b>	<b>2051 Population</b>	<b>Growth</b>	<b>Share of York Region Growth</b>	<b>Average Annual Growth Rate</b>
Aurora	57,200	84,900	27,700	3%	1.1%
East Gwillimbury	24,700	105,100	80,400	9%	4.2%
Georgina	46,800	71,900	25,100	3%	1.2%
King	25,300	49,600	24,300	3%	1.9%
Markham	339,100	619,200	280,100	32%	1.7%
Newmarket	86,800	110,700	23,900	3%	0.7%
Richmond Hill	201,000	317,000	116,000	13%	1.3%
Vaughan	315,700	568,700	253,000	29%	1.7%
Whitchurch-Stouffville	47,300	92,900	45,600	5%	1.9%
<b>York Region</b>	<b>1,143,900</b>	<b>2,020,000</b>	<b>876,100</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1.6%</b>

Source: York Region Planning and Economic Development Branch

Similar to historic trends (Figure 19), the majority of the Region's population growth is forecast to be accommodated in Markham, Vaughan and Richmond Hill. This growth is assumed to include intensification in the Region's Centres and Corridors and other intensification areas along with the build-out of major greenfield areas including ROPA 3 in Markham, ROPA 2 in Vaughan, and North Leslie in Richmond Hill, among other areas. East Gwillimbury will play a more significant role in accommodating population growth once the Upper York Water Reclamation Centre is completed.



Source: York Region Planning and Economic Development Branch

By 2051, all municipalities will experience growth beyond their 2031 Regional Official Plan forecast (Table 11). Overall, the updated 2031 population is lower than the current Regional Official Plan 2031 forecast. Consequently, a number of municipalities have lower 2031 population forecasts than the current ROP due recent levels of relatively slower growth and delays in the timing of servicing infrastructure.

**Table 11**  
**York Region Population Forecast Comparison**

Municipality	2051 Population	2031 Population	2031 Population (ROP)	Difference (2051 vs. 2031 ROP)
Aurora	84,900	72,700	70,200	14,700
East Gwillimbury	105,100	59,300	86,500	18,600
Georgina	71,900	57,200	70,300	1,600
King	49,600	35,300	34,900	14,700

<b>Municipality</b>	<b>2051 Population</b>	<b>2031 Population</b>	<b>2031 Population (ROP)</b>	<b>Difference (2051 vs. 2031 ROP)</b>
Markham	619,200	416,100	421,600	197,600
Newmarket	110,700	97,400	97,100	13,600
Richmond Hill	317,000	248,500	242,200	74,800
Vaughan	568,700	401,000	416,600	152,100
Whitchurch-Stouffville	92,900	60,300	60,600	32,300
<b>York Region</b>	<b>2,020,000</b>	<b>1,447,800</b>	<b>1,500,000</b>	<b>520,000</b>

Source: York Region Planning and Economic Development Branch

The following is a summary of the highlights of the local municipal population forecasts.

### **Aurora**

Aurora is forecast to reach a population of 84,900 by 2051. Primary sources of greenfield residential growth will be the build-out of the Aurora 2C and Aurora South secondary plan areas along with the anticipated development of the Aurora 2A secondary plan area in the longer term. Intensification is planned to occur within the Aurora Promenade, along the Yonge and Wellington Street corridors, including the Aurora GO Station.

### **East Gwillimbury**

With the completion of the Upper York Water Reclamation Centre, East Gwillimbury is forecast to grow to a population of 105,100 by 2051. Population growth is anticipated through the development of the Green Lane secondary plan and designated residential areas in Sharon, Queensville, and Holland Landing. As part of the proposed forecast there is also urban expansion in whitebelt areas adjacent to ROPA 1, south of Mount Albert Road and east of Highway 11. East Gwillimbury's 2031 population is significantly lower than the current Regional Official Plan forecast due to the delay in the Upper York Water Reclamation Centre.

### **Georgina**

Georgina is forecast to reach a population of 71,900 by 2051 with most of the growth occurring in the communities of Keswick and Sutton. The forecast for Sutton is based on the capacity of the planned expansion to the Sutton sewage treatment facility. Georgina's 2031 forecast population is lower than the current Regional Official Plan 2031 forecast due to recent slower levels of growth than previously anticipated.

### **King**

The population forecast of 49,600 for King Township is based on growth assumptions for the communities of Nobleton, King City, and Schomberg. The forecast assumes the current Environmental Assessment for water and wastewater servicing capacity expansion will be approved to allow Nobleton to reach a population of approximately 10,800. Growth beyond this figure in Nobleton was not contemplated in the Region's MCR work because of the significant

cost (minimum \$100 - \$200 million) that would be required in addition to a number of environmental constraints. King City is forecast to grow to a population of approximately 20,000, which will require water and wastewater upgrades to Regional infrastructure to accommodate growth beyond the current limit of 15,000 people and would be contingent on addressing constraints in the York Durham Sewage System. Schomberg is forecast to experience modest growth to reach its servicing capacity of approximately 3,600 people.

### **Markham**

Markham is forecast to accommodate the largest share of the Region's population growth between 2016 and 2051. The ROPA 3 new community area along with Markham's remaining whitebelt lands will be the primary locations for greenfield ground-related housing growth in the City. Significant levels of intensification are anticipated in Markham Centre and the Langstaff Gateway, along the Yonge corridor where the future Yonge North Subway Extension is being planned, the redevelopment of the York Downs golf course, and along other intensification corridors in the City. Markham's population is forecast to reach over 619,200 by 2051, an increase of 280,100 from 2016.

### **Newmarket**

Newmarket's population growth will be increasingly achieved through intensification as the last remaining greenfield areas are built out in Northwest and Southeast Newmarket. Newmarket is forecast to reach a population of 110,700 by 2051. Most of the intensification growth is planned within the Newmarket Urban Centre secondary plan area along Yonge St and Davis Drive, including the Newmarket Urban Growth Centre. In the short term, growth in Newmarket will be constrained until completion of Phase 1 of the Upper York Water Reclamation Centre.

### **Richmond Hill**

The North Leslie and West Gormley areas along with the build-out of the Oak Ridges community will be the source of most of Richmond Hill's remaining greenfield growth. A significant share of Richmond Hill's population growth will be intensification, concentrated along the Yonge Corridor, including Richmond Hill Centre which is planned to be the terminal station for the Yonge Street subway extension. Richmond Hill is forecast to reach a population of 317,000 by 2051, up from 201,000 in 2016.

### **Vaughan**

Vaughan is forecast to accommodate the second highest share of population growth in the Region (29%) with a 2051 population of 568,700. With the opening of the Toronto-York Spadina Subway Extension in late 2017, Vaughan Metropolitan Centre has been experiencing high levels of development activity with significant additional planned development. The future Yonge North Subway Extension is anticipated to contribute further to intensification growth in Vaughan along with areas of Highway 7 already served by bus rapid transit. The completion of the Northeast and West Vaughan wastewater servicing projects anticipated in the mid to late 2020's will enable the full development of Blocks 27 and 41, increase capacity for growth in Kleinburg-

Nashville, and open up new areas in the Vaughan whitebelt for both community and employment purposes.

### **Whitchurch-Stouffville**

Whitchurch-Stouffville is forecast to reach a population of 92,900 by 2051 with the majority of this growth occurring in the community of Stouffville. The development of the Phase 3 lands in Stouffville will be the main source of future greenfield housing supply, including the proposed Lincolnville MTSA along with proposed community urban expansion lands. The forecast takes account of two Minister's Zoning Orders in the whitebelt, just west of the community of Stouffville which are proposed for a mix of low, medium, and high-density units. Requests to expand the settlement area boundary into the protected countryside of the Greenbelt have not been incorporated because growth there is restricted by Provincial plans. The community of Stouffville will continue to be the source of intensification growth, primarily along the Main Street corridor and the Stouffville GO MTSA.

## **8.2 Employment forecasts to 2051**

### **York Region employment forecast is distributed by employment type to local municipalities based on potential for major office, available employment lands, and population related employment growth consistent with the distribution of population**

Forecast employment growth by local municipality and the overall timing of employment growth throughout the Region takes into account the availability and timing of major servicing infrastructure. The York Region employment forecast by type is distributed to the nine local municipalities based on the considerations below:

- **Major office employment**

Growth in major office is forecast to continue to be predominantly concentrated in Markham, Vaughan and Richmond Hill since new office development tends to gravitate to existing concentrations. An increasing share of major office employment is anticipated in the Region's Centres and Corridors as compared to office development in employment areas, supported by recent major rapid transit investments including the Toronto-York Subway Extension to Vaughan Metropolitan Centre and the future Yonge North Subway Extension. Aurora, Newmarket, East Gwillimbury, King, and Whitchurch-Stouffville are forecast to attract smaller shares of major office growth.

- **Employment area employment**

The local municipal employment area employment forecast is based on forecast market demand and local municipal vacant employment land supply, including potential for intensification. To meet forecast Regional employment growth, 1,100 hectares of urban expansion employment lands are proposed in the locations shown in Attachment 4.

- **Population-related employment**

Population-related employment – schools, retail, services, government, other institutional employment and work-at-home – is forecast to grow in proportion to population growth. Regional serving population-related employment such as the new Vaughan hospital are allocated to the appropriate municipality.

- **Rural employment**

A small share of the Region's employment growth is forecast in rural areas. This was distributed to local municipalities based on the distribution of existing rural employment.

**Markham and Vaughan are forecast to accommodate nearly two thirds of the Region's employment growth to 2051**

Table 12 summarizes the total employment forecast by local municipality.

**Table 12**  
**York Region Employment Forecast by Local Municipality**

<b>Municipality</b>	<b>2016 Employment</b>	<b>2051 Employment</b>	<b>Growth</b>	<b>Share</b>	<b>Average Annual Growth Rate</b>
Aurora	27,300	41,000	13,700	4%	1.2%
East Gwillimbury	9,500	37,400	27,900	7%	4.0%
Georgina	9,300	21,900	12,600	3%	2.5%
King	9,600	16,400	6,800	2%	1.5%
Markham	182,000	309,200	127,200	33%	1.5%
Newmarket	45,000	57,600	12,600	3%	0.7%
Richmond Hill	78,800	122,600	43,800	11%	1.3%
Vaughan	223,200	352,000	129,800	33%	1.3%
Whitchurch-Stouffville	15,400	31,900	16,500	4%	2.1%
<b>York Region</b>	<b>599,100</b>	<b>990,000</b>	<b>390,900</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1.4%</b>

Source: Planning and Economic Development Branch

Markham and Vaughan are forecast to accommodate nearly two thirds of the Region's employment growth to 2051 which is related to the large existing vacant employment land base in Vaughan, proposed urban expansion employment lands in Vaughan and Markham, the strong office market in both Markham and Vaughan, and the population-related employment growth that will accompany significant population growth.

Table 13 compares forecast employment in 2031 and 2051 with the Regional Official Plan 2031 forecast by local municipality. A number of municipalities have lower 2031 employment forecasts compared to the current Regional Official Plan due to delays in the timing of infrastructure delivery and slower than anticipated population growth. All municipalities have higher 2051 employment figures than the Regional Official Plan employment forecast for 2031.



**Table 13**  
**York Region Employment Forecast Comparison**

<b>Municipality</b>	<b>2051 Employment</b>	<b>2031 Employment</b>	<b>2031 Employment (ROP)</b>	<b>Difference (2051 vs. 2031 ROP)</b>
Aurora	41,000	33,800	34,200	6,800
East Gwillimbury	37,400	16,800	34,400	3,000
Georgina	21,900	13,100	21,200	700
King	16,400	11,700	11,900	4,500
Markham	309,200	224,000	240,400	68,800
Newmarket	57,600	51,800	49,400	8,200
Richmond Hill	122,600	97,000	99,400	23,200
Vaughan	352,000	277,900	266,100	85,900
Whitchurch-Stouffville	31,900	20,300	23,000	8,900
<b>York Region</b>	<b>990,000</b>	<b>746,400</b>	<b>780,000</b>	<b>210,000</b>

Source: Planning and Economic Development Branch

The following is a summary of the highlights of the employment forecast by local municipality.

### **Aurora**

Aurora's employment is forecast to grow by nearly 14,000 jobs from 2016 to 2051. Just over half of Aurora's employment growth during this period is anticipated to be in employment areas, primarily in employment areas along the Highway 404 corridor. Population-related employment growth accounts for just over 30% of employment growth. New major office development comprises the remainder the Town's employment growth and is expected to locate near the Highway 404 and Wellington area.

### **East Gwillimbury**

Employment in East Gwillimbury is forecast to grow by nearly four times its 2016 level of approximately 9,500, reaching 37,400 by 2051, representing an average annual growth rate of 4%. Over half of East Gwillimbury's employment growth is anticipated to be in employment areas, mainly in the ROPA 1 and Queensville employment areas along Highway 404 along with urban expansion employment lands. The majority of the remaining employment growth will be through population-related employment to serve the anticipated growth in population through development along Green Lane, in Queensville, Sharon, Holland Landing, and proposed urban expansion community lands.

### **Georgina**

Employment in Georgina is forecast to grow by about 12,600 jobs with total employment projected at 21,900 by 2051. Nearly 70% of Georgina's employment growth is anticipated to be

in employment areas, mainly in the Keswick Business Park. The remainder of Georgina's employment growth will be through population-related employment.

### **King**

King's employment is projected to grow by nearly 6,800 jobs with nearly half of this growth through growth in employment areas in King City, Nobleton, and Schomberg, as well as a small area proposed urban expansion. Just over 40% of King's employment growth is forecast to be in population-related employment which will serve the growing communities of King City and Nobleton.

### **Markham**

Markham is forecast to continue to accommodate a significant share of York Region employment, accounting for approximately 33% of the Region's growth from 2016 to 2051. Markham has traditionally been the primary centre for major office businesses in York Region and is projected to continue to play a major role in accommodating office employment. Major office employment is forecast to grow by just under 45,000 jobs from 2016 to 2051, representing a 44% share of the Region's total major office growth. In addition to continuing to accommodate office employment growth in business parks along Highway 404; Markham Centre, Langstaff Gateway, and the Yonge corridor are anticipated to attract increasing shares of new office development, supported by recent and planned major transit investments including the Yonge North Subway Extension. Approximately 29% of Markham's employment growth is forecast to be in employment areas, with a large share of this growth in the ROPA 3 employment area and proposed urban expansion area. The remaining employment growth in Markham will be population-related, a large share of which will be in centres and corridors to serve intensification residential development and in the proposed urban expansion community area in Northeast Markham.

### **Newmarket**

Employment in Newmarket is forecast to increase by approximately 12,600 jobs between 2016 and 2051. Newmarket is anticipated to attract growth of just over 4,000 major office jobs over the forecast period, accommodated mainly in the Yonge Street and Davis Drive corridors. As Newmarket's remaining vacant employment area supply is limited, employment area employment growth is projected to be approximately 3,500 jobs through development on vacant lands and intensification. The largest share of employment growth is anticipated to be population-related (40%), in step with projected growth in population.

### **Richmond Hill**

Richmond Hill is forecast to continue to experience strong employment growth with total jobs anticipated to increase by approximately 43,800 jobs between 2016 and 2051. The Beaver Creek employment area currently forms part of the Region's major office node at Highways 7 and 404. Major office will continue to account for significant employment growth in Richmond Hill, accounting for just under 16,000 new jobs. With the anticipated completion of the Yonge North Subway Extension in 2030, it is anticipated that a significant share of this growth will be

within Richmond Hill Centre. The largest share of employment growth (47%) is forecast to be population-related which will serve growth in population through intensification and remaining residential greenfield areas. Employment area employment growth is a relatively small share of Richmond Hill's total employment growth (17%) as the remaining vacant employment area supply is largely consumed over the first half of the forecast period.

### **Vaughan**

Vaughan is forecast to continue to accommodate a significant share of employment growth in the Region, accounting for 33% of total growth. Vaughan has traditionally accommodated the largest share of employment land employment in the Region, having an ample supply of well-located employment lands close to 400 series highways along with the CN Macmillan freight classification yard and CP Intermodal facility. Between 2016 and 2051, Vaughan is forecast to accommodate just under 40% of the Region's total employment area employment growth through development of existing vacant lands and urban expansion lands in West Vaughan and along the future GTA West corridor. The Toronto-York Spadina Subway Extension to the Vaughan Metropolitan Centre in 2017 has attracted new office development. Vaughan's major office market is anticipated to continue to strengthen both in the Vaughn Metropolitan Centre and other transit supportive locations as well as in employment areas. Vaughan is second only to Markham in forecast major office employment growth, accommodating nearly one third of the Regional growth total. Vaughan's remaining employment growth will be through population-related employment, including the new Vaughan hospital as well as education, retail, service and other institutional uses to serve intensification as well as greenfield areas.

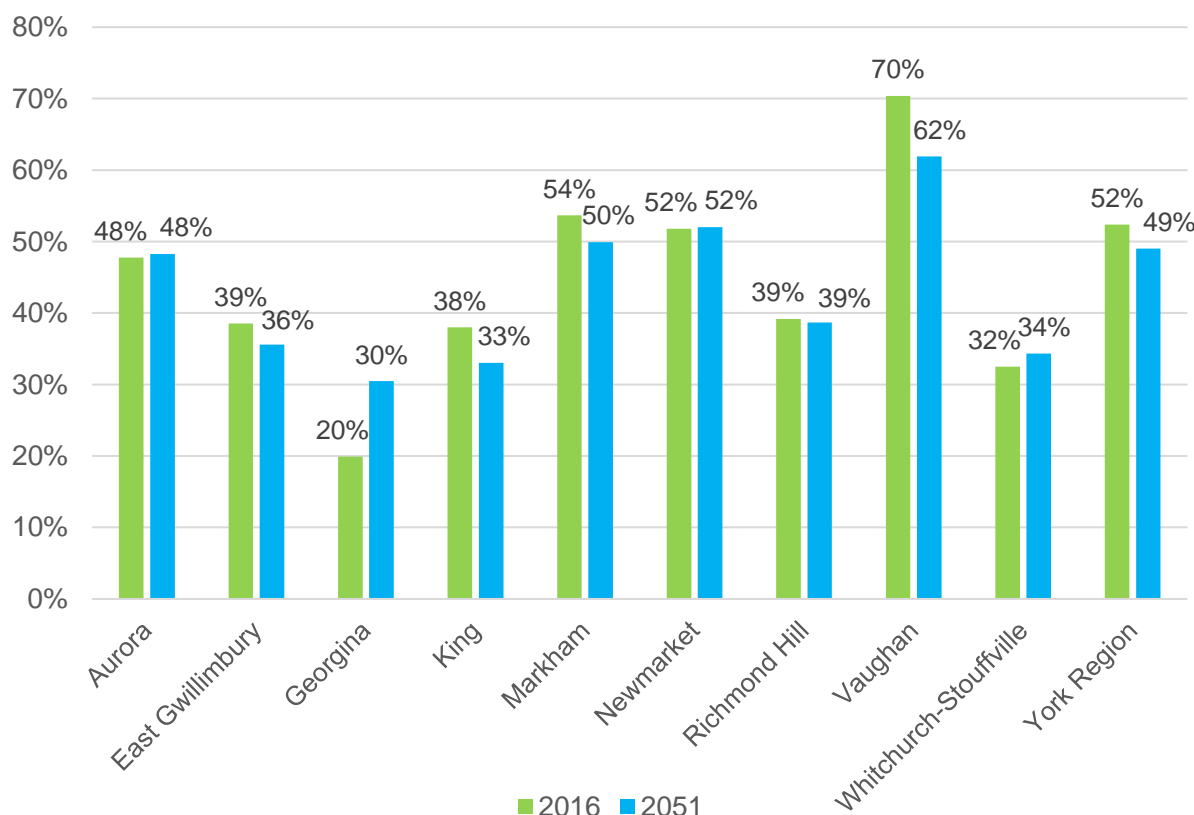
### **Whitchurch-Stouffville**

Employment in Whitchurch-Stouffville is forecast to grow by approximately 16,500 jobs between 2016 and 2051 with just under half of this growth in employment areas. The majority of the Town's forecast employment area growth is anticipated to be through proposed urban expansion lands. Approximately 45% of the Town's employment growth is anticipated to be through population-related employment, as a result of population growth in intensification areas and greenfield areas in the Community of Stouffville as well as the proposed community urban expansion area. Smaller shares of the Town's employment growth are forecast through major office and rural employment.

### **Local Municipal Activity Rates to remain fairly constant to 2051**

An activity rate is the ratio of employment to residents. It provides a measure of economic sustainability by looking at the provision of employment opportunities in relation to the population of a community. The current Regional Official Plan has a policy goal of providing 1 job for every 2 residents, which equates to an activity rate of 50%. The Growth Plan forecast for York Region results in a Reginal activity rate of 49% by 2051. Figure 20 compares local municipal activity rates in 2016 and at 2051.

**Figure 20**  
**Local Municipal Activity Rate Comparison**



Source: Planning and Economic Development Branch

## 9.0 INTENSIFICATION AND DENSITY TARGETS BY LOCAL MUNICIPALITY

### 9.1 Intensification Targets

**A York Region intensification framework was presented to Regional Council in April 2019 and is being through the Regional Official Plan update**

The Growth Plan requires municipalities to prepare an intensification strategy to set out how the Growth Plan minimum intensification target will be met. The April 2019 [Planning for Intensification](#) report presented a draft framework for intensification in York Region. The framework is based on existing Centres and Corridors policies in the Regional Official Plan along with local municipal intensification strategies and policies. Intensification is planned for strategic locations within the built-up area to optimize efficiencies in infrastructure and services delivery, including transit services. The current Regional Official Plan includes an intensification matrix that supports a hierarchy of appropriate density ranges by intensification type. As part of

the Regional Official Plan review process, a more simplified intensification hierarchy is being developed that proposes the following components:

1. Regional Centres/ subway stations
2. Major Transit Stations Areas
3. Regional Corridors
4. Local centres and corridors

**A range of factors were considered in developing local municipal intensification targets**

Under the Growth Plan, York Region is required to meet a minimum 50% intensification target. Each local municipality will play a unique role in supporting the achievement of the overall Regional intensification target. Markham, Vaughan and Richmond Hill have the largest built-up areas and contain three of the four Regional Centres as well as extensive intensification corridors. They also benefit from having the most existing and planned transit infrastructure. A number of factors were considered in developing the proposed local municipal intensification targets including:

- Current planning applications in the built-up area
- Extent of planned local municipal intensification areas – Regional Centres and Corridors, Major Transit Station Areas, local centres and corridors, and infill potential
- Current Regional Official Plan local municipal intensification targets
- Infrastructure capacity and timing

The extent and presence of Major Transit Station Areas was considered in developing intensification targets but were not a determining factor since Major Transit Station Areas are not obligated to meet their minimum density targets by 2051.

The amount of vacant designated greenfield area land and distribution of urban expansion also impacts a municipalities intensification rate. For example, a municipality such as Markham, while allocated a significant share of the Region's total intensification units also has a large amount of designated greenfield area and whitebelt growth proposed to 2051 which results in a lower intensification percentage than a municipality such as Newmarket that has very little remaining designated greenfield area potential. Table 14 presents proposed intensification targets by local municipality.

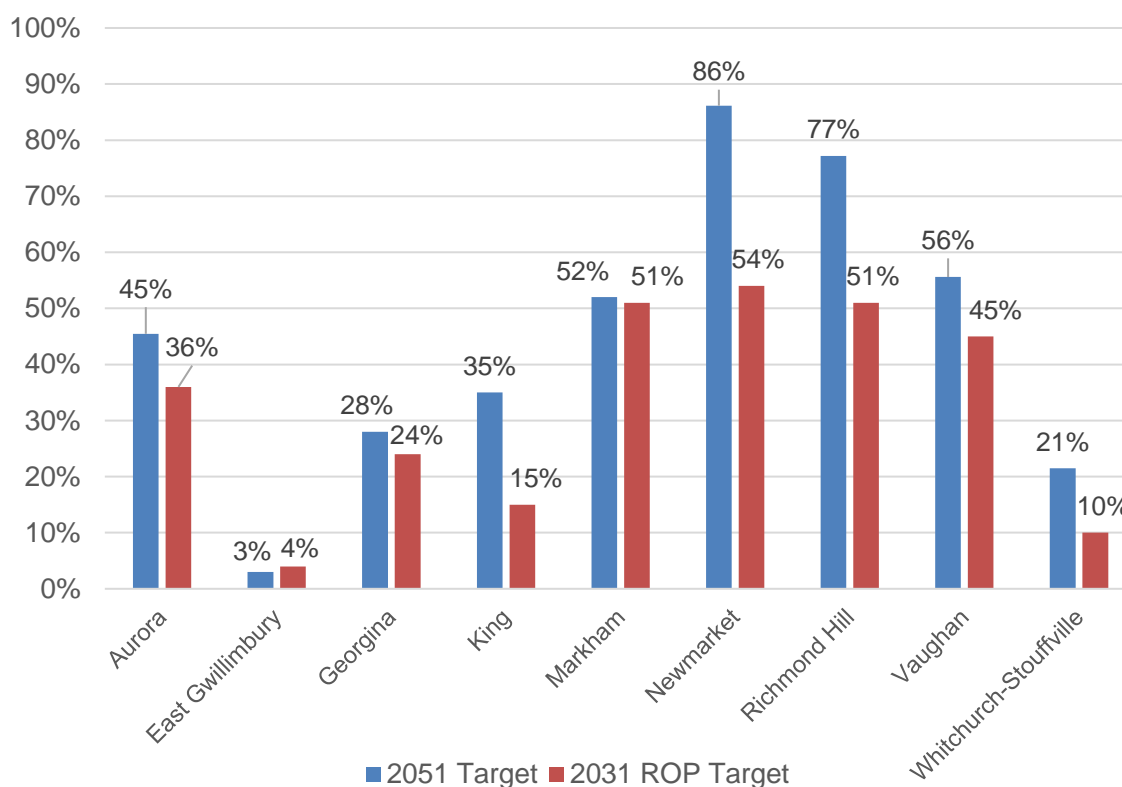
**Table 14**  
**Proposed Local Municipal Intensification Targets**

<b>Municipality</b>	<b>2016-2051 Intensification Target (units)</b>	<b>Intensification Percentage</b>
Aurora	4,600	45%
East Gwillimbury	800	3%
Georgina	2,500	28%
King	2,800	35%
Markham	50,300	52%
Newmarket	8,700	86%
Richmond Hill	33,100	77%
Vaughan	49,100	56%
Whitchurch-Stouffville	3,600	21%
<b>York Region</b>	<b>155,500</b>	<b>50%</b>

Source: Planning and Economic Development Branch

As shown in Figure 21, compared to the 2031 targets in the 2010 Regional Official Plan, most local municipal targets are higher in order to achieve the 50% Regional intensification target. Given that the market is currently delivering over 50% Region-wide, these increases are reasonable. The draft intensification targets for King, Newmarket, Richmond Hill and Whitchurch-Stouffville are noticeably higher than the current Regional Official Plan due to less available greenfield growth.

**Figure 21**  
**Comparison of Local Municipal Intensification Targets**



Source: Planning and Economic Development Branch

## 9.2 Designated Greenfield Area Density Targets

### Local municipal designated greenfield area density targets reflect existing and planned development

As part of the land needs assessment process, the Growth Plan requires that the Region develop local municipal designated greenfield area density targets. The targets are expressed as minimum densities in residents and jobs per hectare that are planned to be achieved by 2051. The designated greenfield area targets reflect existing development in the designated greenfield area along with planned residential and non-residential uses and are to be applied across the entire designated greenfield area within each local municipality. This includes any proposed urban expansion lands required to accommodate growth to 2051.

Local municipal designated greenfield area minimum density targets are calculated in the same way as the Regional total – considering built, under construction, under application, and planned development in the designated greenfield area. As discussed earlier in this report, a density of 60 residents and jobs per hectare was assumed for urban expansion purposes in community areas. Local municipal designated greenfield area minimum density targets are shown in Table 15.

**Table 15****Proposed Local Municipal Designated Greenfield Area Density Targets**

<b>Municipality</b>	<b>2051 DGA Density Targets (residents and jobs per ha)</b>
Aurora	55
East Gwillimbury	55
Georgina	35
King	30
Markham	70
Newmarket	40
Richmond Hill	70
Vaughan	70
Whitchurch-Stouffville	50
<b>York Region</b>	<b>60</b>

Source: Planning and Economic Development Branch

In the case of many municipalities, designated greenfield area density targets are heavily influenced by existing areas that have already been built at low densities. Density targets in Table 15 should therefore be treated as minimums. Local municipalities are encouraged to plan for higher densities in appropriate locations, especially in areas with higher order transit.

## 10.0 INTEGRATED APPROACH TO GROWTH MANAGEMENT

### 10.1 Managing growth-related risks

#### **Integrated growth management will be important in mitigating growth-related risk**

Planning for growth of over 800,000 people and 345,000 jobs over a 30-year planning horizon will require an integrated and agile approach to growth management. Achieving provincial forecasts requires average annual growth of 26,100 people per year. As shown in Table 16, this figure exceeds short term historical average annual growth (2010-2020) in York Region and is slightly above longer-term averages over the past 35 years.

**Table 16****Comparison of Local Municipal Intensification Targets**

Historical short term	Historical long term	2051 forecast
16,500	24,900	26,100

Source: York Region Planning and Economic Development Branch



The Region's fiscal capacity is strongly tied to the pace of growth. As a result, there are financial risks associated with planning for growth and paying for required infrastructure. Slower than anticipated growth could have the following impacts:

- Slower cost recovery through development charges to pay down outstanding development charges debt and reduction in the amount of development charges revenue available to fund new infrastructure – for example a sustained 10% reduction in collections versus the forecast could require capital deferral of up to \$300 million
- Increased costs for operating infrastructure put in place too early to operate efficiently
- Tax levy or rate increases for existing residents and businesses to support ongoing operation and maintain service levels
- Reduction in contributions to asset management reserves and insufficient funds for the Region's future capital replacement and rehabilitation.

### **An agile approach to growth management will help maintain financial sustainability**

The Region has been planning in an integrated manner since the 1994 Regional Official Plan with the current MCR providing an opportunity to re-assess and recalibrate the distribution of growth based on updated policy objectives, recent growth trends, and the actual pace and location of growth observed since the 2010 Regional Official Plan. Core to the Region's integrated approach to growth management are the objectives in Figure 22.

**Figure 22**

#### **Integrating infrastructure and financial planning with land use planning**



Source: York Region Planning and Economic Development Branch

A more agile approach involves regularly re-aligning Regional plans, programs, and processes with the Region's fiscal reality. Through municipal comprehensive reviews, master plan updates, Capital Plan updates, and annual budget reviews there are opportunities to re-calibrate Regional plans and strategies with actual growth and development charges collections. While the current MCR and master plan process will provide the foundation for planning for growth to 2051, annual updates to Capital Plans through the annual budget process will be important in responding to the changing nature and pace of growth to ensure growth remains fiscally sustainable. Future municipal comprehensive reviews (approximately every 5-10 years) will re-assess the distribution and pace of growth as well as future urban expansion needs.

Analyzing the full costs and debt implications of land use decisions and understanding associated risks and opportunities has been and will continue to be important. While planning to achieve the Region's long term vision of building strong, caring, safe, complete communities will ultimately require 100% of the remaining whitebelt lands, applying the land needs assessment identified that only 80% of these lands are required to accommodate the 2051 forecast. An assessment of the full costs and debt implications of land use decisions therefore becomes of paramount importance when recommending a distribution of urban expansion lands. As shown in Section 6, based on an assessment of risks, opportunities, and costs associated with each geographic option, the proposed distribution of urban expansion in Table 8 more closely aligns infrastructure investment required to support growth with the ability to recover it through development charges. It also reduces the costs of new infrastructure relative to other geographic distributions by not requiring the final expansion of the Upper York Water Reclamation Centre.

Phasing is another key component to managing growth, particularly over the extensive 30-year planning horizon. Based on the allocation of growth in Table 8, and an estimated 33% share of anticipated Regional rapid transit costs to 2051, an estimated \$11.6 billion in new infrastructure is required to accommodate growth to 2051. The significant investments required to accommodate growth to 2051 mean that growth cannot happen everywhere at once so mechanisms to implement phasing at the Regional and local municipal levels will be incorporated into the Regional Official Plan update.

Finally, it's important to recognize the role of the Region's partners in building communities. Greater coordination and information exchange particularly with local municipalities and the development community will be critical to a successful integrated growth management strategy.

### **It will be important for public agency partners to support growth to ensure complete communities**

Cooperation by other public agencies and the private sector will be necessary to achieve the 2051 forecast. The Province, local municipalities, the development industry, Metrolinx, conservation authorities, and the public are important stakeholders in supporting and managing growth. Fast-tracking critical infrastructure to support growth in the Region will require action by the Province. The overdue approval of the Upper York Water Reclamation Centre is necessary to unlock population growth potential in northern York Region and required to accommodate the assigned growth to 2051. Continued funding for planned Bus Rapid Transit and Yonge-North

Subway Extension projects are necessary to accommodate high-density growth in the Region's urbanizing areas.

The development industry can play an important role in mitigating financial risks to the Region by entering into prepaid development charges credit agreements in advance of Regional infrastructure in exchange for a development charges credit at the time of registration/site plan approval. This is one example of risk sharing the Region will consider moving forward.

## 10.2 Phasing and staging of growth

### **Phasing strategies for urban expansion areas will be enhanced in the draft Regional Official Plan and coordinated with infrastructure Master Plans**

The amount of urban expansion and associated population and employment growth to 2051 is unprecedented. To achieve its 2051 forecasts, York Region will be required to accommodate over 130,000 people and 50,000 jobs in new whitebelt areas. This is in addition to growth of 115,000 and 35,000 jobs in the Region's 2031 new community areas that were brought into the urban boundary through the 2010 ROP for which construction is just starting. Together, these growth areas consist of almost one third of the Region's total growth to 2051 with most of these areas being dependent on new infrastructure. Ensuring this growth materializes in a controlled and phased manner will be critical to deliver complete communities for new residents with timely provision of services such as schools, libraries, community centres, and other personal services, in addition to roads, transit, and pipe infrastructure. This will also be important to support a return on previous infrastructure investments in the Region's intensification areas.

To properly manage this amount of growth across diverse geographies of the Region will require strong phasing policies in both Regional and local municipal Official Plans.

A phased approach to growth management will consider:

- Optimizing growth in areas with existing water and wastewater capacity in order to recover development charges collections prior to making new investments
- Giving special consideration to projects which support broader geographic areas (including supporting intensification) and/or enhance the existing transportation network and water/ wastewater system rather than result in extensions to those systems
- Phasing policies for urban expansion areas based on:
  - Alignment with capital spending
  - Achievement of population thresholds
  - Prioritizing areas that are lower risk (higher level of certainty), lower costs, lower costs per capital, and greater potential return on investment
  - Tying the timing of growth in intensification areas to the sustained achievement of the Region's annual intensification target
  - A requirement to provide a logical progression of development

**Designating 80% of the whitebelt provides certainty, focus, and stronger alignment with the ability to recover growth-related investments through development charges**

As mentioned, 100% of the whitebelt will be required at some point in time to accommodate Regional growth. Planning for 80% of the whitebelt allows the Region to take a more focused approach to planning for growth to 2051 and to better leverage existing and planned infrastructure investments. Planning for growth as allocated in Table 8 of this report also acknowledges that the final phase of the Upper York Water Reclamation Centre is likely to be built post 2051, thereby reducing the amount of new infrastructure that is planned for through master plans and Capital Plans. Planning for 80% of the whitebelt also provides more certainty and focus for the Region by creating a closer alignment between the infrastructure required to support growth to 2051, the cost of that infrastructure, and the ability to recover costs through development charges collections.

Finally, 80% of the whitebelt minimizes, to the extent possible, impacts on the Region's agri-food network and supports ongoing agricultural uses given that the majority of the lands not proposed for urban expansion (located in northern East Gwillimbury) had LEAR scores in the highest category.

**Identifying the remaining Whitebelt as Future Urban beyond 2051 is a consideration**

With the Provincial Land Needs Assessment requiring 80% of the Region's Whitebelt to accommodate growth to 2051, it may be appropriate to clarify that the remaining 20% of Whitebelt lands will likely be needed for future growth beyond 2051. Eighty percent to 2051 can be supplied by existing and planned infrastructure investments, and more closely matches the ability to recover growth-related costs through development charges in the future. This also acknowledges the final phase of the Upper York Water Reclamation Centre is likely to be post 2051. Identifying the remaining 20% of the Whitebelt lands as "Future Urban" beyond 2051 acknowledges the reality of the future long-term function of these lands.

It should be noted that in January 2021, concern was expressed with the identification of whitebelt lands not required to 2051 as a result of the provincial land needs assessment as 'Future Urban'. Local municipal staff identified that a 30-year planning horizon provided ample land to accommodate growth to 2051 and that planning communities beyond that horizon was premature. They also indicated the desire to capitalize on technological advancements as well as inevitable changes to demographic, housing, and consumer preferences as well as the nature of work.

## 11.0 CONCLUSIONS AND NEXT STEPS

Planning for and managing growth is a complex process that involves many considerations. Growth forecasts are developed and distributed to the Region's nine local municipalities based on Provincial growth targets, planning policy, demographic factors, market trends, financial, and servicing factors. Results of the Provincial land needs assessment methodology produce a need for 2,300 hectares of community land and 1,100 hectares of employment lands to accommodate growth to 2051 – equating to 80% of the Region's available Whitebelt lands. The proposed distribution of urban expansion lands in Table 7 is based on a thorough review of opportunities, costs, and potential risks in each geographic area of the whitebelt. Timing and uncertainty of servicing in northern York Region is a key factor informing the distribution of urban expansion land needs to 2051. Proposed forecasts meet the requirements of the Provincial Policy Statement, Growth Plan, and Regional Official Plan with respect to criteria for assessing locations for urban expansion while also minimizing growth-related risks to the Region.


The proposed forecast distribution by local municipality is based on recent growth trends, Land Need Assessment urban expansion needs, vacant greenfield areas, and market demand for intensification.

While 100% of the Whitebelt will be required in time, planning for 80% to 2051 will require a more focused and financially sustainable approach to managing growth and infrastructure delivery. Identifying the remaining 20% of the Whitebelt lands as "Future Urban" would reflect the reality of future long-term growth beyond 2051 and encourage comprehensive long-term visioning for those lands. Further, staging and phasing of capital investments in line with actual rather than forecast growth will be necessary for a more agile and coordinated approach to achieving the Region's long-term vision of building strong, caring, safe complete communities in a financially sustainable manner.

# YORK REGION

## REGIONAL MAP






### Landowner/Municipal Requests for Urban Expansion

 Urban Expansion Request

### Land Use Category

 Built-up Area  
 Designated Greenfield Area  
 Greenbelt  
 Hamlet  
 2010 Urban Expansion  
 Designated Greenfield Area - Agriculture

### Base Map

 Municipal Boundary  
 Other Municipal Boundaries  
 Roads  
 400-Series Highways  
 Waterbodies

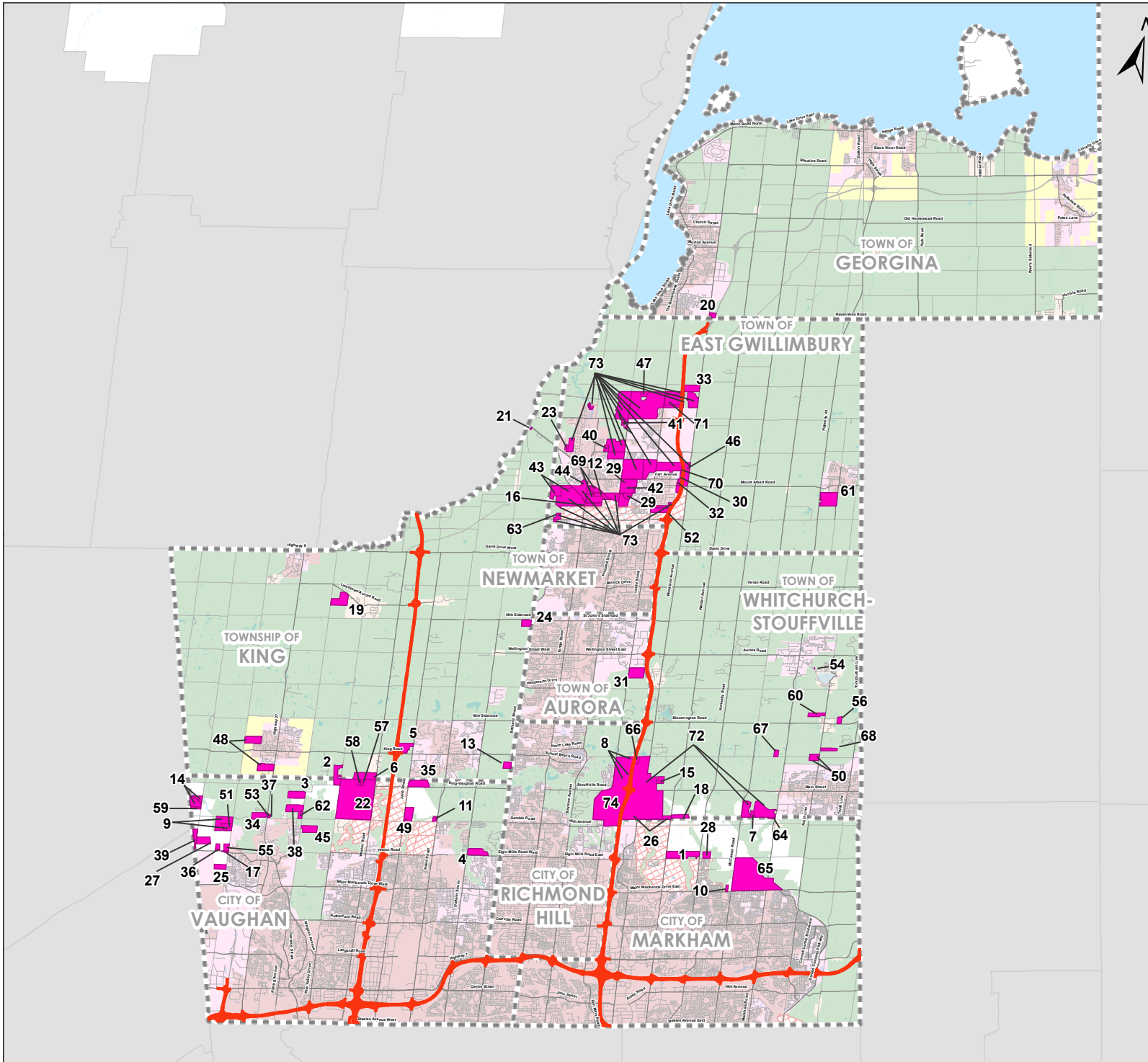
\*Areas are draft and are awaiting approval through the Municipal Comprehensive Review and are subject to change.



Produced by:  
The Regional Municipality of York  
Planning and Economic  
Development, Corporate Services  
March 2021

Data: © Queen's Printer for Ontario  
2003-2021

0 10 Kilometers



**York Region Official Plan Review**  
**Landowner and Municipal Submissions for Urban Expansion for the Municipal Comprehensive Review**

**Table 1: Landowner Requests**

*Note: Any lands ultimately identified for urban expansion would be subject to further studies to determine the extent of developable area.*

#	Submitted by	On Behalf of	Location or Address	Nature of Request	Comments
1	RJ Forhan & Associates	Romandale Farms Ltd.	4044 Elgin Mills Road East, Markham	Request for lands to be brought into the Urban Area through the MCR, should the Region determine a need for additional 'Whitebelt' land.	The lands outside of the Greenbelt Plan area are included within the preliminary urban boundary expansion based on the Province's mandated land needs assessment.
2	Weston Consulting	1606620 Ontario Inc.	12700 7th Concession, King	The portion of the lands in Vaughan currently designated 'Whitebelt' maintain the designation and this portion of the property be added to the Urban Area should the Region determine a need for additional 'Whitebelt' land.	The lands outside of the Greenbelt Plan area are included within the preliminary urban boundary expansion based on the Province's mandated land needs assessment.
3	Weston Consulting	Mrs. Orah Buck	5511 King Vaughan Road, Vaughan	The portion of the lands in Vaughan currently designated 'Whitebelt' maintain the designation and this portion of the property be added to the Urban Area should the Region determine a need for additional 'Whitebelt' land.	The lands outside of the Greenbelt Plan area are included within the preliminary urban boundary expansion based on the Province's mandated land needs assessment.

#	Submitted by	On Behalf of	Location or Address	Nature of Request	Comments
4	Cam Milani	Milani Group	1136 Teston Road, Vaughan	Remove lands from ORMCP Countryside and Natural Linkage and bring them into the Settlement Area. Consider property for inclusion in the Urban Area should the Region determine a need for additional 'Whitebelt' land.	In accordance with Provincial policies, urban uses are not being proposed within the Greenbelt Plan or Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan (beyond existing settlement areas).
5	IBI Group	Toromont Industries Limited	3230 King Road, King	Remove lands from Protected Countryside and Natural Heritage System designations in Greenbelt Plan and remove lands from Greenbelt and Agricultural designations in YROP and re-designate land for Employment Use.	In accordance with Provincial policies, urban uses are not being proposed within the Greenbelt Plan or Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan (beyond existing settlement areas).
6	M.A.M Group Inc (including subsidiary Trinistar Corporation) and SGL	Westlin Farms Incline Home Corporation, Trinison Management Corp., Trinistar Corporation	12470 Weston Road, King	Include the subject lands within the urban area expansion.	The lands outside of the Greenbelt Plan area are included within the preliminary urban boundary expansion based on the Province's mandated land needs assessment.



#	Submitted by	On Behalf of	Location or Address	Nature of Request	Comments
7	Sorensen Gravely Lowes Planning & Design Inc.	Willowgrove	11737 McCowan Road, Whitchurch-Stouffville	Request that the Willowgrove lands not be considered for any "land swap" to redesignate the lands from 'Whitebelt' to greenbelt in the Greenbelt Plan. Request that this portion of the "Whitebelt lands" should remain as such to allow for the possibility of a logical urban boundary expansion of the Community of Stouffville, to accommodate Provincial growth projections.	The lands outside of the Greenbelt Plan area are included within the preliminary urban boundary expansion based on the Province's mandated land needs assessment.
8	Evans Planning Inc.	Ms. Asha Rani Batra	1775 Bethesda Road, 12471 Leslie Street, 1700 Stouffville Road, Richmond Hill	Remove lands from the Greenbelt Plan and modify ORMCP designation to permit employment uses. Consider adding these lands to Urban Area through the MCR and redesignate to permit employment uses.	In accordance with Provincial policies, urban uses are not being proposed within the Greenbelt Plan or Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan (beyond existing settlement areas).
9	Weston Consulting	Vinnie Ussia, 1116941 Ontario Ltd.	11180 Huntington Road, 6901 Kirby Road, 7001 Kirby Road, and 7055 Kirby Road, Vaughan	Include subject lands in the Urban Area through the MCR to permit low-rise residential use on the east side and commercial/industrial uses to the west of the railway tracks.	The lands outside of the Greenbelt Plan area are included within the preliminary urban boundary expansion based on the Province's mandated land needs assessment.

#	Submitted by	On Behalf of	Location or Address	Nature of Request	Comments
10	Patrick Cheng	Peoples Gospel Church	5172 Major Mackenzie Drive East, Markham	Include subject lands in Urban Area through the MCR to permit construction of the Peoples Gospel Church.	The lands outside of the Greenbelt Plan area are included within the preliminary urban boundary expansion based on the Province's mandated land needs assessment.
11	Humphries Planning Group Inc.	K & K Holdings Ltd.	11600 Keele Street, Vaughan	Include subject lands in urban area to align ROP with Vaughan OMB approved Official Plan.	The lands outside of the Greenbelt Plan area are included within the preliminary urban boundary expansion based on the Province's mandated land needs assessment.
12	Michael Smith Planning Consultants	1334618 Ontario Inc.	18823 Old Yonge Street, East Gwillimbury	Request to include subject lands (part of the 'Whitebelt') in the Urban Area through the MCR to permit low-density development of the lands.	The lands are included within the preliminary urban boundary expansion based on the Province's mandated land needs assessment. *Preliminary distribution of the quantum of urban expansion required based on the proposed forecast for the Town of East Gwillimbury is subject to ongoing discussions between York Region and Town of East Gwillimbury staff.
13	Barbir and Associates	18823 Old Yonge Street	12820 Bathurst Street, King	Include subject lands in the Township of King settlement area.	In accordance with Provincial policies, urban uses are not being proposed within the Greenbelt Plan or Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan (beyond existing settlement areas).

#	Submitted by	On Behalf of	Location or Address	Nature of Request	Comments
14	Pamela Tang and Peter Chang Sing	Pamela Tang and Peter Chang Sing	11871 Albion Vaughan Road, Vaughan	Redesignate Greenbelt portion of the lands and bring entire property from 'Whitebelt' into Urban Area. Introduce a new GO station on property.	The lands outside of the Greenbelt Plan area are included within the preliminary urban boundary expansion based on the Province's mandated land needs assessment.
15	Dillon Consulting	Mr. Edmund Moss	12441 Woodbine Avenue, Whitchurch-Stouffville	Request for an expansion of the Gormley Secondary Plan Area to include the subject lands to be developed as General Commercial and Light Employment.	In accordance with Provincial policies, urban uses are not being proposed within the Greenbelt Plan or Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan (beyond existing settlement areas).
16	Bousfields Inc.	Living Life (Greenwich Inc.)	18618 Yonge Street, East Gwillimbury	Request for lands to be brought into the Urban Boundary for East Gwillimbury to permit the development of commercial and residential uses, including affordable, rental and seniors housing.	The lands are included within the preliminary urban boundary expansion based on the Province's mandated land needs assessment. *Preliminary distribution of the quantum of urban expansion required based on the proposed forecast for the Town of East Gwillimbury is subject to ongoing discussions between York Region and Town of East Gwillimbury staff.
17	Bousfields Inc.	Ms. Lesa Cozzi	1070 Nashville Road, Vaughan	Request for Whitebelt lands to be brought into the Urban Boundary through the MCR.	The lands are included within the preliminary urban boundary expansion based on the Province's mandated land needs assessment.

#	Submitted by	On Behalf of	Location or Address	Nature of Request	Comments
18	Davies Howe Partners LLP	Warden North GP Inc.	11691 Warden Avenue, Whitchurch-Stouffville	Request for lands to be brought into the urban boundary through the MCR.	The lands outside of the Greenbelt Plan area are included within the preliminary urban boundary expansion based on the Province's mandated land needs assessment.
19	Humphries Planning Group Inc.	1453941 Ontario Ltd.	4995-5015 Lloydtown/ Aurora Road and 16425 8th Concession, King	Request for lands to be brought into Pottageville Hamlet Plan boundary through the MCR. Property is currently designated as Protected Countryside and Natural Heritage System in the Greenbelt Plan.	In accordance with Provincial policies, urban uses are not being proposed within the Greenbelt Plan or Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan (beyond existing settlement areas).
20	MMM Group Ltd.	Nizza Enterprises	2354 Ravenshoe Road, Georgina	Request the subject lands and the lands to the north be included into the Urban Area as well as re-designate the lands from Agricultural Protection Area to Employment as part of the Town's Official Plan review.	In accordance with Provincial policies, urban uses are not being proposed within the Greenbelt Plan or Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan (beyond existing settlement areas).
21	Owners of the Bradford Inn (Sia and Frank)	Owners of the Bradford Inn (Sia and Frank)	20590 Highway 11, King	Request for additional permissions under the Greenbelt Plan to permit the development of a seniors housing complex or an expansion to the existing hotel use.	In accordance with Provincial policies, urban uses are not being proposed within the Greenbelt Plan or Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan (beyond existing settlement areas).

#	Submitted by	On Behalf of	Location or Address	Nature of Request	Comments
22	KLM Planning Partners Inc.	Block 42 landowners: Melrose Properties Inc., Ironrose Investments Inc., MCN (Pinevalley) Inc., Mel-Terra Investments Inc., Azure Woods Home Corp., Lazio Farms Holdings Inc., Mastro Capital Partners Inc., Mastro Investments Inc., and Intu Developments Corporation	12011 Pine Valley Drive, Vaughan	Request for an expansion of the urban boundary to include the lands within Block 42 for urban uses through the MCR.	The lands are included within the preliminary urban boundary expansion based on the Province's mandated land needs assessment.
23	Biddington Homes/Bousfields Inc.	Owners of 198 Oriole Drive, East Gwillimbury	198 Oriole Drive, East Gwillimbury	Request for lands to be brought into the urban boundary through the MCR.	A number of considerations informed the identification of preliminary urban expansion areas. Staff are not recommending these lands be included in the preliminary urban boundary expansion. *Preliminary distribution of the quantum of urban expansion required based on the proposed forecast for the Town of East Gwillimbury is subject to ongoing discussions between York Region and Town of East Gwillimbury staff.

#	Submitted by	On Behalf of	Location or Address	Nature of Request	Comments
24	KLM Planning Partners Inc.	2154000 Ontario Inc.	15940 Bathurst Street, King	Request for lands to be removed from Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Area and Greenbelt Plan Area. Request for lands to be brought into the urban boundary through the MCR.	In accordance with Provincial policies, urban uses are not being proposed within the Greenbelt Plan or Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan (beyond existing settlement areas).
25	Humphries Planning Inc	Owners of 10436, 10450 Huntington Road	10436, 10450 Huntington Road, Vaughan	Request for lands to be brought into the urban boundary through the MCR. Property is currently within the 'Whitebelt' in Block 66E in Vaughan.	The lands are included within the preliminary urban boundary expansion based on the Province's mandated land needs assessment.
26	Weston Consulting	P. Campagna Investments Ltd.	12162 Woodbine Avenue, 11670 Woodbine Avenue, 11851 Woodbine Avenue, 11767 Woodbine Avenue, 11674 Warden Avenue, Whitchurch-Stouffville	Request for lands to be brought into the urban boundary through the MCR for employment purposes. The properties are primarily within the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan and Greenbelt Plan areas. A small portion of land is 'Whitebelt'.	The lands outside of the Greenbelt Plan area are included within the preliminary urban boundary expansion based on the Province's mandated land needs assessment.
27	Weston Consulting	Laurentel Developments	10961 Cold Creek Road, Vaughan	Request for lands to be brought into the urban boundary through the MCR for employment purposes. The property is currently within the 'Whitebelt' lands in north west Vaughan.	The lands are included within the preliminary urban boundary expansion based on the Province's mandated land needs assessment.

#	Submitted by	On Behalf of	Location or Address	Nature of Request	Comments
28	Devine Park LLP	Elgin Mills Markham Ltd.	4716 Elgin Mills Road East, Markham	Request to include identified property in urban expansion area.	The lands outside of the Greenbelt Plan area are included within the preliminary urban boundary expansion based on the Province's mandated land needs assessment.
29	Evans Planning Inc.	Sharon Road Holding Company (857 Mount Albert Road); Oxford Developments (18839 2nd Concession Road)	857 Mount Albert Road and 18839 2nd Concession Road, East Gwillimbury	Request to include lands in urban area.	The lands are included within the preliminary urban boundary expansion based on the Province's mandated land needs assessment. *Preliminary distribution of the quantum of urban expansion required based on the proposed forecast for the Town of East Gwillimbury is subject to ongoing discussions between York Region and Town of East Gwillimbury staff.
30	Arshia Delfani & Roya Rezaee	Arshia Delfani & Roya Rezaee	1915 Farr Avenue, East Gwillimbury	Request to redesignate land as urban based on nature of surrounding land, freeway, etc.	The lands are included within the preliminary urban boundary expansion based on the Province's mandated land needs assessment. *Preliminary distribution of the quantum of urban expansion required based on the proposed forecast for the Town of East Gwillimbury is subject to ongoing discussions between York Region and Town of East Gwillimbury staff.

#	Submitted by	On Behalf of	Location or Address	Nature of Request	Comments
31	Harper Dell & Associates		14897 and 14773 Leslie Street, Aurora	Request to redesignate Part W 1/2 Lots 17 and 18, Cons 3 EYS from ORMCP Countryside to Settlement Area	In accordance with Provincial policies, urban uses are not being proposed within the Greenbelt Plan or Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan (beyond existing settlement areas).
32	Weston Consulting	Marino D'Allesandro	2062 Farr Avenue, East Gwillimbury	Request to include whitebelt lands in urban boundary (extending urban boundary slightly west from adjacent parcels in the Sharon Community)	The lands are included within the preliminary urban boundary expansion based on the Province's mandated land needs assessment. *Preliminary distribution of the quantum of urban expansion required based on the proposed forecast for the Town of East Gwillimbury is subject to ongoing discussions between York Region and Town of East Gwillimbury staff.
33	Kian Kashani	Kashani & Co. Investment Inc., Kashani & Kashani Inc.	21170 Woodbine Avenue, East Gwillimbury	Consider lands for site specific zoning or inclusion within future expansions to the urban area to support the ongoing growth of York Region.	In accordance with Provincial policies, urban uses are not being proposed within the Greenbelt Plan or Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan (beyond existing settlement areas).
34	Weston Consulting	Di Poce Real Estate Holdings Limited	11720 Highway 27, Vaughan	Request for Urban boundary expansion on the eastern portion of the lands outside of the Greenbelt.	The lands are included within the preliminary urban boundary expansion based on the Province's mandated land needs assessment. *Although the subject property is within the urban expansion area, a preliminary review indicates little to no developable area.



#	Submitted by	On Behalf of	Location or Address	Nature of Request	Comments
35	KLM Planning Partnership	Robintide Farms Limited	2720 King-Vaughan Road, Vaughan	Request for removal of the ORMCP/redesignation portion of the west lands; the appropriate long-term use of the west lands will be for urban uses.	The lands outside of the Greenbelt Plan area are included within the preliminary urban boundary expansion based on the Province's mandated land needs assessment.
36	Weston Consulting		6990 Nashville Road, Vaughan	The subject property is currently located approximately 2 kilometers north of the City of Vaughan's Urban Boundary. Request for staff to consider potential future development of these lands in its growth management analysis.	The lands are included within the preliminary urban boundary expansion based on the Province's mandated land needs assessment.
37	Armstrong Planning	Vanda Buttarazzi and Kalid Yusuf	5920 Kirby Road and 11561 Highway 27, Vaughan	Request for a minor expansion of the Urban Boundary up to the Greenbelt Boundary to accommodate future residential uses.	The lands are included within the preliminary urban boundary expansion based on the Province's mandated land needs assessment. *Although the subject property is within the urban expansion area, a preliminary review indicates little to no developable area.
38	Premier Realty Consulting Limited	Di Poce Real Estate Limited	11720 Kipling Avenue, Vaughan	Applicant requests that as part of the Region's MCR and the City's Official Plan Review process to consider lands outside the Greenbelt for future community area development.	The lands are included within the preliminary urban boundary expansion based on the Province's mandated land needs assessment. *Although the subject property is within the urban expansion area, a preliminary review indicates little to no developable area.

#	Submitted by	On Behalf of	Location or Address	Nature of Request	Comments
39	Weston Consulting	Sarai Trucking Limited	11151 Highway 50, 11050 Cold Creek Road, 11065 Highway 50, Vaughan	Request for subject property to be included in the Urban Area designation.	The lands are included within the preliminary urban boundary expansion based on the Province's mandated land needs assessment.
40	Thorstone Consulting Services	685109 Ontario Ltd. (Geo A. Kelson Company)	236 Doane Road, East Gwillimbury	That the land at 236 Doane Road, in the Town of East Gwillimbury, be identified as a "Future Urban Area".	A number of considerations informed the identification of preliminary urban expansion areas. Staff are not recommending these lands be included in the preliminary urban boundary expansion. *Preliminary distribution of the quantum of urban expansion required based on the proposed forecast for the Town of East Gwillimbury is subject to ongoing discussions between York Region and Town of East Gwillimbury staff.
41	Evans Planning	Ann Lee Chong and Teddy Chong	641 Queensville Sideroad, East Gwillimbury	Request to update the Region's Greenbelt protected countryside layer and to request including the lands within the urban boundary to allow for urban expansion.	A number of considerations informed the identification of preliminary urban expansion areas. Staff are not recommending these lands be included in the preliminary urban boundary expansion. *Preliminary distribution of the quantum of urban expansion required based on the proposed forecast for the Town of East Gwillimbury is subject to ongoing discussions between York Region and Town of East Gwillimbury staff.

#	Submitted by	On Behalf of	Location or Address	Nature of Request	Comments
42	Evans Planning Inc.	2nd Concession Landowners Group	18899, 18839 2nd Concession Road, 893, 857 Mount Albert Road, East Gwillimbury	Applicant requests to bring the subject lands (agricultural area) into the urban area.	The lands are included within the preliminary urban boundary expansion based on the Province's mandated land needs assessment. *Preliminary distribution of the quantum of urban expansion required based on the proposed forecast for the Town of East Gwillimbury is subject to ongoing discussions between York Region and Town of East Gwillimbury staff.
43	Groundswell Urban Planners Inc.	Marianneville Stonehaven Developments Limited (Kerbel Group)	18813, 18881 and 18737 Bathurst Street, and 356 Morning Sideroad, East Gwillimbury	Request for urban expansion northward to include the subject lands with the development of Whitebelt lands to occur north of Green Lane.	A number of considerations informed the identification of preliminary urban expansion areas. Staff are not recommending these lands be included in the preliminary urban boundary expansion. *Preliminary distribution of the quantum of urban expansion required based on the proposed forecast for the Town of East Gwillimbury is subject to ongoing discussions between York Region and Town of East Gwillimbury staff.

#	Submitted by	On Behalf of	Location or Address	Nature of Request	Comments
44	The Biglieri Group Ltd.	Holland Green Developments Inc.	Part of Lot 106, Concession 1, West of Yonge Street, East Gwillimbury	A request to re-designate the lands from Agriculture to future Settlement Area.	The lands are included within the preliminary urban boundary expansion based on the Province's mandated land needs assessment. *Preliminary distribution of the quantum of urban expansion required based on the proposed forecast for the Town of East Gwillimbury is subject to ongoing discussions between York Region and Town of East Gwillimbury staff.
45	Weston Consulting	Paul and Doris Nessim	PT LT 29 CON 7 PTS 1, 2 & 3 65R11933, Vaughan	The purpose of this submission is to formally request consideration for an Urban Area Boundary Expansion through the Region's MCR.	In accordance with Provincial policies, urban uses are not being proposed within the Greenbelt Plan or Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan (beyond existing settlement areas).
46	MHBC Planning, Urban Design & Landscape Architecture	Liberty Development Corporation (1596630 Ontario Ltd.)	19350 Woodbine Avenue, East Gwillimbury	Requesting that the York Region expands the Queensville settlement through the MCR process to accommodate employment purposes on Whitebelt lands.	The lands are included within the preliminary urban boundary expansion based on the Province's mandated land needs assessment. *Preliminary distribution of the quantum of urban expansion required based on the proposed forecast for the Town of East Gwillimbury is subject to ongoing discussions between York Region and Town of East Gwillimbury staff.

#	Submitted by	On Behalf of	Location or Address	Nature of Request	Comments
47	Thorstone Consulting Services	Thomas & Martin Pick	21045 2nd Concession Road, East Gwillimbury	Requesting that mostly Whitebelt lands be considered for future urban expansion employment lands.	A number of considerations informed the identification of preliminary urban expansion areas. Staff are not recommending these lands be included in the preliminary urban boundary expansion. *Preliminary distribution of the quantum of urban expansion required based on the proposed forecast for the Town of East Gwillimbury is subject to ongoing discussions between York Region and Town of East Gwillimbury staff.
48	Dentons Canada LLP	Flato Developments and Wyview Group	12650 Highway 27 & 13235 10th Concession, King	Request for lands to be considered for inclusion in the Nobleton Community settlement area.	In accordance with Provincial policies, urban uses are not being proposed within the Greenbelt Plan or Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan (beyond existing settlement areas). Additional growth beyond the serviced capacity limit in the current environmental assessment is not being proposed based on preliminary financial assessments for the community of Nobleton.
49	KLM Planning Properties Inc.	Yarmosh Holdings Inc. c/o DG Group	11665 Jane Street, Vaughan	Request for lands to be included within the Urban Boundary for the City of Vaughan through the MCRP process.	The lands outside of the Greenbelt Plan area are included within the preliminary urban boundary expansion based on the Province's mandated land needs assessment.

#	Submitted by	On Behalf of	Location or Address	Nature of Request	Comments
50	Margaret Orsi and Domenic & Pina Greco	Margaret Orsi and Domenic & Pina Greco	13044 Ninth Line (Margaret Orsi) and 12958 Ninth Line (Domenic & Pina Greco), Whitchurch-Stouffville	Urban Area Expansion (York Region) and inclusion into the official plan and secondary plan area (Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville).	In accordance with Provincial policies, urban uses are not being proposed within the Greenbelt Plan or Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan (beyond existing settlement areas).
51	MHBC Planning	DiBattista Farms Ltd/Signature Communities	11180, 11300, 11340 Huntington Road, Vaughan	Request that the lands be included in the urban boundary expansion as "future urban area."	The lands are included within the preliminary urban boundary expansion based on the Province's mandated land needs assessment. *Although the subject properties are within the urban expansion area, a preliminary review indicates little to no developable area.
52	Dr. Keith Watson	Dr. Keith Watson	18004 Leslie Street, East Gwillimbury	Seeking to have Whitebelt land included in the Settlement Area of East Gwillimbury.	The lands are included within the preliminary urban boundary expansion based on the Province's mandated land needs assessment. *Preliminary distribution of the quantum of urban expansion required based on the proposed forecast for the Town of East Gwillimbury is subject to ongoing discussions between York Region and Town of East Gwillimbury staff.

#	Submitted by	On Behalf of	Location or Address	Nature of Request	Comments
53	Weston Consulting		11561 Highway 27, Vaughan	Request consideration of the southern portion of the subject lands (currently white belt) for inclusion within the Urban Area limits of the City of Vaughan in the Region of York Official Plan.	In accordance with Provincial policies, urban uses are not being proposed within the Greenbelt Plan or Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan (beyond existing settlement areas). For the 'Whitebelt' portion of the lands, a number of considerations informed the identification of preliminary urban expansion areas. Staff are not recommending these lands be included in the preliminary urban boundary expansion.
54	Groundswell Urban Planners Inc.	2561371 Ontario Inc.	5612 Lakeshore Road, Whitchurch-Stouffville	The subject property is designated ORM Countryside Area. The request for consideration to include the subject property into the urban boundary.	In accordance with Provincial policies, urban uses are not being proposed within the Greenbelt Plan or Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan (beyond existing settlement areas).
55	Weston Consulting	Laurentel Developments	6910 Roe Road, Vaughan	Formally request consideration for the inclusion of the subject properties within the Urban Area through the Region's MCR.	The lands are included within the preliminary urban boundary expansion based on the Province's mandated land needs assessment.
56	SOL-Arch	Jerry Xu	6336 Bloomington Road, Whitchurch-Stouffville	Interested to be included in the York Region's Boundary Expansion Plan for Hamlet of Bloomington	In accordance with Provincial policies, urban uses are not being proposed within the Greenbelt Plan or Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan (beyond existing settlement areas).

#	Submitted by	On Behalf of	Location or Address	Nature of Request	Comments
57	CBRE Limited	Mary Friedrich	4050 King-Vaughan Road, Vaughan	Client seeks that an expansion of the urban boundary includes the subject lands within Block 42 for future urban uses, and that property is included in budgetary discussions for the expansion of the Urban Area	The lands are included within the preliminary urban boundary expansion based on the Province's mandated land needs assessment.
58	Stella Ventura	Antonio and Antoinietta Guida (parents of Stella Ventura)	4100 King-Vaughan Road, Vaughan	Submission to support that the current MCR review include subject lands located within Block 42 in the proposed urban expansion boundary.	The lands are included within the preliminary urban boundary expansion based on the Province's mandated land needs assessment.
59	WSP	1860938 Ontario Ltd. (Sam Morra)	Pt of Lot 32, Concession 11, Vaughan	Applicant is requesting that the Subject Area, including the Subject Property, be included within York Region's Urban Area Boundary for use as a mix of affordable residential and employment uses.	The lands are included within the preliminary urban boundary expansion based on the Province's mandated land needs assessment.
60	Henry Li, Representative of Centraland	Jerry Xu	13962 Ninth Line, Whitchurch-Stouffville	Interested to be included in the York Region's Boundary Expansion Plan for Hamlet of Bloomington	In accordance with Provincial policies, urban uses are not being proposed within the Greenbelt Plan or Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan (beyond existing settlement areas).
61	Weston Consulting		18609A Highway 48 & 18784 Centre Street, East Gwillimbury	Formally request consideration for the subject properties for inclusion in the Town and Villages designation of the York Region OP.	In accordance with Provincial policies, urban uses are not being proposed within the Greenbelt Plan or Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan (beyond existing settlement areas).



#	Submitted by	On Behalf of	Location or Address	Nature of Request	Comments
62	Weston Consulting		(Pt Lot 31 Con 8 VAUGHN) or 00 Kirby Road, Vaughan	Formally request consideration for the subject property to be included in the Urban Area limits of the Region of York OP.	In accordance with Provincial policies, urban uses are not being proposed within the Greenbelt Plan or Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan (beyond existing settlement areas).
63	Macaulay Shiomi Howson Ltd.	Sundial Homes (Green Lane) Limited	22 Green Lane West, East Gwillimbury	Requests the inclusion of a small, isolated piece of land currently used for agriculture in the urban boundary.	A number of considerations informed the identification of preliminary urban expansion areas. Staff are not recommending these lands be included in the preliminary urban boundary expansion. *Preliminary distribution of the quantum of urban expansion required based on the proposed forecast for the Town of East Gwillimbury is subject to ongoing discussions between York Region and Town of East Gwillimbury staff.
64	Dentons Canada LLP	Flato Developments Inc., Wyview Group	Highway 48 and Dickson Hill Road, Markham	Request the Region include these lands as part of a settlement area expansion. Clients intend to develop a full mixed use community focused on age-friendly development, including seniors housing.	The lands are included within the preliminary urban boundary expansion based on the Province's mandated land needs assessment. Subject to Provincial MZO.
65	SGL Planning & Design Inc.	Northeast Markham Landowners Group (NEMLG)	North of Major Mackenzie Drive East and east of McCowan Road, Markham	NEMLG respectfully requests that their lands be included within an expansion to the City of Markham urban boundary through the MCR process.	The lands outside of the Greenbelt Plan area are included within the preliminary urban boundary expansion based on the Province's mandated land needs assessment.

#	Submitted by	On Behalf of	Location or Address	Nature of Request	Comments
66	MGP	Vianova Group Inc.	2005 Bethesda Side Road, Whitchurch-Stouffville	Request of Vianova Group Inc. to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing for a Minister's Zoning Order to permit Light Employment and industrial development on a site outside the Town's settlement area boundary; site is designated Oak Ridges Moraine Countryside where Light Employment industrial development is not permitted in the Town and Region's Official Plans.	In accordance with Provincial policies, urban uses are not being proposed within the Greenbelt Plan or Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan (beyond existing settlement areas).
67	Tagrid Rokan	Tagrid Rokan	5026 Bethesda Road, Whitchurch-Stouffville	Inquiring about urban boundary expansion and the possibility of future development.	In accordance with Provincial policies, urban uses are not being proposed within the Greenbelt Plan or Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan (beyond existing settlement areas).
68	Ashish Patel	Ashish Patel	13187 Ninth Line, Whitchurch-Stouffville	Inquiring for future potential boundary expansion of Stouffville	In accordance with Provincial policies, urban uses are not being proposed within the Greenbelt Plan or Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan (beyond existing settlement areas).

#	Submitted by	On Behalf of	Location or Address	Nature of Request	Comments
69	Thorstone Consulting Services, Inc.	1324534 Ontario Inc (Thomas and Martin Pick)	18733, 18719, 18645 Old Yonge Street, East Gwillimbury	That the area generally described as the lands east of Old Yonge Road north of Green Lane East, be identified as a "Future Urban Area" within the draft land budget for 2041 and the Region's Municipal Comprehensive Review.	The lands are included within the preliminary urban boundary expansion based on the Province's mandated land needs assessment. *Preliminary distribution of the quantum of urban expansion required based on the proposed forecast for the Town of East Gwillimbury is subject to ongoing discussions between York Region and Town of East Gwillimbury staff.
70	MHBC Planning, Urban Design & Landscape Architecture	Liberty Development Corporation (1596630 Ontario Ltd.)	Part Lot 13 & 14, Conc 3, East Gwillimbury	Expand the Sharon settlement area to permit a mix of residential and population-related employment on Whitebelt land.	The lands are included within the preliminary urban boundary expansion based on the Province's mandated land needs assessment. *Preliminary distribution of the quantum of urban expansion required based on the proposed forecast for the Town of East Gwillimbury is subject to ongoing discussions between York Region and Town of East Gwillimbury staff.

#	Submitted by	On Behalf of	Location or Address	Nature of Request	Comments
71	Prudence Management Inc.	1078703 Ontario Limited	20913 Leslie Street, East Gwillimbury	Applicant requests that the subject lands be included in the Urban Boundary with the new Official Plan.	A number of considerations informed the identification of preliminary urban expansion areas. Staff are not recommending these lands be included in the preliminary urban boundary expansion. *Preliminary distribution of the quantum of urban expansion required based on the proposed forecast for the Town of East Gwillimbury is subject to ongoing discussions between York Region and Town of East Gwillimbury staff.

**Table 2: Municipal Requests**

*Note: Any lands ultimately identified for urban expansion would be subject to further studies to determine the extent of developable area.*

#	Submitted by	On Behalf of	Location or Address	Nature of Request	Comments
72	Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville	Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville	1) Areas east of Highway 404, between the southern boundary of the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville and Bethesda Sideroad. 2) Area between the southern boundary of the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville and west of McCowan Road	That the subject lands be included into the Provincially Significant Employment Zones. The Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville also endorsed an expansion of the urban settlement boundary.	1) In accordance with Provincial policies, urban uses are not being proposed within the Greenbelt Plan or Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan (beyond existing settlement areas). 2) The lands are included within the preliminary urban boundary expansion based on the Province's mandated land needs assessment.
73	Town of East Gwillimbury	Town of East Gwillimbury	Various parcels in the central and western sections of East Gwillimbury	THAT Council endorses the need to include the "Whitebelt" lands within the Town as part of the "Urban Area" in the Regional Official Plan (ROP) through the Region's current Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR) process in order to create complete communities, coordinate infrastructure planning and accommodate residential and employment growth to the year 2041 and beyond.	A portion of the lands outside of the Greenbelt Plan are included within the preliminary urban boundary expansion based on the Province's mandated land needs assessment.  *Preliminary distribution of the quantum of urban expansion required based on the proposed forecast for the Town of East Gwillimbury is subject to ongoing discussions between York Region and Town of East Gwillimbury staff.

#	Submitted by	On Behalf of	Location or Address	Nature of Request	Comments
74	MPlan Inc., City of Richmond Hill	Leslie Stouffville Landowners Association	Northeast Richmond Hill, surrounding the Gormley GO Station	Request that Countryside designated area be redesignated to settlement area, and that lands south of Bethesda Road are not to be considered within a prime agricultural area.	In accordance with Provincial policies, urban uses are not being proposed within the Greenbelt Plan or Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan (beyond existing settlement areas).



 **Watson  
& Associates**  
ECONOMISTS LTD.

# Foundational Housing Analysis

York Region

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Final Report (Executive Summary)

March 2021

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# Executive Summary





## Executive Summary

With an estimated population of 1,227,000 as of 2021,<sup>1</sup> York Region is expected to grow to approximately 2 million people by the year 2051, in accordance with the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (GGH) – A Place to Grow, hereinafter referred to as the Growth Plan, 2019.<sup>2</sup> As the Region's population grows, providing affordable and appropriate housing for residents across all life stages will be an ongoing challenge. Between 2021 and 2051, it is estimated that over 273,000 new households will be required across the Region, largely within existing and future urban areas.<sup>3</sup>

To better understand how macro-economic conditions, as well as regional and local real estate development trends, are influencing current housing trends across the Region, York Region is embarking on the development of a Foundational Housing Analysis. This analysis will help inform the definition of market demand as well as provide an assessment of the various other supply and policy-based factors that are likely to impact York Region's updated Regional Official Plan (ROP) population and housing forecast. A critical consideration in the development of the 2051 housing forecast will be the need to strike the right balance between market demand, Growth Plan, 2019 targets and policy objectives, housing supply and housing affordability.

The York Region Foundational Housing Analysis is being prepared in two phases:

- **Phase 1 – York Region Foundational Housing Brief** (December 2020) – This Brief provided the preliminary findings of the Foundational Housing Analysis, largely as it related to:
  - The rate of recent population and housing growth relative to current estimates, as well as to York Region's regional competitors within the broader regional market area;<sup>4</sup> and

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<sup>1</sup> 2021 population estimate, York Region. Adjusted for net Census population undercount.

<sup>2</sup> A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe. Office Consolidation. August 2020. Ontario.

<sup>3</sup> York Region, Preliminary Draft Forecast to 2051, September 2020.

<sup>4</sup> For the purpose of this study, the broader regional market area is defined as the neighbouring upper-tier and single-tier municipalities of the Greater Toronto Hamilton Area as well as the Simcoe Area and Dufferin County.



- The reasons for estimated population and housing shortfalls relative to current estimates, as well as preliminary considerations of where on-going unmet housing needs are likely to persist and need to be further examined.

The Phase 1 report also provided a closer examination of anticipated residential real estate market demand, including potential barriers to housing choice, within the context of available housing supply.

- **Phase 2 – York Region Foundational Housing Report** – This report provides an assessment of the York Region long-term housing forecast to the year 2051, prepared by York Region as part of its current Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR) and ROP Review. As part of this review, specific attention has been given to housing demand by structure type, tenure, planning policy area, and rate of development. In providing this assessment, a detailed examination has also been provided with respect to current conditions and future trends in housing affordability, and the influence of these trends on future housing needs by structure type and tenure.

Core to this analysis is an examination of the following key themes regarding the Region's 2051 population forecast and housing needs over the next 30 years:

1. **What are the broader trends regarding long-term population for York Region within the GTHA and GGH context?**
2. **What are the key factors that need to be considered in assessing the appropriateness of the long-term housing forecast by structure type prepared as part of the York Region draft MCR?**
3. **Is the York Region long-term housing forecast by structure type prepared as part of the York Region draft MCR appropriate?**
4. **Is a minimum 50% residential intensification target for York Region from 2021 to 2051 appropriate? Should York Region consider a higher residential intensification target?**



5. **How are future trends regarding housing affordability in York Region anticipated to impact demand for rental and ownership housing? Are there particular types of rental and ownership housing where supply is needed to accommodate anticipated demand?**
6. **Are there potential risks for York Region if the housing supply is not well-aligned with the anticipated long-term needs of existing and future residents?**
7. **What recommended actions should York Region and its partners take to help ensure that housing supply in York Region is aligned with the anticipated needs of the Region's existing and future residents to the year 2051?**

**Q1. What are the broader trends regarding long-term population for York Region within the GTHA and GGH context?**

**A1. The growth outlook for York Region remains very positive; however, it is anticipated that the rate of future population and employment across the Region will gradually decline over the long term.**

- Population and employment growth within York Region is strongly correlated with the growth outlook and competitiveness of the broader regional economy of Central Ontario, which is commonly referred to as the Greater Golden Horseshoe (GGH). The economic growth potential and increasing global presence of the GGH City/Region presents a tremendous opportunity to leverage York Region's economic profile at the international level.
- Notwithstanding the strong economic and population growth potential of the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA), it is important to recognize that the GGH Outer Ring economy is anticipated to grow at a relatively faster rate than the GTHA over the next three decades. This forecast shift in population growth from the GTHA to the GGH Outer Ring is anticipated to be largely driven by two key factors: 1) the relative affordability of housing in the GTHA compared to the GGH Outer Ring; and 2) a growing and strengthening economy across the GGH Outer Ring.



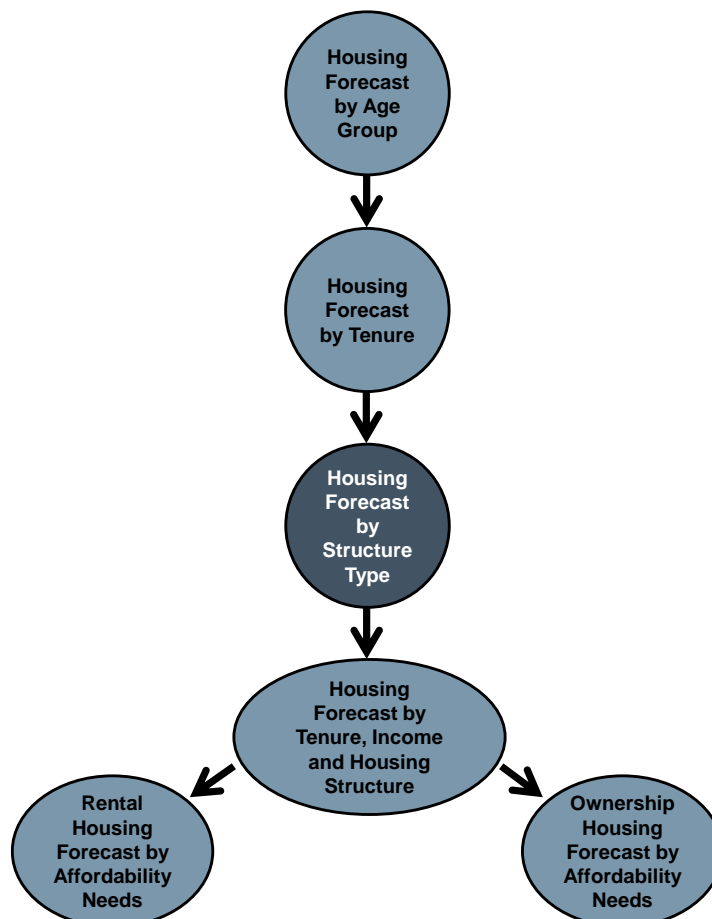
- It is recognized that the long-term population forecast for the GTHA as set out in the Growth Plan, 2019 is aspirational. This conclusion also applies to York Region. While it is recognized that the Growth Plan, 2019 population and employment forecasts are to be treated as minimums, a higher 2051 population forecast for York Region is not considered to be a likely long-term growth scenario. Accordingly, the Growth Plan, 2019 population forecast for York Region is recommended as the preferred long-term growth forecast.

**Q2. What are the key factors that need to be considered in assessing the appropriateness of the long-term housing forecast by structure type prepared as part of the York Region draft MCR?**

**A2. The appropriateness of the York Region MCR housing forecast by structure type was tested through this Foundational Housing Analysis using a customized housing forecast modelling framework, which assesses future trends in age structure, housing demand by tenure (i.e. ownership vs. rental) and housing affordability. Figure ES-1 summarizes the adopted housing forecast modelling framework.**



Figure ES-1  
York Region Foundational Housing Study  
Household Forecast Modelling Framework



- Using this modelling framework, a household forecast by structure type by population age group was generated over the 2021 to 2051 planning horizon. Key observations regarding housing demand by structure type and major age group are summarized below and illustrated in Figure ES-2.



## **York Region's Aging Population is one of the Key Drivers of Increased Demand for High-Density Housing**

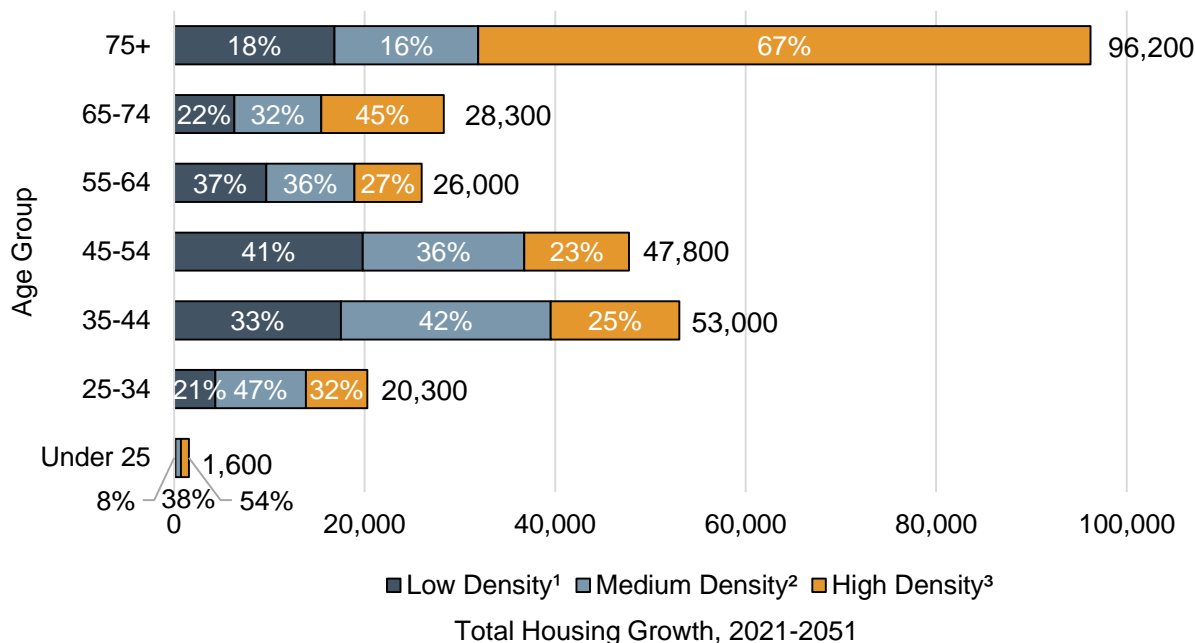
- The average age of the population base in York Region is getting older, due to the concentration of Baby Boomers within the Region.<sup>1</sup> In 2021, the oldest of the Region's Baby Boomers will turn 75 years of age.
- The percentage of the population in the 75+ age group (older seniors) is forecast to more than double over the 25-year period, from 6% in 2016 to 14% by 2051. The 75+ age group is anticipated to represent the fastest growing demographic group in York Region, increasing at two and a half times the rate of the Region's total population.
- The aging of the Region's population is anticipated to place increasing demand on the need for a range of new housing options by type and built form, largely geared towards condominiums, rental apartments, seniors' housing, affordable housing and social housing products.
- Over the 2021 to 2051 forecast period, over half (55%) of future high-density housing demand in York Region is anticipated to be generated from households maintained by persons aged 75 years of age and older.
- As York Region's Baby Boomers continue to age, an increasing number of grade-related households are anticipated to "turn-over" to new buyers. In total, approximately 40,000 grade-related households are anticipated to be circulated back into the residential real estate market between 2016 and 2051, representing 13% of the Region's entire stock of grade-related households in 2016.

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<sup>1</sup> Defined as those born between 1946 and 1964.



Figure ES-2  
York Region  
Housing Forecast by Structure Type by Age Group, 2021 to 2051



<sup>1</sup> Low density represents singles and semi-detached.

<sup>2</sup> Medium density includes townhouses (including back-to-back and stacked townhouses) and duplexes.

<sup>3</sup> High density includes all apartments.

Source: Watson & Associates Economists Ltd. derived from York Region Draft Municipal Comprehensive Review Housing Forecast, 2020.

- The housing forecast by structure type was then further summarized by tenure. These results were also assessed against historical trends as well as active development applications in the planning approvals process. Key observations regarding housing demand by structure type and tenure group are summarized below and illustrated in Figure ES-3.

### Ownership Housing Forecast

- Ownership housing in York Region is forecast to increase by 186,900 households, which represents approximately 68% of total forecast demand for new households over the forecast period.
- Just over two-thirds of projected ownership housing growth is anticipated to be grade related, while the remaining 32% is anticipated to be in high-



density forms. Demand for high-density ownership housing is largely anticipated to be generated from persons 75+ years of age.

### Rental Housing Forecast

- Rental housing demand in York Region is projected to total 82,600 households, which represents approximately one-third of housing growth in York Region over the forecast period. At this rate of growth, rental housing would represent approximately 22% of total housing in York Region by the year 2051, which is similar to the ratio of rental to total housing for the GTHA, excluding the City of Toronto, as of 2016.
- Just under two-thirds of forecast rental housing demand is anticipated to be in the form of high-density households. Rental housing is anticipated to represent close to half the Region's total high-density housing demand over the next 30 years, equally driven by demand from both the primary and secondary rental housing market.
- Forecast demand for rental housing is expected across a broad range of age groups but is anticipated to be highest amongst adults between 25 and 54 years of age and older seniors in the 75+ age group.

Figure ES-3  
York Region  
Housing Growth Forecast by Structure Type and Tenure, 2021 to 2051

	Low Density <sup>1</sup>	Medium Density <sup>2</sup>	High Density <sup>3</sup>	Total	Percentage Housing Share
<b>Total Renter-Occupied Housing Forecast</b>	<b>7,500</b>	<b>22,600</b>	<b>56,100</b>	<b>86,200</b>	<b>32%</b>
<b>Renter-Occupied Housing Forecast by Structure Type</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>65%</b>	<b>100%</b>	
<b>Total Owner-Occupied Housing Forecast<sup>4</sup></b>	<b>66,300</b>	<b>59,900</b>	<b>60,700</b>	<b>186,900</b>	<b>68%</b>
<b>Owner-Occupied Housing Forecast by Structure Type</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>32%</b>	<b>32%</b>	<b>100%</b>	
<b>Total Household Forecast<sup>5</sup></b>	<b>73,800</b>	<b>82,500</b>	<b>116,800</b>	<b>273,100</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Total Household Forecast by Structure Type</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>43%</b>	<b>100%</b>	

Source: Watson & Associates Economists Ltd., 2021.

<sup>1</sup> Low density represents singles and semi-detached.

<sup>2</sup> Medium density includes townhouses (including back-to-back and stacked townhouses) and duplexes.

<sup>3</sup> High density includes all apartments.

<sup>4</sup> Includes freehold and condominium units.

<sup>5</sup> Based on York Region draft MCR Housing Forecast.





**Q3. Is the York Region long-term housing forecast by structure type prepared as part of the York Region draft MCR appropriate?**

**A3. Yes, the analysis prepared as part of this Foundational Housing Report supports the findings of the draft York Region MCR with respect to forecast long-term housing demand by structure type.**

- In accordance with the York Region draft MCR housing forecast, the York Region 2021 to 2051 percentage housing forecast by structure type is 27% for low-density, 30% for medium-density and 43% for high-density dwellings.<sup>1</sup> The York Region draft MCR housing forecast by structure type:
  - Appropriately recognizes recent shifts in residential building permit activity in York Region from low-density dwellings toward medium- and high-density housing forms;
  - Recognizes further anticipated shifts toward medium- and high-density residential development which are exhibited in active residential plans; and
  - Anticipates a more balanced mix of ownership and rental housing demand relative to recent trends.

As York Region Continues to Mature and Urbanize the Composition of its Households are Anticipated to Diversify

- Demand for grade-related housing will largely be driven by Census families, which are relatively large with respect to average household size or persons per unit (PPU).
- It is important to note, however, that the share of Census non-family households, which typically have lower household sizes, has been recently increasing across York Region. This emphasizes the importance of providing a range of households by structure type and building size.

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<sup>1</sup> For the purposes of this analysis, low-density housing includes singles and semis, medium-density housing includes townhouses (including stacked townhouses) and duplexes, and high-density housing includes all other apartment units.



**Q4. Is a minimum 50% residential intensification target for York Region from 2021 to 2051 appropriate? Should York Region target a higher residential intensification target?**

**A4. Yes, a minimum 50% residential intensification target is recommended as the preferred long-term residential intensification scenario for the Region. This intensification target appropriately considers recent residential housing development patterns by geographic area as well as anticipated near-term and longer-term housing demand within the BUA and DGA.**

A 50% Residential Intensification Target would Represent an Increase in the Absolute Amount of Housing Growth within the York Region BUA Relative to Recent Historical Trends

- Between 2006 and 2020, approximately 4,000 housing residential building permits were issued annually within the York Region BUA. Since 2006, the Region's share of residential development activity within the BUA has steadily increased, from 45% during the 2006 to 2010 period, to 54% from 2016 to 2019. During this same time period, the share of new residential development within the BUA has steadily shifted towards high-density housing types, as remaining vacant lands available to accommodate low-density housing have been absorbed.
- Under a 50% residential intensification target, approximately 4,600 new households would be required to be built on an annual basis within the BUA between 2021 and 2051. Relative to the amount of residential intensification achieved between 2006 and 2021, a 50% residential intensification target would represent a 15% increase in the annual level of housing growth allocated to the BUA. At this time, a higher residential intensification target beyond 50% is not considered a likely scenario.
- As previously noted in the York Region Foundational Housing Brief, York Region has recently made significant transit infrastructure investments within the BUA. These investments have played, and will continue to play, a key role in the Region's recent success regarding residential intensification over the next 30 years.



- Q5. How are future trends regarding housing affordability in York Region anticipated to impact demand for rental and ownership housing? Are there particular types of rental and ownership housing for which more supply is needed to accommodate demand?**
- A5. Housing affordability represents a key driver behind the need for a broader range of ownership and rental housing products geared toward medium- and high-density households.**

#### Housing Demand for Ownership Housing is Anticipated to Remain Strong Across York Region

- The home ownership market in York Region is expected to remain strong over the long term. Owner-occupied housing growth is expected to be comprised of a mix of freehold and condominium development with a range of low-, medium- and high-density dwellings. Demand for grade-related ownership housing is anticipated to be largely driven by middle- and high-income Census families.

#### Low-Density Ownership Housing Needs

- Forecast demand for low-density ownership housing in York Region will continue to be strongest amongst **high-income** households that can afford premium-priced homes above an average price point of \$950,000; however, minimal market choice exists for homes priced under this average.

#### Medium-Density Ownership Housing Needs

- Relative to low-density housing, York Region offers a greater supply of medium-density housing to accommodate anticipated demand associated with **high-income** households across York Region.
- Over the past decade, however, York Region has experienced significant price appreciation in medium-density housing which has eroded housing affordability for this form of housing to **middle-income** households.



- **Middle-income**, working-age families represent the largest market for medium-density ownership housing across York Region; however, few **middle-income** households can afford to purchase a medium-density home in York Region.<sup>2</sup>

#### High-Density Ownership Housing Needs

- York Region is anticipated to require a greater share of smaller condominium units in the market over the next three decades than what has been constructed over the past 10 years.
- This need for smaller condominium units (studio) is anticipated to be significant, representing approximately 53% of high-density ownership housing demand. Demand for smaller condominium units is expected to be largely driven by **low-income** households in the 75+ age group.
- Demand for larger (2 bedroom+) condominium units is projected to make up approximately 23% of the demand for high-density ownership households. Demand for larger apartments is anticipated to be comprised primarily from **high-income** households.

#### Continue to Explore Opportunities to Increase the Supply of Purpose-Built Rental Housing

- In recent years, demand for rental housing in York Region has largely been satisfied by the secondary rental market. This includes condominium units rented by owners and second suites as well as non-profit housing development. The secondary rental market is expected to continue to supply the majority of ground-oriented rental housing.
- Based on the findings of this study, it is projected that just under 40% of overall renter household growth during the 2021 to 2051 period will need to be accommodated through the primary rental market, totalling approximately 32,800 new purpose-built rental households.

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<sup>2</sup> For the purposes of this report, **low-income** households are defined as those that earn an annual household income of less than \$65,000 per year, **middle-income** households are defined as those that earn an annual household income between \$65,000 and under \$104,000, while **high-income** households are defined as those that earn an annual household income of \$104,000 or more per year.



- Q6. Are there potential risks for York Region if the housing supply is not well-aligned with the anticipated long-term needs of existing and future residents?**
- A6. Improving the alignment of the housing stock by type, location, tenure, and affordability against the needs of the population by age and income level is a fundamental long-term goal for York Region. Improved alignment between housing supply and demand is essential for York Region to achieve its long-term population and employment allocation to the year 2051. Ultimately, if mismatches persist between housing supply and demand, existing residents and potential new home buyers may consider alternative housing options within the broader regional market area outside York Region.**

Continue to Address Gaps in Housing Affordability to Better Align Housing Demand and Supply across York Region

- If York Region is unable to address the housing affordability gaps identified herein, the following combination of outcomes are likely:
  - An increasing share of lower-and middle-income households will need to spend a greater than 30% share of household income on shelter costs in York Region.
  - Households may need to settle for housing arrangements that meet their affordability needs but do not necessarily meet their functional needs which may impact quality of life. This could include living arrangements in smaller than desired dwellings.
  - An increased percentage of young adults would be expected to defer entry into the rental or ownership housing market, combined with an overall increase in multiple family/multi-generation living arrangements.
  - A greater share of lower- and middle-income households than what has been presented herein will likely rent and not purchase, placing greater pressure on both the primary and secondary rental markets.
  - Households may consider less-expensive housing options in other locations within the broader regional market area outside York Region. If York Region is unable to attract the target market segments identified in



the forecast presented herein, the Region will have difficulty in meeting its long-term population and housing forecast to 2051.

**Q7. Are there recommended actions that York Region and its partners should take to help ensure that housing supply in York Region is better aligned with the anticipated long-term needs of the Region's existing and future residents?**

**A7. Yes, opportunities exist through land-use planning tools and financial incentives to better align the anticipated long-term needs of the Region's existing and future residents.**

Recommended approaches to address the Region's affordable housing needs are summarized below:

- Work with public- and private-sector partners to increase the supply of medium-density ownership housing opportunities geared toward younger families and middle-income households.
- Encourage the development of a broad range of condominium units by size and price.
- Continue to explore approaches to expand the Region's purpose-built rental housing inventory.
- Explore land-use planning tools and financial incentives to better align the anticipated long-term needs of the Region's existing and future residents, such as:
  - Municipal fee exemptions, discounting or deferrals;
  - Land donation or discounting;
  - Tax increment equivalent grants;
  - Reduced parking requirements;
  - Flexibility in building height and set back requirements; and
  - Inclusionary zoning.



# MAP 1

## YORK REGION

Town of East Gwillimbury

### Preliminary Recommended Locations for Urban Expansion\*

- Community
- Employment
- Remaining Developable Whitebelt Areas
- Non-developable (NHS, Infrastructure)

### Land Use Category

- Built-up Area
- Designated Greenfield Area
- Greenbelt
- Hamlet
- 2010 Urban Expansion
- Designated Greenfield Area - Agriculture

### Base Map

- 400-Series Highways
- Municipal Boundary
- Roads

\*Areas are draft and are awaiting approval through the Municipal Comprehensive Review and are subject to change.



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The Regional Municipality of York  
Planning and Economic  
Development, Corporate Services  
March 2021

Data: © Queen's Printer for Ontario  
2003-2021

0 0.250.5 1 1.5 2  
Kilometers



## MAP 2

## YORK REGION

Township of King  
and  
City of Vaughan

### Preliminary Recommended Locations for Urban Expansion\*

- Community
- Employment
- Non-developable  
(NHS, Infrastructure)

### Land Use Category

- Built-up Area
- Designated  
Greenfield Area
- Greenbelt
- Hamlet
- 2010 Urban  
Expansion
- Designated  
Greenfield Area  
- Agriculture

### Base Map

- Municipal Boundary
- Roads
- 400-Series Highways

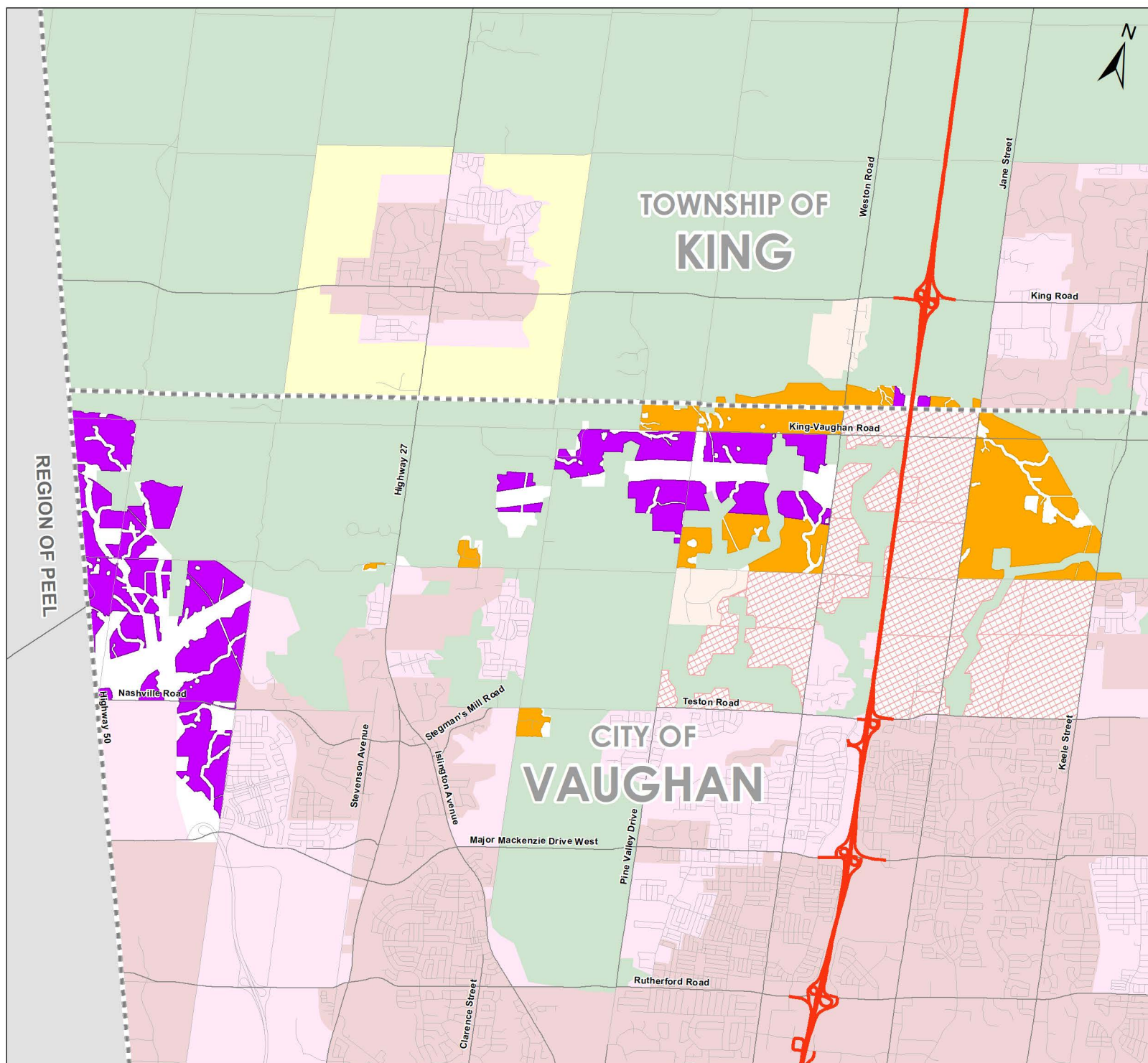
\*Areas are draft and are awaiting approval  
through the Municipal Comprehensive Review  
and are subject to change.



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March 2021

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0 0.375 0.75 1.5 2.25 3  
Kilometers





## MAP 3

## YORK REGION

City of Markham  
and  
Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville

**Preliminary Recommended  
Locations for Urban Expansion\***

- Community
- Employment
- Non-developable  
(NHS, Infrastructure)

**Land Use Category**

- Built-up Area
- Designated  
Greenfield Area
- Greenbelt
- Hamlet
- 2010 Urban  
Expansion
- Designated  
Greenfield Area  
- Agriculture

**Base Map**

- Municipal Boundary
- Roads
- 400-Series Highways

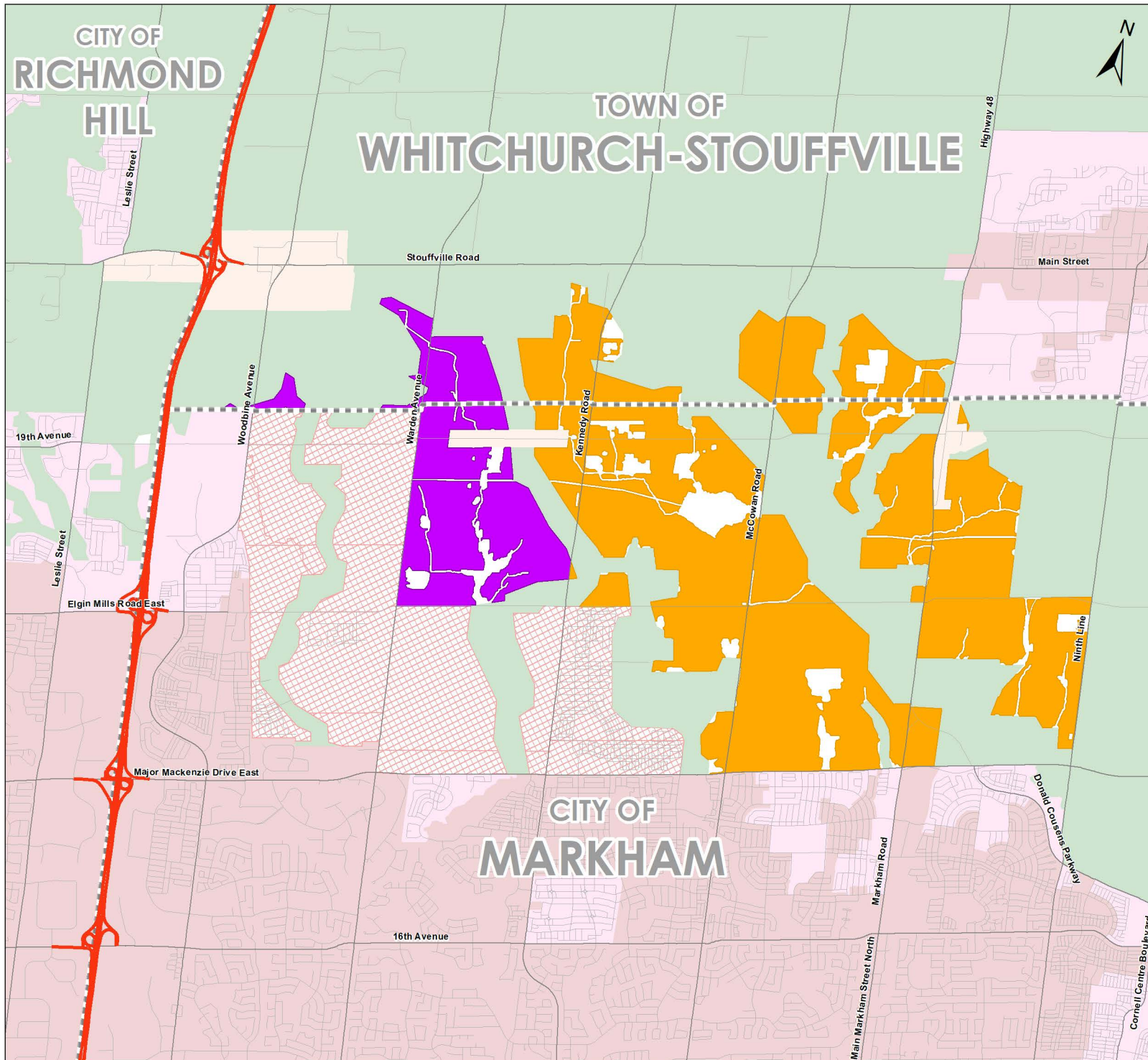
\*Areas are draft and are awaiting approval  
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2003-2021

0 0.250.5 1 1.5 2  
Kilometers



**ATTACHMENT 5**

**Forecast and Land Needs Assessment  
Draft Consultation Approach**

<b>Type of Engagement</b>	<b>Q2/early Q3 2021</b>
Local Municipal Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1:1 meetings - feedback on proposed forecasts and land needs</li> <li>• Local municipal working group discussions / feedback</li> </ul>
Development Industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feedback from BILD on proposed forecasts and land needs</li> </ul>
Planning Advisory Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feedback on proposed forecasts and land needs</li> </ul>
Public Consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inform and request feedback on proposed forecasts and land needs</li> <li>• Online engagement coordinated with consultation on Master Plans and with proposed Regional Official Plan policy directions and topic areas (e.g. Housing)</li> <li>• Online engagement through platforms such as York Region Have your say web page, social media, surveys, and/or others</li> <li>• Virtual public open house</li> </ul>
York Region staff presentations to local Councils	As requested
Local municipal Council positions on draft forecasts	Requested no later than July 15, 2021

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**From:** Switzer, Barbara <Barbara.Switzer@york.ca> **On Behalf Of** Regional Clerk  
**Sent:** March 24, 2021 1:48 PM  
**Subject:** Regional Council Decision - Bradford Bypass Project - Regional Response to the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada

**CAUTION: This email originated from a source outside the City of Markham. DO NOT CLICK on any links or attachments, or reply unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.**

On March 18, 2021 Regional Council made the following decision:

1. Council endorse the proposed response (Attachment 1) to the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada as the Region's input to inform the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada's analysis of the designation request for the Bradford Bypass Project under the federal Impact Assessment Act.
2. The Regional Clerk circulate this report to the Ontario Minister of Transportation, Simcoe County and the local municipalities.

The original staff report is attached for your information.

Please contact Brian Titherington, Director of Transportation and Infrastructure Planning at 1-877-464-9675 ext. 75901 if you have any questions with respect to this matter.

Regards,

**Christopher Raynor** | Regional Clerk, Regional Clerk's Office, Corporate Services

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The Regional Municipality of York | 17250 Yonge Street | Newmarket, ON L3Y 6Z1  
**O:** 1-877-464-9675 ext. 71300 | [christopher.raynor@york.ca](mailto:christopher.raynor@york.ca) | [york.ca](http://york.ca)

Our Mission: **Working together to serve our thriving communities – today and tomorrow**

# **The Regional Municipality of York**

Regional Council  
Transportation Services  
February 25, 2021

Report of the Commissioner of Transportation Services

## **Bradford Bypass Project Regional Response to the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada**

### **1. Recommendations**

1. Council endorse the proposed response (Attachment 1) to the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada as the Region's input to inform the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada's analysis of the designation request for the Bradford Bypass Project under the federal *Impact Assessment Act*.
2. The Regional Clerk circulate this report to the Ontario Minister of Transportation, Simcoe County and the local municipalities.

### **2. Summary**

On February 3, 2021, Ecojustice, on behalf of Rescue Lake Simcoe Coalition and Simcoe County Greenbelt Coalition, submitted a request to the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change Canada to designate the Bradford Bypass Project under the federal *Impact Assessment Act* (IAA) (Attachment 2). On February 12, 2021, the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada (Agency) requested input from municipalities on the Bradford Bypass Project to inform the Agency's analysis of the designation request (Attachment 3). The Agency has requested municipal input by March 3, 2021.

#### Key Points:

- The Bradford Bypass (also known as the Highway 400-404 Link) supports the Region's Official Plan and Transportation Master Plan (2016) and is an important component of servicing planned growth in the Region
- The Region has long supported the Bradford Bypass Project and has been consulted by the Ontario Ministry of Transportation since the original Individual Environmental Assessment (EA) approved in 2002, the Simcoe Area Multimodal Transportation Study undertaken in support of Growth Plan Amendment 1 (Simcoe Sub-Area Amendment – January 2012), to the current ongoing preliminary design and Class EA process

### 3. Background

#### **The Impact Assessment Agency of Canada has invited affected municipalities to provide input on the Bradford Bypass Project**

The Ontario Ministry of Transportation is proposing a new four-lane highway, connecting Highways 400 and 404. The proposed Bradford Bypass Project will connect Highway 400 in Bradford West Gwillimbury in Simcoe County to Highway 404 in East Gwillimbury and across King Township in York Region.

The Impact Assessment Agency of Canada has invited affected municipalities to provide input on the Bradford Bypass Project to inform the Agency's analysis of the designation request submitted by Ecojustice, on behalf of Rescue Lake Simcoe Coalition and Simcoe County Greenbelt Coalition. In particular, the Agency is seeking input on:

- Whether any York Region requirements apply to the Project?
- Would any of those involve consultation with the public and Indigenous groups?
- What environmental, social, economic or health issues would those address?
- Whether the Ontario Ministry of Transportation is addressing the interests and issues of importance to York Region?

#### **The federal *Impact Assessment Act* regulates projects that are required to undergo a federal impact assessment process**

The *Impact Assessment Act* became law in 2019 and outlines two ways a project may be required to undergo a federal impact assessment process. The first is the project contains an activity that matches a description contained in the federal *Physical Activities Regulations* (Project List). The second is that a request be made to the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change to exercise their discretion to require a federal impact assessment process for a project that is not on the Project List, but due to the potential for the project to cause adverse effects on matters within federal jurisdiction, or adverse direct or incidental effects (due to a federal decision) or due to public concerns related to those effects. With the IAA in effect only since 2019, staff has not been able to identify any instance of the Minister exercising their discretion in this manner over a project that would otherwise only be regulated by a provincial environmental assessment process.

#### **Planning for the Bradford Bypass Project began in the 1990's**

The Ontario Ministry of Transportation completed an Individual EA for the Bradford Bypass Project concurrent with the EA for the Highway 404 extension in 1993 and was granted approval by the Ministry of Environment for both EA's on August 28, 2002. In 2004, the Province designed the approved alignment for the Highway 400 – 404 Link as a Controlled Access Highway Corridor under the *Public Transportation and Highways Improvement Act*, thereby protecting the route from development until the highway is constructed.

As a condition of the EA approval, the design and construction of the highway is subject to the Ontario Ministry of Transportation Class EA process for Provincial Transportation Facilities. The preliminary design and Class EA phase of the Bradford Bypass Project is currently ongoing.

The Ministry of Transportation also undertook the Simcoe Area Multimodal Transportation Study in support of the Growth Plan (Simcoe Sub-Area Growth Plan Amendment 1 – January 2012). The study was completed in March 2014 and reaffirmed the need for the Bradford Bypass Project.

## 4. Analysis

### **Council has long-supported the Bradford Bypass Project**

The Ministry of Transportation has consulted the Region throughout the EA, network planning and design processes for the Bradford Bypass Project. Staff have reported to Council at key milestones and will continue to do so throughout the current preliminary design and Class EA process. Council positions related to the Bradford Bypass Project are summarized below:

York Region Council [March 2008](#) resolved:

*Regional Council request the Regional Chair to present a brief to the Ministers of Public Infrastructure Renewal, Transportation and Municipal Affairs and Housing on the urgent need for action on the Bradford Bypass, including adding the Bradford Bypass into the Provincial Growth Plan and committing to develop an implementation schedule with York Region.*

York Region Council [September 2009](#) resolved:

*Regional Council requested the Province to expedite its review and study of the following facilities with funding commitments:*

- a. Yonge Street Subway
- b. Bradford Bypass
- c. Highway 427 extension to Major Mackenzie Drive
- d. Completion of the GTA West Individual Environmental Assessment (IEA) study

York Region Council [June 2011](#) resolved:

*Council endorse this staff report and Attachment 1 as the Region's official comments on the Provincial Proposed Amendment No. 1 to the Growth Plan: An Amendment and Implementation Tools for the Simcoe Sub-Area.*

York Region Council [June 2012](#) resolved:

*Council direct staff to work with Simcoe County, Bradford West Gwillimbury, East Gwillimbury and Newmarket to develop a joint communication strategy to advocate for the Highway 400-404 Link and to report back to Council by the end of 2012 with an update on the progress.*



York Region Council [June 2019](#) resolved:

*Council support a robust highway network to move people, goods and services and achieve provincial Growth Plan population and employment objectives in York Region and encourage:*

- a. The resumption of Environmental Assessment for GTA West Highway for near-term inclusion in the Southern Highways Program*
- b. The inclusion of the Highway 400-404 Connecting Link and the Highway 404 Extension to Highway 12 in the next Southern Highways Program*

## **The Bradford Bypass supports the Region's Official Plan and Transportation Master Plan**

The York Region Official Plan 2010 describes how the Region plans to accommodate future growth and development while meeting the needs of existing residents and businesses. It provides directions and policies that guide economic, environmental and community planning decisions.

The Bradford Bypass Project is identified as a planned transportation corridor in the York Region Official Plan ([Map 12 Street Network](#)) and included in policy 7.2.56:

*To work with the Province and local municipalities to plan and protect for the following corridors and facilities:*

- a. Highway 427 north to the GTA West Corridor*
- b. Highway 404 north beyond Ravenshoe Road*
- c. the Bradford Bypass (Highway 400-404 Link)*
- d. the GTA West Corridor*

The York Region Transportation Master Plan 2016 establishes the vision for transportation services, assesses existing transportation system performance, forecasts future travel demand and defines actions and policies to address road, transit and active transportation needs in York Region to 2041.

The Bradford Bypass Project is identified in the Transportation Master Plan as an important component of the transportation network required to service York Region residents and businesses ([Map 8 - Proposed 2041 Road Network](#)).

## **The Ontario Ministry of Transportation has consulted the Region throughout the Bradford Bypass Project**

The Ontario Ministry of Transportation has consulted the Region throughout the planning for the Bradford Bypass Project. Through the original Individual EA process, Simcoe Area Network Study in support of The Growth Plan, to the ongoing preliminary design and Class EA study, the Region has been consulted and actively engaged. At key milestones, staff will continue to report to Council, including highlighting issues or concerns for consideration during the Provincial preliminary design and Class EA process.

## 5. Financial

There are no financial implications resulting from this report.

## 6. Local Impact

The Region and the local municipalities benefit from provincial investment in the highway network in the Greater Toronto Area. The planned Bradford Bypass Project is identified as an important component of the transportation network required to service the Region's residents and businesses.

## 7. Conclusion

This report seeks Council endorsement for staff to submit the proposed response to the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada to inform the Agency's analysis of the designation request under the federal *Impact Assessment Act* for the Bradford Bypass Project.

The Region anticipates the current provincial Environmental Assessment process for the Bradford Bypass will continue to address environmental, social, economic and health issues as well as necessary public consultation to balance the needs for all community stakeholders.

---

For more information on this report, please contact Brian Titherington, Director of Transportation and Infrastructure Planning at 1-877-464-9675 ext. 75901. Accessible formats or communication supports are available upon request.

Recommended by:

  
**Paul Jankowski**  
 Commissioner of Transportation Services

Approved for Submission:

  
**Bruce Macgregor**  
 Chief Administrative Officer

February 24, 2021  
 Attachments (3)  
 12595078



**ATTACHMENT 1**

March 3, 2021

Ms. Anjala Puvananathan, Director  
Impact Assessment Agency of Canada  
Ontario Region  
600-55 York Street  
Toronto ON M5J 1R7

Dear Ms. Puvananathan,

**Re: Designation Request for the Proposed Bradford Bypass Project under the *Impact Assessment Act***

Thank you for your February 12, 2021 correspondence regarding the designation request submitted on February 3, 2021 by Ecojustice on behalf of Rescue Lake Simcoe Coalition and Simcoe County Greenbelt Coalition. The Ecojustice submission has requested the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change Canada designate the proposed Ontario Bradford Bypass Project under subsection 9(1) of the *Impact Assessment Act*.

The Ontario Ministry of Transportation is proposing a new four-lane highway, connecting Highway 400 and Highway 404. The proposed Bradford Bypass Project (also commonly known as the Highway 400-404 Link) will connect Highway 400 in Bradford West Gwillimbury (Simcoe County) to Highway 404 in East Gwillimbury and crossing King Township (York Region).

The Ontario Ministry of Transportation completed an Individual Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Highway 400 – 404 Link concurrent with the EA for the Highway 404 extension in 1993 and was granted approval by the Ministry of Environment for both EA's on August 28, 2002. In 2004, the Province designed the approved alignment for the Highway 400 – 404 Link as a Controlled Access Highway Corridor under the Public Transportation and Highways Improvement Act, thereby protecting the route from development until the highway is constructed. As a condition of the EA approval, the design and construction of the highway became subject to the Ontario Ministry of Transportation's Class EA process for Provincial Transportation Facilities, as a "Group A" project.

The Impact Assessment Agency of Canada has invited affected municipalities to provide input on the Bradford Bypass Project to inform the Agency's analysis of the designation request. In particular, the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada is seeking input on:

- Whether any York Region requirements apply to the Project?
- Would any of those involve consultation with the public and Indigenous groups?
- What environmental, social, economic or health issues would those requirements address?
- Whether the Ontario Ministry of Transportation is addressing the interests and issues of importance to York Region.

The Impact Assessment Agency of Canada has requested municipal responses by March 3, 2021.

### York Region has long supported the Bradford Bypass Project

The Ontario Ministry of Transportation received EA approval for the Bradford Bypass Project in 2002. The Ontario Ministry of Transportation also undertook the Simcoe Area Multimodal Transportation Study in support of the Provincial Growth Plan (Simcoe Sub-Area Growth Plan Amendment 1 – January 2012). The study was completed in March 2014 and reaffirmed the need for the Bradford Bypass Project.

The Ministry of Transportation consulted York Region throughout these studies. York Region staff have reported to Council at key milestones through the provincial study process and York Region Council has consistently supported the Bradford Bypass Project as highlighted below.

York Region Council March 2008 resolved:

*Regional Council request the Regional Chair to present a brief to the Ministers of Public Infrastructure Renewal, Transportation and Municipal Affairs and Housing on the urgent need for action on the Bradford Bypass, including adding the Bradford Bypass into the Provincial Growth Plan and committing to develop an implementation schedule with York Region.*

York Region Council September 2009 resolved:

*Regional Council request the Province to expedite its review and study of the following facilities with funding commitments:*

- a. Yonge Street Subway*
- b. Bradford Bypass*
- c. Highway 427 extension to Major Mackenzie Drive*
- d. Completion of the GTA West Individual Environmental Assessment (IEA) study*

York Region Council June 2011 resolved:

*Council endorse this staff report and Attachment 1 as the Region's official comments on the Provincial Proposed Amendment No. 1 to the Growth Plan: An Amendment and Implementation Tools for the Simcoe Sub-Area. [Staff comments attached to the Council Report: York Region Council had repeatedly expressed the opinion that investment in transportation infrastructure was required to accommodate the Provincial 2031 growth allocations. Critical road investments needed include extended Highways 404 and 427, constructing the Bradford Bypass and capacity improvements to the existing 400-series highways. York Region Council has taken the position that the Bradford By-pass extension is an immediate need.]*

York Region Council June 2012 resolved:

*Council direct staff to work with Simcoe County, Bradford West Gwillimbury, East Gwillimbury and Newmarket to develop a joint communication strategy to advocate for the Highway 400-404 Link and to report back to Council by the end of 2012 with an update on the progress.*

York Region Council June 2019 resolved:

*Council support a robust highway network to move people, goods and services and achieve provincial Growth Plan population and employment objectives in York Region and encourage:*

- a. The resumption of Environmental Assessment for GTA West Highway for near-term inclusion in the Southern Highways Program*
- b. The inclusion of the Highway 400-404 Connecting Link and the Highway 404 Extension to Highway 12 in the next Southern Highways Program*

#### The Bradford Bypass Project supports York Region's Official Plan and Transportation Master Plan

With a population of 1.2 million residents, The Regional Municipality of York is one of Canada's largest municipalities and the second largest business centre in Ontario. Ranked as Ontario's fastest growing large municipality, managing growth over the coming decades is important. York Region is forecast to reach approximately 2.02 million people and 990,000 jobs by 2051.

The York Region Official Plan 2010 describes how York Region plans to accommodate future growth and development while meeting the needs of existing residents and businesses in the Region. It provides directions and policies that guide economic, environmental and community planning decisions.

The Bradford Bypass Project is identified as a planned transportation corridor in the York Region Official Plan (Map 12 Street Network) and included in policy 7.2.56:

*To work with the Province and local municipalities to plan and protect for the following corridors and facilities:*

- a. Highway 427 north to the GTA West Corridor*
- b. Highway 404 north beyond Ravenshoe Road*
- c. the Bradford Bypass (Highway 400-404 Link)*
- d. the GTA West Corridor*

The York Region Transportation Master Plan 2016 establishes the vision for transportation services, assesses existing transportation system performance, forecasts future travel demand, and defines actions and policies to address road, transit and active transportation needs in York Region to 2041.

The Bradford Bypass Project is identified as an integral component of the transportation network required to service York Region residents and businesses (Map 8 Proposed 2041 Road Network) and described in section 5.2.1 Provincial Infrastructure Plans:

*Highway 400/404 Link: This would provide a connection between Highway 400 and Highway 404 in East Gwillimbury. Its benefits include creation of a more resilient network by connecting the two major north-south highways. It would reduce the need for the Region to expand Queensville Sideroad and would reduce traffic congestion on Regional roads, including Highway 9, Green Lane and Yonge Street. An Environmental Assessment for the Highway 400/404 Link was approved in 2002 and designated as a Controlled Access Highway under the Public Transportation and Highways Improvement Act. It is not identified in the current Provincial Growth Plan for 2031. Given the project's benefits to the Regional network, this TMP assumes it will be in place by 2041.*

Both York Region's Official Plan and Transportation Master Plan were developed with extensive consultation, including the public, stakeholders, government agencies and Indigenous groups.

The Ontario Ministry of Transportation has consulted York Region throughout the Bradford Bypass Project

The Ontario Ministry of Transportation has consulted York Region throughout the planning for the Bradford Bypass Project. Through the Individual EA process, Simcoe Area Network Study, and ongoing Preliminary Design/Class EA for the Bradford Bypass Project, York Region has been consulted and actively engaged. At key milestones, York Region staff will continue to report to Council, including highlighting issues or concerns for consideration in the provincial Preliminary Design/Class EA process.

The provincial EA process provides for a robust level of environmental assessment and stakeholder consultation. The Region expects the current provincial environmental process will continue to address environmental, social, economic and health issues as well as the necessary public consultation to balance the needs of all project stakeholders.

Specific Input to the Federal Impact Assessment Agency of Canada

Specific responses for the input questions posed by the Federal Impact Assessment Agency are summarized in the table below:

<b>Impact Assessment Agency Question</b>	<b>Regional Response</b>
Whether any York Region requirements apply to the Project?	The Region requires conformity with the Region's Official Plan as well as the Transportation Master Plan.
Would any of these involve consultation with the public and Indigenous groups?	The Region consulted extensively for the Official Plan and the Transportation Master Plan and would expect the Province to duly consult all stakeholders as required in the Provincial Environmental Assessment process.
What environmental, social, economic or health issues would those requirements address?	The Region would expect the Provincial Environmental Assessment process to address all relevant environmental, social, economic or health issues as raised by community stakeholders.
Whether the Ontario Ministry of Transportation is addressing the interests and issues of importance to York Region?	The Ontario Ministry of Transportation is addressing the interests and issues as identified by the Region through the completed Individual Environmental Assessment process as well as the ongoing Class Environmental Assessment.

Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact Brian Titherington, Director of Transportation and Infrastructure Planning at 1-877-464-9675 ext. 75901.

Sincerely,

Paul Jankowski  
Commissioner of Transportation Services

12602084

**Laura Bowman**

1910-777 Bay Street, PO Box 106  
 Toronto, Ontario M5G 2C8  
 Tel: 416-368-7533 ext. 522  
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 Email: [lbowman@ecojustice.ca](mailto:lbowman@ecojustice.ca)  
 File No.: 3860051

February 3, 2021

The Honourable Jonathan Wilkinson  
 Minister of the Environment and Climate Change  
 House of Commons  
 Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A6  
[Jonathan.Wilkinson@Canada.ca](mailto:Jonathan.Wilkinson@Canada.ca)

Dear Minister Wilkinson,

**Re:    Bradford Bypass – Request for designation under s.9 of the *Impact Assessment Act***

I am writing on behalf of my clients Rescue Lake Simcoe Coalition and Simcoe County Greenbelt Coalition. This request is also supported by Environmental Defence Canada, Ontario Nature, Wilderness Committee, Ontario Rivers Alliance, Ontario Headwaters Institute, Nature League of Collingwood, Durham Region Field Naturalists, Nature Barrie, Ontario Road Ecology Group, AWARE Simcoe, Peterborough Field Naturalists, Barilla Park Residents Association, Save the Maskinonge, Lake Simcoe Watch, Windfall Ecology Centre, York Region Environmental Alliance, The North American Native Plant Society, Carden Field Naturalists, the Lake Simcoe Association, South Lake Simcoe Naturalists and High Park Nature. My clients and the other organizations named above request that the proposed Bradford Bypass Highway in Ontario, also known as the “Highway 400 to Highway 404 Extension Link” or the Holland Marsh Highway (the “project”) be designated for a federal Environmental Assessment pursuant to subsection 9(1) of the *Impact Assessment Act (IAA)*. The project will result in adverse environmental effects within federal jurisdiction as well as adverse and incidental effects and meets the criteria for public concern.

Under subsection 9(1) of IAA the Minister may, by order, designate a physical activity that is not *prescribed* in the Regulations. The Minister may do this, if, in the Minister’s opinion, the physical activity may cause adverse effects within federal jurisdiction or adverse direct or incidental effects, or public concerns related to those effects warrant the designation.

The project has not substantially begun nor has a federal authority exercised a power or performed a duty or function that would permit the Project to be carried out, in whole or in part, and therefore the Minister is not prohibited from designating this project pursuant to subsection 9(1) of IAA.

## Overview of the project

The Holland Marsh Highway is a proposed 16.2 kilometre, four-lane controlled access freeway located in Simcoe County and York Region in Ontario in the northern Greater Toronto Area, and to the south of Lake Simcoe. It requires a new 100 metre wide right of way. The project would cross the lake bed of the ancient Lake Algonquin, in an east-west direction across what is now the Holland Marsh, one of the most productive specialty crop agricultural areas in the country and one of the largest wetlands in the region. The project will lead to the removal of approximately 39 hectares of wildlife habitat and large areas of one of Ontario's most important wetlands, the Holland Marsh.<sup>1</sup>

A highly controversial environmental assessment study under the Ontario *Environmental Assessment Act* was completed 23 years ago. It concluded that the project would cause adverse effects to fish habitat including severe stormwater and groundwater impacts. The environmental assessment did not evaluate the impacts on species at risk, migratory birds or climate change. This study has not been updated.

## The provincial regulatory process is grossly inadequate

### The environmental assessment is dated

The environmental assessment (EA) for the project was completed in 1997. The 1997 EA for the project was superficial in nature. It did not consider cumulative effects, climate change, or detail the impacts on natural heritage, migratory birds, fisheries, First Nations or discuss air pollution. The 1997 EA was approved by the Ontario Minister of the Environment under the Ontario *Environmental Assessment Act* in 2002. The 2002 Notice of Approval conditions required upgraded studies on archaeological resources, storm water management, groundwater protection plan, noise, and compliance monitoring.<sup>2</sup>

### The environmental assessment has not been updated

Pursuant to the Ontario *Environmental Assessment Act* the EA required 5-year updates through the streamlined, self-approved, class assessment process. However, the plans for the highway were put on hold in the mid-2000s. As a result, no 5-year updates were completed.

### The Province proposes to exempt the project from further assessment and evaluation

On July 8, 2020 the Ontario Government proposed to exempt the Bradford Bypass from completion of any environmental assessment updates, and to exempt the project from all existing conditions of approval including those mentioned above for stormwater management and groundwater protection. The project is proposed to be exempted from further environmental assessment studies before construction begins on early works, such as bridges and water crossings.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Bradford Bypass Environmental Assessment (1997) Appendix Document ["EA Appendices"], p.515.

<sup>2</sup> Notice of Approval – Bradford Bypass Environmental Assessment (2002) <https://www.ontario.ca/page/approval-highway-400-highway-404-extension-link-bradford-bypass-environmental-assessment>

<sup>3</sup> Environmental Registry (019-1883) Proposal to exempt various Ministry of Transportation projects from the requirements of the Environmental Assessment Act, July 2020. <https://ero.ontario.ca/notice/019-1883>

If the exemption is approved, there would be no further legally-mandated public consultation or environmental assessment requirements under the Ontario *Environmental Assessment Act*. In the interim, a notice of study commencement was published on September 24, 2020. This study, if it proceeds and the exemption is not granted, would proceed as a self-approval class assessment and is not subject to oversight by the Ontario Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks.

If the exemption is granted, there would be no provincial regulatory process addressing the impacts to federal aspects of the project such as migratory birds, species at risk, and fish habitat.

Many of the species at risk potentially impacted by the project have been exempted from approvals under the Ontario *Endangered Species Act*. The project is also exempt from conservation authority approvals for wetland and floodplain development under the *Conservation Authorities Act*. There is no regulatory requirement that climate change or air pollution would be addressed. No air pollution approvals would be required. There is no indication that the proposed provincial study, if completed, would assess climate change, noise impacts or impacts on migratory birds and fish habitat.

#### Other limitations of the provincial process

The usual permits for development and site alteration of wetlands and fish habitat under section 28 of the *Conservation Authorities Act* are not applicable to projects undertaken by the Ministry of Transportation Ontario (MTO). Accordingly, the usual environmental protections of that permitting process, which applies to regulated lands (typically valleys, wetlands and water crossings) is not likely to be applied to protect sensitive natural heritage features such as fish habitat and migratory bird habitat.

As noted below there is inadequate protection for species at risk affected by the project under the Ontario *Endangered Species Act*.

#### **Public concern**

There has been a great deal of public concern about water quality in Lake Simcoe and the need to urgently reduce phosphorus loadings and chloride in the watershed. The project is south of Lake Simcoe and is predominantly in the Lake Simcoe watershed. The Lake Simcoe watershed is subject to special legislation, the *Lake Simcoe Protection Act*, which puts in place policies to reduce nutrients and other contaminants. This legislation was enacted following large amounts of public concern. Recently the federal government announced it is investing \$16 million on treatment technology to reduce phosphorus to Lake Simcoe.<sup>4</sup> The highway project would increase nutrient loading in Lake Simcoe by increasing the impervious area and would undermine the objectives of this nutrient reduction project.

There has also been a great deal of public concern about protecting Greenbelt lands in Northern York Region from development.<sup>5</sup> The project would bisect a large area of Greenbelt and natural

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<sup>4</sup> “Feds to spend \$16M on Lake Simcoe water treatment facility Midland Today”, *Barrie Today* (Nov 12, 2020); “Where do local candidates stand on cleaning up Lake Simcoe?” *Barrie Today* (Oct 7, 2019).

<sup>5</sup> Noor Javed, “York Region asks province for process to open up protected Greenbelt – again”, *Toronto Star* (Oct 7 2020) <https://www.thestar.com/news/gta/2020/10/06/york-region-asks-province-for-process-to-open-up-protected->



heritage lands, and would facilitate sprawl in Greenbelt natural heritage areas. York Region recently requested that the province allow development in protected Greenbelt lands along all 400 series highways.<sup>6</sup>

In the EA process, there was significant public opposition to the project including large public meetings and opposition from organizations formed to oppose the highway such as “forbid roads on our greenspace”. Even organizations who were generally supportive of the highway raised concerns about the lack of adequate noise and air quality studies.<sup>7</sup>

During the Ontario government’s growth planning exercise in the mid-2000s, the need for the project was re-assessed and the project was shelved.<sup>8</sup> The province repeatedly expressed a priority for transit service, including enhanced commuter GO Train service instead.<sup>9</sup> More recently, the Ontario government recommitted to the project and later indicated that it intends to move forward with the project on an expedited basis. This proposal has re-ignited public concerns.<sup>10</sup>

### **Predicted adverse effects on core areas of federal jurisdiction**

Section 51 of the *Physical Activities Regulations* (SOR/2019-285) designates “The construction, operation, decommissioning and abandonment of a new all-season public highway that requires a total of 75 km or more of new right of way. A new right of way is described as land that “is not alongside and contiguous to an area of land that was developed for an...all season highway”. While the project is a new right of way of 16.2 km, and is therefore not at or near this threshold, at the time of the 1997 EA a number of triggers under the former *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act, 1995* were identified such as *Fisheries Act*, *Railways Act* and *Navigable Waters Protection Act*. As such the project has the potential for direct or incidental adverse effects.<sup>11</sup>

While these are no longer federal environmental assessment triggers for the project under the federal *Impact Assessment Act* they are indications that the project has impacts on areas of

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[greenbelt-again.html](#); Kim Zarzour, “Economy vs Environment: York Region seeking a process to develop Greenbelt lands”, *Toronto.com* (Oct 10 2020); Kim Zarzour, “Environmentalists warn of ‘terrible precedent’ as York Region council votes on Greenbelt development request”, *Yorkregion.com* (Oct 7, 2020); Gil Shochat, “How developers are trying to build on Ontario’s protected Greenbelt land”, *Global News* (Dec 14, 2016).

<sup>6</sup> Report, York Region Council (October 8, 2020),

<https://yorkpublishing.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?DocumentId=16293>.

<sup>7</sup> EA Appendices – Appendix C: Summary of public involvement, PDF pp.238-273.

<sup>8</sup> Editor “Bradford bypass wrong solution for local traffic woes”, *Bradford West Gwillimbury Topic* (Apr 2, 2008) <https://www.simcoe.com/community-story/2038520-bradford-bypass-wrong-solution-for-local-traffic-woes/>;

“Bradford Bypass plan shelved, but not eliminated”, *Newmarket Era* (Apr 23, 2008)

<https://www.yorkregion.com/news-story/1458921-bradford-bypass-plan-shelved-but-not-eliminated/>;

“Environmentalists glad to see province drop plans for Bradford Bypass”, *Newmarket Era* (Apr 23, 2008); Deborah Percy, “Curtailling Bradford bypass should be applauded”, *Yorkregion.com* (Apr 11, 2008)

<https://www.yorkregion.com/opinion-story/1448122-curtailling-bradford-bypass-should-be-applauded/>.

<sup>9</sup> Teresa Latchford, “Transit, not Bradford bypass, priority for province: Ontario Premier Kathleen Wynne”, *Newmarket Era* (Apr 15, 2016) <https://www.yorkregion.com/news-story/6499705-transit-not-bradford-bypass-priority-for-province-ontario-premier-kathleen-wynne/>

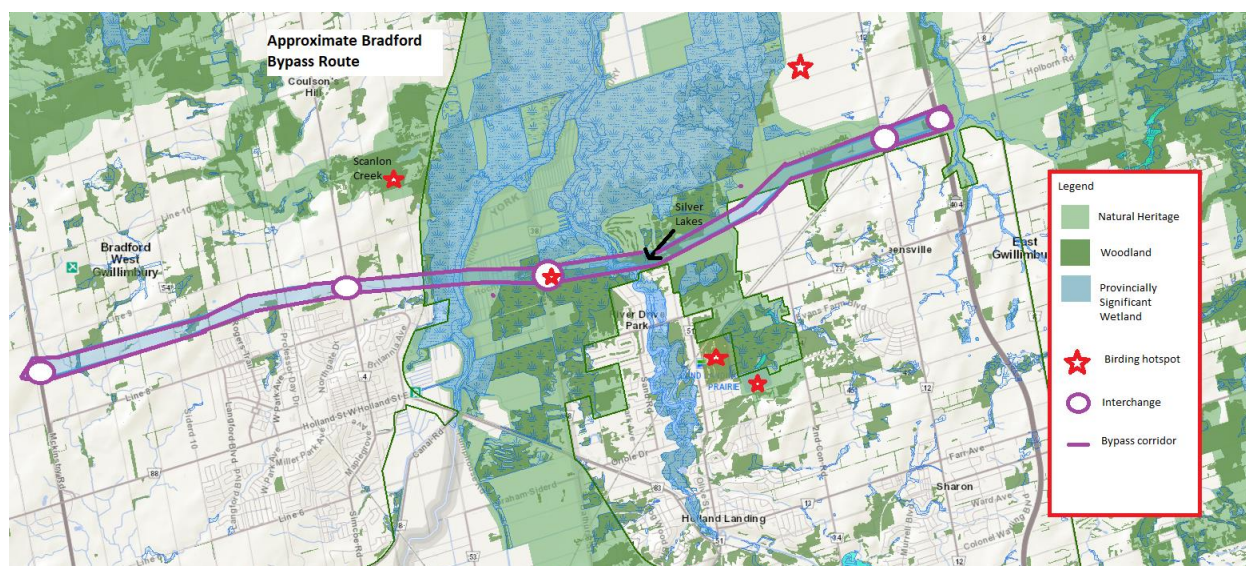
<sup>10</sup> Letter, “Province failing Lake Simcoe, residents with Bradford Bypass” *Newmarket Today* (Dec 8, 2020) <https://www.newmarkettoday.ca/letters-to-the-editor/letter-province-failing-lake-simcoe-residents-with-bradford-bypass-3161458>

<sup>11</sup> 1997 EA p.13.

federal jurisdiction. The federal government will have to exercise duties, powers and functions in relation to the project. The project would also adversely affect federal interests in migratory birds, fish habitat and species at risk.

### Habitat destruction and fragmentation concerns

The project would have severe and irreversible impacts on an extremely important natural area. The proposal would transect a large wetland, the Holland Marsh Wetland Complex that the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) has classified as *provincially significant*. The project would cross several streams including the east and west branches of the Holland River. According to a recent provincial EA for a project proposed directly adjacent to the project, there are at least eight significant wetlands within 5 kilometres, and at least three nearby provincially classified areas of natural and scientific interest (ANSIs) and 12 environmentally significant areas.<sup>12</sup> The project would remove 32.7 hectares of significant wildlife habitat. The project entails water crossings that would remove 9.5 hectares of the provincially significant Holland Marsh wetland complex including some fen wetlands. Even where the project does not directly remove habitat, the project would bisect and cut in half a significant swath of important natural areas and significant wetlands and aquatic habitat as shown in the figure below, resulting in fragmentation. It also traverses the largest remaining forested portion of the Holland Marsh, where a major intersection would be located. The 1997 EA identifies that fragmentation of habitat and disruption of natural corridors is an adverse effect.<sup>13</sup> Although this concern was raised during the 1997 EA, in the subsequent 23 years the proponent has not completed a technical analysis of the need for provision of adequate wildlife crossings.<sup>14</sup>



In its 1993 review of the project, the MNR indicated that “we do not feel that the two crossings of the Holland River on the west side of the study area could be done without significant loss of

<sup>12</sup> Upper York Sewage Solutions (December 2013)

<http://www.uyssolutions.ca/en/onlineresources/resources/AssessmentoftheProposedWRCDischargeonAquaticHabitatintheEastHollandRiver.pdf>

<sup>13</sup> 1997 EA, p.8.

<sup>14</sup> Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Review of Bradford Bypass EA, [“Ministry Review”] p.63.

wetland values regardless of the construction techniques used.”<sup>15</sup> The MNR indicated that the wetland traversed “is the most significant wetland in [Southern] Ontario, and is about to be designated one of the key wetlands in eastern North America.”<sup>16</sup>

### Fish and Fish Habitat

As noted above the project requires several federal approvals including for the harmful alteration, disruption or destruction of fish habitat under the federal *Fisheries Act*. The project will require the crossing of 13 watercourses along the length of the highway. There are two major river crossings, the east and west branches of the Holland River.<sup>17</sup> Long span bridges would be used for the Holland River crossings and culverts for the other 11 crossings.<sup>18</sup> The 1997 EA acknowledged the potential for loss of fish spawning habitat, including Northern Pike spawning habitat.<sup>19</sup> The 1997 EA also predicts that “stormwater runoff has the potential to severely impact the quality/quantity of surface water and groundwater.”<sup>20</sup> The EA notes that there is the potential for sedimentation to harm terrestrial and aquatic resources.<sup>21</sup> The project would dramatically increase the total impervious land surface area south of Lake Simcoe, which is an important metric for predicting impacts to receiving waterbodies, particularly for impairments from phosphorus, nitrogen and chloride.<sup>22</sup>

There is no overall assessment of the potential impacts to fish, aquatic habitat or fish populations in the 1997 EA. There is no evaluation of the effectiveness of mitigation measures and no specific measures are proposed within the EA or associated appendices. The 1997 EA contains only very limited discussion of impacts on fish and fish habitat, though it notes that key construction concerns for aquatic habitat include the introduction of sediment, habitat disturbance and alteration of the stream banks and bed during structure placement.<sup>23</sup> The 1997 EA predicted serious stormwater and groundwater contamination, with unknown effects on fish habitat within the east and west Holland River and Lake Simcoe. The east Holland River contains a variety of fish species, with 24 native species including Bowfin, White Sucker, Black Crappie, Bluegill, Largemouth Bass, Pumpkinseed, Rock Bass, Smallmouth Bass, Blacknose Dace, Bluntnose Minnow, Common Carp, Common Shiner, Creek Chub, Fathead Minnow, Golden Shiner, Northern Redbelly Dace, Sand Shiner, Northern Pike, Brook Stickleback, Brown Bullhead, Johnny Darter, and Yellow Perch.<sup>24</sup> Portions of the Holland River near the project

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<sup>15</sup> EA Appendices, p.411, T. Smith (MNR) to Fred Leach (MTO) Oct 28, 1993.

<sup>16</sup> EA Appendices, p.418.

<sup>17</sup> EA Appendices, p.508.

<sup>18</sup> EA Appendices, p.508.

<sup>19</sup> 1997 EA, p.6.

<sup>20</sup> 1997 EA, p.177.

<sup>21</sup> 1997 EA, p.177.

<sup>22</sup> Joseph Hollis Bartlett, “Impacts of Transportation Infrastructure on Stormwater and Surface Waters in Chittenden County, Vermont, USA”, p.2-5, <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/51067147.pdf>.

<sup>23</sup> 1997 EA, p.161; EA Appendices, pp.500, 552.

<sup>24</sup> Upper York Sewage Solutions Aquatic Habitat Assessment, pp.15-16, <http://www.uyssolutions.ca/en/onlineResources/resources/AssessmentoftheProposedWRCDischargeonAquaticHabitatintheEastHollandRiver.pdf>, Lake Simcoe and Region Conservation Authority, data from stations EH-35 and WH-07.

corridor are transition areas between coldwater and warmwater fish species.<sup>25</sup> The Holland River watershed is known to contain spawning habitat for Northern Pike.

The Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) completed a preliminary review of the project in 1998 and concluded that the project would result in harmful alteration, disruption or destruction of fish habitat. It required that habitat compensation be employed to address no net loss requirements. However, no habitat compensation plan is contained within the 1997 EA.<sup>26</sup> In response to DFO and Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority concerns, the proponent MTO refused to adhere to no net loss principles, for all areas of fish habitat stating “In an undertaking of this magnitude it is not possible to commit to “no net loss” of forested land and wetlands. Compensation and regeneration opportunities for woodlands and wetland habitat on MTO surplus lands will be considered where it is feasible...”<sup>27</sup> and that “mitigation will occur where it is both warranted and feasible.”<sup>28</sup> Further, the proponent MTO withdrew earlier commitments to the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF) to acquire extra lands for wetland compensation.<sup>29</sup> The MTO also indicated it would not commit to 80% phosphorus removal and level 1 protection recommended for the protection of the Maskinonge River subwatershed.<sup>30</sup>

In July 2020, the Province proposed to exempt the project from provincial EA requirements including the requirement in the 2002 notice of approval to assess stormwater and groundwater contamination.<sup>31</sup> The proposed exemption would also permit “early works” such as bridge construction through watercourses without completing a transportation environmental study report, or a detailed design as is normally required by the provincial class EA process. Despite proposing to urgently commence bridge and watercourse construction, the proponent has not contacted the DFO to discuss requirements for fish habitat compensation or mitigation.<sup>32</sup>

The project will dramatically increase the total impervious area to the south of Lake Simcoe by approximately 1.6 million square metres. The impervious area is known to contribute to nutrient loadings and is an important metric for predicting increased nutrients and chloride in the Lake Simcoe watershed. Minimizing impervious surfaces including pavement has been identified as a priority in Lake Simcoe protection planning.<sup>33</sup> The west Holland River subwatershed is already 7% impervious and imperviousness exceeding 10% begins to have impacts on water quality. Research has shown that as impervious cover increases to eight to nine percent, there is a significant decline in wetland aquatic macroinvertebrate health. The Holland Marsh wetland is a

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<sup>25</sup> *Ibid*, p.23.

<sup>26</sup> Ministry Review, pp.116-118.

<sup>27</sup> Ministry Review, p.149, row M2, MTO response.

<sup>28</sup> Ministry Review, p.36, 39, 149.

<sup>29</sup> Ministry Review, p.35, 39, 66.

<sup>30</sup> Ministry Review, p.27 (PDF p.36).

<sup>31</sup> Environmental Registry (019-1883) Proposal to exempt various Ministry of Transportation projects from the requirements of the *Environmental Assessment Act* <https://ero.ontario.ca/notice/019-1883>.

<sup>32</sup> Cesar Kagame (DFO) to Charlotte Ireland (Ecojustice) November 10, 2020.

<sup>33</sup> C. Eimers et al, “Recent changes and patterns in the water chemistry of Lake Simcoe”, *Journal of Great Lakes Research* (December 2005); Lake Simcoe Phosphorus Reduction Strategy <https://www.ontario.ca/page/lake-simcoe-phosphorus-reduction-strategy>; Minister’s Five Year Report on Lake Simcoe. <https://www.ontario.ca/page/ministers-five-year-report-lake-simcoe-protect-and-restore-ecological-health-lake-simcoe-watershed>.



key ecosystem not just in the in the east and west Holland River subwatersheds, but also in the Lake Simcoe watershed. Therefore maintaining or improving wetland aquatic health in that wetland is critical.<sup>34</sup>

As noted, the nature of the stormwater controls or chloride mitigation that would ultimately be employed by the project is not clear, nor is the implementation of no net loss policy for the wetland destruction which would occur directly from the project. Perhaps more significantly for fish habitat, there has been no assessment of the additional nutrient loading and chloride loading which would be entailed by the project and whether it will still be possible to achieve nutrient load reductions in line with the provincial *Lake Simcoe Protection Act* and Plan if the highway is constructed. These requirements are in place to protect and restore fish habitat in Lake Simcoe. Accordingly, the project would have clear and uncontested adverse effects on fish and fish habitat which would not be mitigated.

### Migratory Bird Habitat

Highways cause significant adverse impacts to birds in four ways: direct mortality, indirect mortality (such as habitat loss and habitat sinks), habitat fragmentation, and disturbance.<sup>35</sup> No mitigation can remove the impacts of highways to wildlife.<sup>36</sup> The well-known direct effects of roads on birds include habitat loss and fragmentation, vehicle-caused mortality, pollution, and poisoning. Nevertheless, indirect effects may exert a greater influence on bird populations. These effects include noise, artificial light, barriers to movement, and edges associated with roads. Moreover, indirect and direct effects may act synergistically to cause decreases in population density and species richness. Of the many effects of roads, it appears that road mortality and traffic noise may have the most substantial effects on birds relative to other effects and taxonomic groups.<sup>37</sup>

The section of the proposed highway crossing the Holland River is described as “a major wildlife habitat area” including a forested block with integrity containing “numerous woodland raptors” including Red-shouldered Hawk, Broadwinged Hawk, Sharp-shinned Hawk, and Coopers Hawk.<sup>38</sup> The EA reported that “a full suite of forest interior/area sensitive bird species were recorded including Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Winter Wren, Wood Thrush, Veery, Northern Water Thrush, Canada Warbler, Black and White Warbler, Ovenbird and Scarlet Tanager.<sup>39</sup> Numerous species of migratory birds were surveyed during the 1997 EA.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> West Holland River Subwatershed Plan (LSRCA, 2010), p.48

<https://www.lsrca.on.ca/Shared%20Documents/reports/west-holland-subwatershed-plan.pdf>.

<sup>35</sup> Sandra L Jacobson, Mitigation Measures for Highway-caused impacts to birds, (2002)

<https://www.fws.gov/migratorybirds/pdf/management/jacobsen2005highwaymeasures.pdf>.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*; also see A V Kociolek, et al, “Effects of road networks on bird populations”, *Conservation Biology* (February 2011); and see US Environmental Protection Agency, *Evaluation of Ecological Impacts From Highway Development* (April 1994), [https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2014-08/documents/ecological-impacts-highway-development-pg\\_0.pdf](https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2014-08/documents/ecological-impacts-highway-development-pg_0.pdf).

<sup>37</sup> Kociolek, et al, *Ibid.*

<sup>38</sup> EA Appendices, p.513.

<sup>39</sup> EA Appendices, p.513.

<sup>40</sup> EA Appendices: Wildlife Field Surveys (Ecoplans). pp.557-563.

The project would impact 15 natural heritage features including the removal of 22.1 hectares of high quality woodlands and 9.5 hectares of the Holland Marsh providing migratory bird nesting and foraging habitat, including for species at risk described below.<sup>41</sup> The highway would cause adverse impacts including mortality, disturbance, and habitat fragmentation and loss. The 1997 EA references “unavoidable” adverse effects on vegetation in the vicinity including in the provincially significant wetlands but does not assess the potential for adverse impacts on migratory birds or the effectiveness of mitigation at reducing or managing those impacts.<sup>42</sup> No beneficial management practices for protection of migratory birds have been incorporated into the project. As described below, several of these species are listed under the federal *Species at Risk Act* (SARA).

### Species at Risk

The 1997 EA predicted adverse effects on two (then) vulnerable species: Louisiana Waterthrush (SARA threatened - 2015) and Red-Shouldered Hawk (no longer federally listed). Baseline surveys for endangered and threatened species both provincially and federally are grossly out of date and predate both the provincial *Endangered Species Act* and federal SARA. Despite this, the EA predicts that species of concern “may be affected” by the project. There is no assessment of the specific effects on survival or recovery of species or the effectiveness of mitigation. It is important to note that there are no publically available updated studies on wildlife impacts from any period after 1997, which predates the federal SARA. There is no requirement to update baseline surveys, as a condition of this nature was not included in the 2002 Notice of Approval under the Ontario *Environmental Assessment Act*.

The project would occur within a few kilometres of to the Holland Landing Prairie Provincial Nature Reserve. This reserve contains one of the few remaining areas of tallgrass prairie in Ontario and the entire extent of relict prairie in this area. The prairie and associated shrub thickets provide habitat for approximately five provincially and 50 regionally rare vascular plant species.<sup>43</sup> There has been no assessment of the potential impacts on the nature reserve.

Wildlife surveys were completed in the 1997 EA which found numerous species of migratory birds, reptiles and amphibians, and vascular plants. Reptile and amphibian surveys identified several species that would be impacted by the project including federally listed species such as Snapping Turtle, Northern Map Turtle, and Eastern Ribbonsnake and COSEWIC assessed species such as Midland Painted Turtle.<sup>44</sup> The 1997 EA describes high quality amphibian habitat in forested areas that would be impacted by the project.<sup>45</sup> The EA also noted that the woodland block is functionally connected to the wetlands and woodlands to the east of the river and may be viewed as one habitat area.<sup>46</sup> Similar comments are made in reference to other portions of the project route.<sup>47</sup> The EA predicts that the corridor function of the two river branches and

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<sup>41</sup> EA, p.6; EA Appendices, p.523.

<sup>42</sup> 1997 EA, pp.160-168.

<sup>43</sup> Holland Landing Prairie Provincial Park Management Plan, section 2. EA Appendices, pp.527-528, 557-566, 576-591.

<sup>44</sup> EA Appendices, pp.527-528, 557-566, 576-591.

<sup>45</sup> EA Appendices, p.513; memo, p.46.

<sup>46</sup> EA Appendices, p.513.

<sup>47</sup> EA Appendices, pp.513-515; memo, pp.46-48.

associated woodlands and wetlands could be adversely affected.<sup>48</sup> Smaller streams were not surveyed or assessed as part of the 1997 EA.<sup>49</sup> The 1997 EA does not propose any mitigation measures for these species.

Vascular plants which were identified in the project area include COSEWIC assessed plants such as Black Ash as well as SARA-listed plants like Butternut trees.<sup>50</sup> Listed terrestrial wildlife were surveyed in the project area including Little Brown Myotis.<sup>51</sup> The 1997 EA notes that two vulnerable species of migratory birds have nesting sites in proximity to the project but does not indicate if they are federally or provincially listed, nor does it predict what adverse effects might occur as a result.<sup>52</sup>

As noted above, the project would impact Louisiana Waterthrush habitat. Louisiana Waterthrush is a migratory bird under the *Migratory Birds Convention Act* and a SARA threatened species that has a Canadian population of under 500 adults. It is a riparian obligate and an area-sensitive forest species. The most recent COSEWIC assessment indicated that habitat loss and changes in water quality and quantity due to suburban residential development may have contributed to declines observed in Southern Ontario. In particular, the COSEWIC report noted that stormwater runoff including from roads is detrimental to the Louisiana Waterthrush, including anything that negatively affects the supply of aquatic insects in Waterthrush habitat is likely to have a negative impact on breeding populations. The COSEWIC report noted that some protection was afforded provincially for Louisiana Waterthrush habitat through the natural heritage protections in the Provincial Policy Statement and the Greenbelt Plan. However, it is important to note that the Bradford Bypass Environmental Assessment pre-dates these protections and as described below these provincial plans would not protect these areas from the Bradford Bypass.<sup>53</sup>

Other federal migratory bird species at risk have been cited in the project area, and identified through EA studies of nearby projects although they are not included in the 1997 EA baseline surveys. For example, Eastern Wood-pewee, Bobolink, Barn Swallows, Wood Thrush, Chimney Swift, Eastern Meadowlark, Canada Warbler, Common Nighthawk, Hooded Warbler, Least Bittern, and Red Headed Woodpecker.<sup>54</sup> The MNR natural heritage mapping tool indicates that SARA listed species such as Red-headed Woodpecker, Yellow Rail, Henslow's Sparrow, Bank Swallow, Least Bittern and Black Tern habitat is located along the proposed project route.<sup>55</sup> The 1997 EA did not assess the potential adverse impacts on these species. There are no known plans for the potential adverse effects on these species to be assessed or mitigated.

The Ontario *Endangered Species Act* does not adequately protect species at risk from the project. Under Regulation O. Reg. 242/08, the laying down of highways and activities authorized under

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<sup>48</sup> EA Appendices, p.515.

<sup>49</sup> EA Appendices, p.515.

<sup>50</sup> EA Appendices, pp.576-591.

<sup>51</sup> EA Appendices: Ecoplans, Mammal Records, p.564.

<sup>52</sup> Bradford Bypass EA, Exhibit 5-6.

<sup>53</sup> COSEWIC Assessment and Status Report of the Louisiana Waterthrush *Parkesia motacilla* in Canada (Threatened, 2015).

<sup>54</sup> Upper York Sewage Solutions, Table G1.1 Breeding Bird surveys and G2.2 BSC tables  
<http://www.uyssolutions.ca/en/onlineresources/resources/NaturalEnvironmentBaseline-AppCDEFG.pdf>.

<sup>55</sup> [https://www.gisapplication.lrc.gov.on.ca/mamnh/Index.html?site=MNR\\_NHLUPS\\_NaturalHeritage&viewer=NaturalHeritage&locale=en-US](https://www.gisapplication.lrc.gov.on.ca/mamnh/Index.html?site=MNR_NHLUPS_NaturalHeritage&viewer=NaturalHeritage&locale=en-US)

the Class Environmental Assessment for Provincial Transportation Facilities are exempt from the prohibitions under sections 9 and 10 of the *Endangered Species Act* pursuant to subsection 23(1) of the Regulation. Further, subsection 23.1(1) may exempt the project from permitting requirements under the *Endangered Species Act* to the extent that it is carrying out an undertaking under the Class Environmental Assessment for Provincial Transportation Facilities. There are a variety of other regulatory exemptions which may reduce or eliminate protections for a variety of other federally listed species at risk within the project area.

## Climate Change

The potential greenhouse gas emissions associated with the project may hinder the Government of Canada's ability to meet its commitments in respect of climate change, including in the context of Canada's 2030 emissions targets and forecasts.

Under the Paris Agreement, Canada committed to reducing its greenhouse gas emission by 30% below 2005 levels by 2030. This requires a reduction in emissions of 142 Mt CO<sub>2</sub>e. Current projections rely on a reduction of transportation emissions. For example, to meet the Paris Agreement targets, Ontario must reduce transportation emissions by 26 Mt CO<sub>2</sub>e by 2030 and by 63 Mt CO<sub>2</sub>e by 2050.<sup>56</sup>

Transportation emissions are the largest greenhouse gas emissions sector in Ontario and the fastest growing source of greenhouse gases in Ontario. Ontario is the second-largest greenhouse Gas emitter jurisdiction in the country.<sup>57</sup> From 1990 to 2017, greenhouse gas emissions from transportation grew from 44.2 Mt of CO<sub>2</sub>e to 60.7 Mt of CO<sub>2</sub>e. Much of this was fueled by increases in passenger transportation.<sup>58</sup> Transportation accounts for approximately 33% of all emissions in the GTA. Nearly 98% of all transportation emissions in Ontario were sourced to fossil fuel use in vehicles.<sup>59</sup>

The 1997 EA of the project did not consider the potential for the project to cause significant increases in greenhouse gas emissions. The 1997 EA included no assessment whatsoever of the impacts of the project on climate change or the impacts of climate change on the project. The proposal has as its stated purpose increasing and facilitating single use passenger vehicles for long-distance commuting. The purpose of the proposed highway is to improve level of service to single occupant vehicle car commuters in the Greater Toronto Area by improving continuity between existing 400 series highways.

The 1997 EA contains no analysis of the well-established phenomenon of "induced demand" reflecting a strong relationship between increases in road capacity and vehicle kilometres travelled. The 1997 EA does not contain any analysis of the potential for increases in transportation emissions as a result of the project. If no federal EA is conducted there will be no

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<sup>56</sup> Environmental Commissioner of Ontario, 2018 Greenhouse Gas Emissions Report, p.116 [ECO 2018] <http://docs.assets.eco.on.ca/reports/climate-change/2018/Climate-Action-in-Ontario.pdf>.

<sup>57</sup> ECO 2018, p.83.

<sup>58</sup> Natural Resources Canada, Energy Use Statistics, Transportation Sector (Ontario) GHG Emissions by Transportation Mode. <https://oee.nrcan.gc.ca/corporate/statistics/neud/dpa/showTable.cfm?type=CP&sector=tran&juris=on&rn=8&page=0>.

<sup>59</sup> ECO 2018, p.43. <https://www.auditor.on.ca/en/content/reporttopics/envreports/env18/Climate-Action-in-Ontario.pdf>



analysis of whether this project is consistent with Canada's international climate commitments and the meeting of those commitments could be irreversibly frustrated.

Greenhouse gas emissions can be roughly estimated by multiplying additional vehicle kilometres travelled by an average emissions factor per vehicle.<sup>60</sup> The increase in vehicle kilometres travelled can be estimated using the “fundamental law of road congestion”.<sup>61</sup> Vehicle kilometres travelled is known to increase “in exact proportion to” percent increase in additional lane kilometres on highways.<sup>62</sup> Accordingly, building roads “elicits a large increase in vehicle kilometres travelled.”<sup>63</sup>

The 1997 EA estimates that the average daily traffic would be approximately 58,000 vehicles.<sup>64</sup> Based on the 16.4 km length and an average vehicle emission factor of 0.25 kg/km<sup>65</sup> the potential greenhouse gas contribution of the project is approximately 86,797,000 kg per year of CO<sub>2</sub>e.

Over the lifetime of the highway, this could represent a significant increase in Ontario's greenhouse gas emissions. Ontario's environmental commissioner recommended that road pricing be used as an alternative for congestion relief.<sup>66</sup> Understood in the context of rapidly ballooning transportation emissions in Ontario the proposal represents a long-term entrenched policy decision to continue allowing transportation emissions to increase by continuing to increase road capacity which in turn induces further demand for single occupant vehicle commuters.

### Air Quality and Health

Traffic related air pollution from highways entails contamination from a variety of air pollutants including nitrogen oxides, carbon monoxide, particulate matter, sulphur dioxide and volatile organic compounds. The health effects of these pollutants include asthma, allergies and reduced lung function as well as lung cancer and heart disease. Children are more sensitive to air pollution than people in other age groups, because children breathe in more air in relation to their body weight and less developed lungs.<sup>67</sup> Emerging evidence links air pollution to pre-term births

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<sup>60</sup> National Academies of Science, “Modelling on-road transport greenhouse gas emissions under various land use scenarios”, <https://trid.trb.org/view/1393792>; According to the EPA the average passenger vehicle emits approximately 0.25 kg of CO<sub>2</sub> per 1 km see US EPA “Greenhouse Gas Emissions from a Typical Passenger Vehicle”, <https://www.epa.gov/greenvehicles/greenhouse-gas-emissions-typical-passenger-vehicle>.

<sup>61</sup> G. Duranton and M. Turner, University of Toronto, Department of Economics, Working paper 370 “The fundamental law of road congestion: Evidence from US cities” (September 8, 2009). <https://www.economics.utoronto.ca/workingPapers/tecipa-370.pdf>; S. Handy and M. Boarnet (Sept 30, 2014) Impact of Highway Capacity and Induced Travel on Passenger Vehicle Use and Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Policy Brief, [https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/sites/default/files/2020-06/Impact\\_of\\_Highway\\_Capacity\\_and\\_Induced\\_Travel\\_on\\_Passenger\\_Vehicle\\_Use\\_and\\_Greenhouse\\_Gas\\_Emissions\\_Policy\\_Brief.pdf](https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/sites/default/files/2020-06/Impact_of_Highway_Capacity_and_Induced_Travel_on_Passenger_Vehicle_Use_and_Greenhouse_Gas_Emissions_Policy_Brief.pdf)

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>64</sup> EA Appendices: Travel Demand Analysis (November 1996), p.7/i.

<sup>65</sup> US EPA, “Greenhouse Gas Emissions from a Typical Passenger Vehicle”

<https://www.epa.gov/greenvehicles/greenhouse-gas-emissions-typical-passenger-vehicle>

<sup>66</sup> ECO 2018, pp.128-129, <https://www.auditor.on.ca/en/content/reporttopics/envreports/env18/Climate-Action-in-Ontario.pdf>

<sup>67</sup> Health Canada, Road traffic air pollution <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/air-quality/road-traffic-air-pollution.html>; Region of Peel, Effective Interventions to Mitigate Adverse Human Health Effects from

and low birth weight,<sup>68</sup> cognitive impairment and other illnesses.<sup>69</sup> Canadian studies have documented that the induced demand and higher vehicle densities from new highways result in increased nitrogen dioxide concentrations in close proximity to new highways and on arterials and access roads in the vicinity of a new highway.<sup>70</sup> The 1997 EA for the project failed to include a site-specific air quality study, a health impact assessment or a regional air quality assessment. At the time of the 1997 EA, Health Canada identified concerns with the proponent's analysis on air quality and noise impacts.<sup>71</sup> The 1997 EA did not attempt to predict particulate matter concentration impacts in or adjacent to the proposed highway.<sup>72</sup> Health Canada indicated that the air quality assessment suffered “from two major limitations that bring into question the conclusions reached in the assessment.” Health Canada noted that the proponent failed to assess the impact on regional air quality. Health Canada critiqued the use of air quality objectives as predetermined to be “acceptable” where current literature indicated that mortality and hospital admissions are implicated by carbon monoxide and nitrogen oxide levels below the objectives.<sup>73</sup> The proponent did not complete dispersion modelling as part of the EA. The proponent responded to these critiques by stating that “it is not practicable for MTO air quality impact assessments for specific highway projects to address the broader long-term regional air quality issues.”<sup>74</sup> Both the background concentrations and the air quality criteria used in the 1997 EA is over 20 years old. As such the EA does not factor in significant infrastructure changes such as the addition of the 404 highway extension into the project area. The worst case scenario predictions in the Ministry Review materials for Benzene would exceed the current Ontario ambient air quality standards.<sup>75</sup> There is no condition of approval for the project that requires a health impact assessment for air quality.

### **Lack of demonstrated need**

The need for the project has not been assessed since 1989.<sup>76</sup> Since 1989, the projected growth in commuter traffic has not occurred due in large part to wastewater servicing constraints.

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Transportation-Related Air pollution (2015) <https://www.peelregion.ca/health/library/pdf/Rapid-Review-TRAP%20Mitigation.pdf>

<sup>68</sup> Marie Lynn Miranda et al. “Proximity to roadways and pregnancy outcomes” *Journal of Exposure Science and Environmental Epidemiology* 23:32 (2013) <https://www.nature.com/articles/jes201278>

<sup>69</sup> Weiran Yuchi et al, “Road Proximity, air pollution, noise, green space and neurologic disease incidence: a population-based cohort study” *Environmental Health*, 9:18 (2020) <https://ehjournal.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12940-020-0565-4>.

<sup>70</sup> Shohel Reza Amin et al, “Understanding Air pollution from Induced Traffic during and after the Construction of a New Highway: Case Study of Highway 25 in Montreal” *Journal of Advanced Transportation* (2017) <https://www.hindawi.com/journals/jat/2017/5161308/>

<sup>71</sup> Ministry Review, Appendix D, PDF p. 205-207 “Response to Health Canada Comments on Air Quality...” (January 8, 2001)

<sup>72</sup> Ministry Review, p. 202.

<sup>73</sup> Ministry Review p.94-96.

<sup>74</sup> Ministry Review, p.206.

<sup>75</sup> Predicted worst-case ambient concentration 20 metres from the highway with a 10% heavy duty vehicle contribution was 9.3 µg/m<sup>3</sup>, compared to the current 24 hour benzene standard of 2.3 µg/m<sup>3</sup> see Ministry Review, Table 12, p.226.

<sup>76</sup> Ministry of Transportation (Ontario) Highway 404/89 Overview Study (1989).

The need for the project and whether alternatives would be more suitable is no longer evident due to the fact that the 23-year-old EA is significantly out of date. Modelling conducted in 1995 indicated that the commuter demand originated in Barrie for distribution to employment areas in York Region.<sup>77</sup> Since 1997, a number of upgrades to the transportation network have occurred, including major upgrades to East-West travel routes between the 404 and 400 highway<sup>78</sup> and all-day, two way commuter GO train service from Barrie to Toronto through Northern York Region and the extension of Highway 404.<sup>79</sup> The EA predicted that upgrades to Highway 9 alone, which have been completed, would meet capacity until at least 2011 and probably until 2021.<sup>80</sup> More up-to-date projections do not show the project being required until beyond 2041.<sup>81</sup> There is no indication that Highway 9 has reached or is reaching capacity as predicted in the EA. Regional documents suggest that other improvements to the Regional Road network are planned which might alleviate the need for the project.<sup>82</sup> The York Region Transportation Master Plan indicates this is a project requiring a low level of effort and low level of resources and does not indicate any clear needs assessment was done or updated in the last 23 years.<sup>83</sup> The 1997 EA disregards the practice of “telecommuting” as a demand management option for transportation demand,<sup>84</sup> something which is difficult to justify as businesses increasingly allow telecommuting due to COVID-19.

### First Nation Consultation

The local First Nation, Georgina Island First Nation has requested that it be consulted on the project. The project would harmfully alter or destroy a vast array of significant archaeological resources. The EA notes that the potential exists for other “undiscovered” archaeological sites along the project route.<sup>85</sup>

### Cumulative effects

The project has the potential to cause cumulative effects in relation to other projects as it would serve to service and therefore open up a large area of rural property to increased development. Specifically, York Region, where the majority of the project is situated has requested permission

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<sup>77</sup> EA Appendices, p.386.

<sup>78</sup> Upgrades to Highway 9 widening it to four lanes, Mulock, Bathurst Street and Green Lane to 4 or 5 lane paved collector roads. At the time of the EA need study, Bathurst Street and Green Lane were gravel roads. See EA report p.37 noting that these road upgrades were not yet completed.

<sup>79</sup> 1997 EA, p.50: disregards the impact of increased GO service because it runs along a north south axis, even though it is clear that the modelling for the Bradford Bypass relies on it being used by commuter traffic ultimately heading long-distances North-South towards Toronto.

<sup>80</sup> 1997 EA, p.37.

<sup>81</sup> <https://www.georgina.ca/doing-business/highway-400-404-connecting-link> 2016 York Region Transportation Master Plan, p.75 [https://www.york.ca/wps/wcm/connect/yorkpublic/d7ec2651-8dc5-492e-b2a0-f76605edc122/16296\\_TmpFinalBigBook\\_NovWEB-FIX.pdf?MOD=AJPERES&CVID=mukDpNz](https://www.york.ca/wps/wcm/connect/yorkpublic/d7ec2651-8dc5-492e-b2a0-f76605edc122/16296_TmpFinalBigBook_NovWEB-FIX.pdf?MOD=AJPERES&CVID=mukDpNz).

<sup>82</sup> 2016 York Region Transportation Master Plan, pp.75, 146: indicating potential improvements to Queensville Sideroad and Green Lane, and “significant improvements to” the Barrie GO train corridor.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.* p.167.

<sup>84</sup> 1997 EA, pp.46-47.

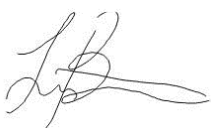
<sup>85</sup> Peterson, W, Canadian Heritage Landscapes, The Bradford Bypass and Alternatives (December 19, 2011).

to develop areas of greenbelt adjacent to 400 series highways.<sup>86</sup> The project is a 400 series highway and it is anticipated that once built, increased development pressure would occur all around the project corridor. The province's "A Place to Grow" plan displays how the proposed highway would expose protected Greenbelt lands particularly to the north of the project to increased development pressures.<sup>87</sup> These pressures particularly pertain to employment lands as set out in the province's growth plan.<sup>88</sup> Additionally, the province has required York Region and Simcoe County to plan for significant increases in forecasted housing and employment growth which must take place in the growth areas adjacent to the project. The 1997 EA does not assess the cumulative impacts of the development of the adjacent areas on water quality, aquatic habitat, migratory bird habitat, or species at risk. There is no provincial process which would require these cumulative effects to be assessed.

## Conclusion

At the time the 1997 EA was approved, there was a further provincial EA process and a federal EA process that was required. As a result, the 1997 EA fails to assess the impacts of the project on areas of federal jurisdiction or propose adequate mitigation measures. Due to the passage of time including the enactment of the federal *Species at Risk Act* and Canada's engagement in further international agreements on climate change, the provincial EA is inadequate and needs to be updated to ensure that there are adequate protections for fish habitat, species at risk and migratory birds. Further, the project needs to be re-assessed in light of Canada's climate change commitments. Had the project proceeded in the early 2000s it would have been subject to federal EA requirements. The provincial process is inadequate and would not assess these effects or ensure they are mitigated. Accordingly, we respectfully request that you designate this project pursuant to section 9(1) of the *Impact Assessment Act*.

Sincerely,



Laura Bowman  
Staff Lawyer

cc: clients, supporters

encl: <https://ln2.sync.com/dl/c5be14300/9237f1zt-nqnpq26x-xyxvtfaq-9dvsbbw>

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<sup>86</sup> Report, York Region Council, Committee of the Whole, Item H.1.1, (October 8, 2020). <https://yorkpublishing.escibemeetings.com/Meeting.aspx?Id=3cdc1d74-9ce9-4580-b80d-d591897b9148&Agenda=Merged&lang=English&Item=21>.

<sup>87</sup> Ontario A Place to Grow, 2020, Schedule 6, [https://files.ontario.ca/schedule\\_6\\_moving\\_goods.jpg](https://files.ontario.ca/schedule_6_moving_goods.jpg).

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid*, p.85, <https://files.ontario.ca/mmah-place-to-grow-office-consolidation-en-2020-08-28.pdf>.



Impact Assessment  
Agency of Canada

Ontario Region  
600-55 York Street  
Toronto ON M5J 1R7

Agence d'évaluation  
d'impact du Canada

Région de l'Ontario  
600-55 rue York  
Toronto ON M5J 1R7

## ATTACHMENT 3

February 12, 2021

Sent by email

### **Invitation for Input**

Christian Meile, Simcoe County  
Christopher Raynor, Regional Municipality of York  
Tom Webster, Town of East Gwillimbury  
Daniel Kostopoulos, Township of King  
Jag Sharma, Town of Newmarket

Dear Colleagues:

### **Subject: Designation Request for the Proposed Bradford Bypass Project under the *Impact Assessment Act***

On February 3, 2021, the Minister of Environment and Climate Change received a request to designate the proposed Bradford Bypass Project under subsection 9(1) of the *Impact Assessment Act* (IAA). The designation request from Ecojustice, on behalf of Rescue Lake Simcoe Coalition and Simcoe County Greenbelt Coalition is enclosed (Enclosure 1).

### **The Proposed Project**

The Ontario Ministry of Transportation is proposing the construction and operation, including maintenance, of a new 16.2-kilometre four-lane controlled access all-season public highway. As proposed, the Bradford Bypass Project (also known as the Highway 400-404 Connecting Link, the Highway 400-404 Extension Link or the Holland Marsh Highway) would connect Highway 400 in Bradford West Gwillimbury (Simcoe County), and cross north King Township, to Highway 404 in East Gwillimbury (Regional Municipality of York) in Ontario. The corridor would require a new 100-metre wide right of way, and would involve water crossings over the Holland River and Holland River East Branch within the Holland Marsh. The Project would also include the replacement of the 9<sup>th</sup> Line structure on Highway 400. The Project as proposed is not a designated project as described in the *Physical Activities Regulations*. The impact assessment process under IAA only applies to designated projects.

Further information on the Project can be found on the proponent's website at [www.bradfordbypass.ca](http://www.bradfordbypass.ca).

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### **Provincial Process**

On August 28, 2002, the Government of Ontario approved the individual environment assessment for a new freeway to connect Highway 400 in Bradford West Gwillimbury to a northerly extension of Highway 404 in East Gwillimbury. As a condition of this approval, the design and construction of the highway became subject to the Ministry of Transportation Class Environmental Assessment for Provincial Transportation Facilities, as a “Group A” project; however, the Government of Ontario is proposing to exempt the Project from further provincial review. More information on the Government of Ontario’s proposal to exempt the Project is available at: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/highway-400-highway-404-extension-link-bradford-bypass>.

### **Designation Request**

Under subsection 9(1) of IAA the Minister may, by order, designate a physical activity that is not prescribed in the *Physical Activities Regulations*. The Minister may do this, if, in the Minister’s opinion, the physical activity may cause adverse effects within federal jurisdiction or adverse direct or incidental effects (resulting from a federal decision), or public concerns related to those effects warrant the designation. In accordance with subsection 9(4) of IAA, it is expected that the Minister will respond, with reasons, to the request by May 4, 2021.

The Impact Assessment Agency of Canada will review information about the Project, any concerns expressed by the public and Indigenous groups, expert advice from federal authorities and input from provincial ministries and municipalities to prepare a recommendation to the Minister on whether to designate the Project. If the Project were designated by the Minister, the Ontario Ministry of Transportation (the proponent) would be prohibited from carrying out the Project and would be required to submit an Initial Project Description, thereby commencing the planning phase of IAA. During the planning phase, the Agency would determine whether an impact assessment is required.

Additional information regarding the process for designation requests can be found at the following link: <https://www.canada.ca/en/impact-assessment-agency/services/policy-guidance/designating-project-impact-assessment-act.html>

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-3-

### Invitation for Input

The Agency notes that the environmental assessment process by the Ontario Ministry of Transportation included consultation with your municipality. However, to further support the Agency's analysis of the designation request, we wish to invite the views and input from representatives of your municipality.

In particular, the Agency would like to confirm whether any bylaws or requirements of your municipality apply to the Project.

- If applicable, would any of those involve consultation with the public and Indigenous groups?
- If applicable, what environmental, social, economic or health issues would those bylaws or requirements address?

In general, please confirm whether the Ontario Ministry of Transportation is addressing the interests and issues of importance to your municipality. The Agency will be pleased to receive any other comments. Given the legislated timeline for the Minister to make a decision, your response is requested by **Wednesday, March 3, 2021**.

In the coming days, a Registry page for the Project will be available on the Canadian Impact Assessment Registry Internet site at [iaac-aeic.gc.ca/050/evaluations](https://iaac-aeic.gc.ca/050/evaluations). Please use the *submit a comment* feature on the Project's Registry page to provide the Agency with information regarding this file. Letters can be uploaded using this feature. If you have difficulties with this feature, immediately contact Conor Anderson, Project Manager, at [Conor.Anderson@canada.ca](mailto:Conor.Anderson@canada.ca) or 416-735-1673.

**Important Note:** All records produced, collected or received in relation to the designation request process—unless prohibited under the *Access to Information Act* or *Privacy Act*—are considered public and may be released. The Agency's Submission Policy<sup>1</sup> determines which submitted information can be shared publicly, and what should remain private. For further information on how we protect your privacy, please refer to the Privacy Notice.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.iaac-aeic.gc.ca/050/evaluations/participation/conditions>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.iaac-aeic.gc.ca/050/evaluations/protection>

-4-

If you have any questions regarding the designation process or the response sheet, please do not hesitate to contact Conor Anderson, Project Manager by email at [Conor.Anderson@canada.ca](mailto:Conor.Anderson@canada.ca) or by telephone at 416-735-1673.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'AP' followed by a long horizontal stroke.

Anjala Puvananathan  
Director, Ontario Region

Enclosure      Designation request letter from Ecojustice on behalf of Rescue  
Lake Simcoe Coalition and Simcoe County Greenbelt Coalition



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**From:** Switzer, Barbara <Barbara.Switzer@york.ca> **On Behalf Of** Regional Clerk  
**Sent:** March 24, 2021 1:50 PM  
**Subject:** Regional Council Decision - GTA West Transportation Corridor Project - Regional Response to the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada

**CAUTION: This email originated from a source outside the City of Markham. DO NOT CLICK on any links or attachments, or reply unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.**

On March 18, 2021 Regional Council made the following decision:

1. Council endorse the proposed response (Attachment 1) to the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada as the Region's input to inform the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada's analysis of the designation request for the GTA West Transportation Corridor Project under the federal Impact Assessment Act.
2. The Regional Clerk circulate this report to the Ontario Minister of Transportation, the Regions of Peel and Halton and the local municipalities.
3. That York Region Council request a Federal Impact Assessment (IA) for Highway 413 (GTA West Transportation West Project).

The original staff report is attached for your information.

Please contact Brian Titherington, Director of Transportation and Infrastructure Planning at 1-877-464-9675 ext. 75901 if you have any questions with respect to this matter.

Regards,

**Christopher Raynor** | Regional Clerk, Regional Clerk's Office, Corporate Services

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The Regional Municipality of York | 17250 Yonge Street | Newmarket, ON L3Y 6Z1  
**O:** 1-877-464-9675 ext. 71300 | [christopher.raynor@york.ca](mailto:christopher.raynor@york.ca) | [york.ca](http://york.ca)

Our Mission: **Working together to serve our thriving communities – today and tomorrow**

# **The Regional Municipality of York**

Regional Council  
Transportation Services  
February 25, 2021

Report of the Commissioner of Transportation Services

## **GTA West Transportation Corridor Project Regional Response to the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada**

### **1. Recommendations**

1. Council endorse the proposed response (Attachment 1) to the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada as the Region's input to inform the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada's analysis of the designation request for the GTA West Transportation Corridor Project under the federal *Impact Assessment Act*.
2. The Regional Clerk circulate this report to the Ontario Minister of Transportation, the Regions of Peel and Halton and the local municipalities.

### **2. Summary**

On February 3, 2021, Ecojustice, on behalf of Environmental Defense, submitted a request to the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change Canada to designate the GTA West Transportation Corridor Project under the federal *Impact Assessment Act* (IAA) (Attachment 2). On February 12, 2021, the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada (Agency) requested input from municipalities on the GTA West Transportation Corridor Project to inform the Agency's analysis of the designation request (Attachment 3). The Agency has requested municipal input by March 3, 2021.

#### Key Points:

- The GTA West Transportation Corridor Project supports York Region's Official Plan and Transportation Master Plan (2016) and is an important component of servicing planned growth in the Region
- The Region has long-supported the GTA West Transportation Corridor Project and has been consulted by the Ontario Ministry of Transportation since the beginning of the provincial Individual Environmental Assessment (EA) process in 2007
- Under Provincial legislation the Individual Environmental Assessment process is the appropriate mechanism to address technical requirements in terms of environmental, social, economic or health needs as well as required consultation of all community stakeholders

- The Region, local municipalities and community stakeholders could be negatively impacted by prolonged processes that lead to continued uncertainty related to the GTA West Transportation Corridor Project

### 3. Background

#### **The Impact Assessment Agency of Canada has invited affected municipalities to provide input**

The Ontario Ministry of Transportation is planning a GTA West Transportation Corridor that will include a new provincial highway and protection for a future transitway. The proposed new highway will connect Highway 400, between Kirby Road and King-Vaughan Road in the east, to the Highway 401/407 interchange area in the west. The corridor extends through the municipalities of Vaughan, Caledon, Brampton and Halton Hills in the Regions of York, Peel and Halton.

The Impact Assessment Agency of Canada has invited affected municipalities to provide input on the GTA West Project to inform the Agency's analysis of the designation request submitted by Ecojustice, on behalf of Environmental Defense. In particular, the Agency is seeking input on:

- Whether any York Region requirements apply to the Project?
- Would any of those involve consultation with the public and Indigenous groups?
- What environmental, social, economic or health issues would those address?
- Whether the Ontario Ministry of Transportation is addressing the interests and issues of importance to York Region?

#### **The federal *Impact Assessment Act* regulates projects that are required to undergo a federal impact assessment process**

The *Impact Assessment Act* became law in 2019 and outlines two ways a project may be required to undergo a federal impact assessment process. The first is the project contains an activity that matches a description contained in the federal *Physical Activities Regulations* (Project List). The second is that a request be made to the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change to exercise their discretion to require a federal impact assessment process for a project that is not on the Project List, but due to the potential for the project to cause adverse effects on matters within federal jurisdiction, or adverse direct or incidental effects (due to a federal decision) or due to public concerns related to those effects. With the IAA in effect only since 2019, staff has not been able to identify any instance of the Minister exercising their discretion in this manner over a project that would otherwise only be regulated by a provincial environmental assessment process.

## 4. Analysis

### **Council has long-supported the GTA West Transportation Corridor Project**

The Ontario Ministry of Transportation began the terms of reference phase of the provincial Environmental Assessment process for the GTA West Transportation Corridor Project in 2007 and has consulted the Region throughout the process. Staff have reported to Council at key milestones throughout the provincial EA process, and Council has consistently supported the GTA West Transportation Corridor Project as summarized below:

York Region Council [May 2007](#) resolved:

*The Ministry of Transportation and Ministry of the Environment be requested to expedite the GTA West Corridor and other environmental assessments that are needed to meet the Provincial Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe.*

York Region Council [March 2016](#) resolved:

*Council request that the Ministry of Transportation resume the GTA West Transportation Corridor Environmental Assessment and define the preferred alignment as soon as possible.*

York Region Council [June 2019](#) resolved:

*Council support a robust highway network to move people, goods and services and achieve provincial Growth Plan population and employment objectives in York Region and encourage:*

- a. The resumption of Environmental Assessment for GTA West Highway for near-term inclusion in the Southern Highways Program*
- b. The inclusion of the Highway 400-404 Connecting Link and the Highway 404 Extension to Highway 12 in the next Southern Highways Program*

York Region Council [January 2020](#) resolved:

*The Province of Ontario be advised that York Region supports the decision to resume the Greater Toronto Area West Transportation Corridor Environmental Assessment and requests that the highway be constructed as soon as possible.*

### **The GTA West Transportation Corridor Project supports York Region's Official Plan and Transportation Master Plan**

The York Region Official Plan 2010 describes how York Region plans to accommodate future growth and development while meeting the needs of existing residents and businesses in York Region. It provides directions and policies that guide economic, environmental and community planning decisions.

The GTA West highway is identified as a planned new transportation corridor in the York Region Official Plan ([Map 12 Street Network](#)) and included in policy 7.2.56:

*To work with the Province and local municipalities to plan and protect for the following corridors and facilities:*

- a. Highway 427 north to the GTA West Corridor*
- b. Highway 404 north beyond Ravenshoe Road*
- c. the Bradford Bypass (Highway 400-404 Link)*
- d. the GTA West Corridor*

The York Region Transportation Master Plan 2016 establishes the vision for transportation services, assesses existing transportation system performance, forecasts future travel demand and defines actions and policies to address road, transit and active transportation needs in York Region to 2041.

The GTA West Transportation Corridor Project is identified in the Transportation Master Plan as an integral component of the transportation network required to service York Region residents and businesses ([Map 8 - Proposed 2041 Road Network](#)).

### **The Ontario Ministry of Transportation has consulted the Region throughout the GTA West Project**

The Ontario Ministry of Transportation has consulted the Region throughout the planning for the GTA West Transportation Corridor Project. At key milestones, staff have reported to Council highlighting issues for consideration in the provincial EA process, including those relating to alignment alternatives and interchange locations. References to previous Council reports for various GTA West project-related issues are referenced above.

The Region anticipates the current provincial EA process will continue to address environmental, social, economic and health issues as well as necessary public consultation to balance the needs of all community stakeholders.

### **Council recently received communications and deputations from residents raising concerns about the GTA West Project**

On [February 11, 2021](#), Council received 19 written communications and six deputations from residents raising concerns relating to various aspects of the GTA West Transportation Corridor Project. The Region anticipates the provincial EA process will recognize and address concerns raised by community stakeholders including those raised at the February 11, 2021 meeting.

## **5. Financial**

There are no financial implications resulting from this report.

## 6. Local Impact

The Region and the local municipalities benefit from provincial investment in the highway network in the Greater Toronto Area. The planned GTA West Transportation Corridor Project is identified as an important component of the transportation network required to service the Region's residents and businesses.

## 7. Conclusion

This report seeks Council endorsement for staff to submit the proposed response to the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada to inform the Agency's analysis of the designation request under the federal *Impact Assessment Act* for the GTA West Transportation Corridor Project.

Staff anticipate the current provincial Environmental Assessment process for the GTA West Transportation Corridor Project will continue to address issues raised by the Region, local municipalities and community stakeholders. The Region, local municipalities and community stakeholders could be negatively impacted by prolonged processes that lead to continued uncertainty related to the GTA West Transportation Corridor Project.

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For more information on this report, please contact Brian Titherington, Director of Transportation and Infrastructure Planning at 1-877-464-9675 extension 75901. Accessible formats or communication supports are available upon request.

Recommended by:



**Paul Jankowski**  
Commissioner of Transportation Services

Approved for Submission:



**Bruce Macgregor**  
Chief Administrative Officer

February 24, 2021  
Attachments (3)  
12592136

**ATTACHMENT 1**

March 3, 2021

Ms. Anjala Puvananathan, Director  
Impact Assessment Agency of Canada  
Ontario Region  
600-55 York Street  
Toronto ON M5J 1R7

Dear Ms. Puvananathan,

**Re: Designation Request for the Proposed GTA West Project under the *Impact Assessment Act***

Thank you for your February 12, 2021 correspondence regarding the designation request submitted on February 3, 2021 by Ecojustice on behalf of Environmental Defense. The Ecojustice submission has requested the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change Canada designate the proposed Ontario Greater Toronto Area (GTA) West Transportation Corridor Project under subsection 9(1) of the *Impact Assessment Act*.

The Ontario Ministry of Transportation is proposing a new GTA West Transportation Corridor which will include a new provincial highway and protection for a future transitway. The proposed new highway will connect Highway 400 between Kirby Road and King-Vaughan Road in the east to the Highway 401/407 interchange area in the west. The corridor extends through the municipalities of Vaughan, Caledon, Brampton and Halton Hills in the Regions of York, Peel and Halton.

The Impact Assessment Agency of Canada has invited affected municipalities to provide input on the GTA West Project to inform the Agency's analysis of the designation request. In particular, the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada is seeking input on:

- Whether any York Region requirements apply to the Project?
- Would any of those involve consultation with the public and Indigenous groups?
- What environmental, social, economic or health issues would those requirements address?
- Whether the Ontario Ministry of Transportation is addressing the interests and issues of importance to York Region?

The Impact Assessment Agency of Canada has requested municipal responses by March 3, 2021.

York Region has long supported the GTA West Transportation Corridor Project

The Ontario Ministry of Transportation started the Terms of Reference phase of the Provincial EA process for the GTA West Project in 2006 and has consulted York Region throughout the process. York Region staff have reported to Council at key milestones throughout the Provincial EA process and York Region Council has consistently supported the GTA West Transportation Corridor Project as highlighted below.

York Region Council May 2007 resolved:

*The Ministry of Transportation and Ministry of the Environment be requested to expedite the GTA West Corridor and other environmental assessments that are needed to meet the Provincial Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe.*

York Region Council March 2016 resolved:

*Council request that the Ministry of Transportation resume the GTA West Transportation Corridor Environmental Assessment and define the preferred alignment as soon as possible.*

York Region Council June 2019 resolved:

*Council support a robust highway network to move people, goods and services and achieve provincial Growth Plan population and employment objectives in York Region and encourage:*

- a. The resumption of Environmental Assessment for GTA West Highway for near-term inclusion in the Southern Highways Program*
- b. The inclusion of the Highway 400-404 Connecting Link and the Highway 404 Extension to Highway 12 in the next Southern Highways Program*

York Region Council January 2020 resolved:

*The Province of Ontario be advised that York Region supports the decision to resume the Greater Toronto Area West Transportation Corridor Environmental Assessment and requests that the highway be constructed as soon as possible.*

The GTA West Highway is integral to managing the movement of goods and people to support the magnitude of growth forecasted by the Province.

With a population of 1.2 million residents, The Regional Municipality of York is one of Canada's largest municipalities and the second largest business centre in Ontario. Ranked as Ontario's fastest growing large municipality, managing growth over the coming decades is important. In accordance with the Growth Plan, York Region is required to plan for Provincially-forecasted growth. York Region is forecast to reach approximately 2.02 million people and 990,000 jobs by 2051, representing population growth of over 800,000 people and approximately 345,000 jobs.

The York Region Official Plan describes how York Region plans to accommodate future growth and development while meeting the needs of existing residents and businesses in the Region. The Regional Official Plan, currently under review to address 2051 population and employment, provides directions and policies that guide economic, environmental and community planning decisions.

The GTA West Project is identified as a planned transportation corridor in the York Region Official Plan (Map 12 Street Network) and included in policy 7.2.56:

*To work with the Province and local municipalities to plan and protect for the following corridors and facilities:*

- a. Highway 427 north to the GTA West Corridor*
- b. Highway 404 north beyond Ravenshoe Road*
- c. the Bradford Bypass (Highway 400-404 Link)*
- d. the GTA West Corridor*



The York Region Transportation Master Plan 2016 establishes the vision for transportation services, assesses existing transportation system performance, forecasts future travel demand, and defines actions and policies to address road, transit and active transportation needs in York Region to 2041.

The GTA West is identified as an integral component of the transportation network required to service York Region residents and businesses (Map 8 Proposed 2041 Road Network) and described in section 5.2.1 Provincial Infrastructure Plans:

*GTA West: The GTA West highway corridor would extend from Highway 401 in Halton Region to Highway 400 in York Region. While Provincial route planning and Environmental Assessment work on the corridor has been put on hold, it remains an important project for York Region. Its benefits would include better access to employment areas in the City of Vaughan, alleviate pressure on east-west Regional roads and provide an alternate route to Highways 400 and 401. This TMP assumes that GTA West will be in place by 2041. [Note that the EA process was put on hold by the Ontario Ministry of Transportation in December 2015 during preparation of the York Region Transportation Master Plan 2016. The EA was restarted in June 2019],*

Both York Region's Official Plan and Transportation Master Plan were developed with extensive consultation, including the public, stakeholders, government agencies and Indigenous groups.

#### The Ontario Ministry of Transportation has consulted York Region throughout the GTA West Project

The Ontario Ministry of Transportation has consulted York Region throughout the planning for the GTA West Project. Through the Individual EA process, the highest level of Provincial Environmental Assessment, York Region has been consulted and actively engaged. At key milestones, York Region staff have reported to Council, including highlighting issues or concerns for consideration in the Provincial EA process, including issues related to impacts of alignment alternatives and interchange locations. A recent example including the following:

In January 2020, York Region Council requested the Ministry of Transportation assess, as part of the Environmental Assessment, a highway route that reduces impacts to existing and approved community areas in the North Kleinburg-Nashville Secondary Plan area. In June 2020, the Ministry of Transportation consulted Regional staff on additional route options between Highway 50 and Highway 27 in the North Kleinburg-Nashville Secondary Plan area. Taking into consideration input received on the draft highway alignment from various stakeholders, in August 2020 the Ontario Ministry of Transportation identified a preferred highway route. The identified preferred route included an improved alignment between Highway 50 and Highway 27, with less impact to the North Kleinburg-Nashville Secondary Plan as compared to the original fall 2019 preliminary alignment.

The Provincial EA process provides for the highest level of environmental assessment and stakeholder consultation. York Region is satisfied with the current Provincial process and would be negatively impacted by a lengthy delay in constructing the Project which would be likely if the GTA West Project were designated for the purpose of commencing a new Federal EA process.

Specific Input to the Federal Impact Assessment Agency of Canada

Specific responses for the input questions posed by the Federal Impact Assessment Agency are summarized in the table below:

Impact Assessment Agency Question	Regional Response
Whether any York Region requirements apply to the Project?	The Region requires conformity with the Region's Official Plan as well as the Transportation Master Plan.
Would any of these involve consultation with the public and Indigenous groups?	The Region consulted extensively for the Official Plan and the Transportation Master Plan and would expect the Province to duly consult all stakeholders as required in the Provincial Individual Environmental Assessment process.
What environmental, social, economic or health issues would those requirements address?	The Region would expect the Provincial Individual Environmental Assessment process to address all relevant environmental, social, economic or health issues as raised by community stakeholders.
Whether the Ontario Ministry of Transportation is addressing the interests and issues of importance to York Region?	The Ontario Ministry of Transportation is addressing the interests and issues as identified by the Region including issues related to alignment alternatives and interchange locations.

Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact Brian Titherington, Director of Transportation and Infrastructure Planning at 1-877-464-9675 ext. 75901.

Sincerely,

Paul Jankowski  
Commissioner of Transportation Services

12596054

**Laura Bowman**

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File No.: 3860051

February 3, 2021

The Honourable Jonathan Wilkinson  
Minister of the Environment and Climate Change  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A6  
[Jonathan.Wilkinson@Canada.ca](mailto:Jonathan.Wilkinson@Canada.ca)

Dear Minister Wilkinson,

**Re: GTA West – Request for designation under s.9 of the *Impact Assessment Act***

I am writing on behalf of my client Environmental Defence, to request that the GTA West Project and associated transmission infrastructure be designated for a federal Environmental Assessment pursuant to s.9(1) of the *Impact Assessment Act* (IAA). This request is also supported by Ontario Nature, Transport Action Ontario, Sierra Club Peel, Halton Environmental Network, Oakvillegreen, Sustainable Vaughan, and Oak Ridges Moraine Land Trust. The GTA West Project and associated transmission infrastructure will result in adverse environmental effects within federal jurisdiction as well as adverse and incidental effects and meets the criteria for public concern. The GTA West Project is proposed to be partially exempted from the provincial EA process.<sup>1</sup>

Under subsection 9(1) of IAA the Minister may, by order, designate a physical activity that is not prescribed in the Regulations. The Minister may do this, if, in the Minister's opinion, the physical activity may cause adverse effects within federal jurisdiction or adverse direct or incidental effects, or public concerns related to those effects warrant the designation.

The GTA West Project has not substantially begun nor has a federal authority exercised a power or performed a duty or function that would permit the Project to be carried out, in whole or in part, and therefore the Minister is not prohibited from designating this Project pursuant to subsection 9(1) of IAA.

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<sup>1</sup> Proposed Regulation for a streamlined environmental assessment process for the Ministry of Transportation's GTA West Transportation Corridor Project (July 8, 2020) <https://ero.ontario.ca/notice/019-1882>.

## Overview of the project

The GTA West Project is a proposed fully separated 400 series highway in the northwest Greater Toronto Area. The proponent is the Ontario Ministry of Transportation (MTO). The highway would have freeway-to-freeway connections at Highways 401, 407, 410, 427 and 400. The GTA West Project also includes highway widenings and expansions along existing highway corridors.

The new highway corridor will extend from Highway 400 (between Kirby Road and King-Vaughan Road) in the east to the Highway 401/407 ETR interchange area in the west, and will feature a 400-series highway and transitway. The project would consist of 8.8 million square metres of new paved surfaces. The paved surface would be approximately 170 metres wide (110 m for vehicle lanes, 60 for transit lanes) and approximately 52 km long. The GTA West Highway would stretch across four municipalities from Highway 401 northeast to Highway 400 including from west to east: Halton Hills, Brampton and Vaughan. It would bisect the sensitive headwaters of four watersheds from west to east, including the easternmost Sixteen Mile Creek, a stretch of the Credit River, the entire width of Etobicoke Creek, and the Humber River.<sup>2</sup>

The GTA West Project is also proposed to be co-located with a Northwest Greater Toronto Area Electricity Transmission Corridor.<sup>3</sup> The proponent of the associated transmission corridor is the Ontario Ministry of Northern Development and Mines (ENDM). The proposed corridor would potentially include a 60 metre or wider right of way with two double-circuit 239kV transmission lines. No environmental assessment for the transmission corridor has been undertaken to date.

## Overview of environmental effects

The GTA West Project would cause significant adverse environmental effects because of its location and environmental setting. The highway will develop a rural area including a number of areas protected under the Greenbelt Plan. It would bisect a number of features such as significant woodlands, endangered species habitat and wetlands which are designated as protected “natural heritage features”. It will bisect and seriously compromise a number of major river corridors in and outside of the Greenbelt Plan that provide critical wildlife connections north to the major natural areas of the Oak Ridges Moraine and the Niagara Escarpment. These include a major twin crossing of the Humber River and the adjacent East Humber River valleys, another three crossings of East Humber valleys, four crossings of West Humber valleys, two crossings of Etobicoke Creek and a major crossing of the main Credit River valley.

The GTA West Project would have “extensive and widespread impacts on the natural heritage system,” including significant loss in the number, form and function of natural features and

<sup>2</sup> GTA West at a glance (February 2015) [https://www.gta-west.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/GTA-West-at-a-Glance\\_February-2015.pdf](https://www.gta-west.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/GTA-West-at-a-Glance_February-2015.pdf).

<sup>3</sup> ERO posting 019-1503 <https://ero.ontario.ca/notice/019-1503> also see attached map [https://prod-environmental-registry.s3.amazonaws.com/2020-03/2.%20MTO%202019%20Focused%20Analysis%20Area%20vs%20Proposed%20Tx%20Narrowed%20Area%20of%20Interest\\_0.png](https://prod-environmental-registry.s3.amazonaws.com/2020-03/2.%20MTO%202019%20Focused%20Analysis%20Area%20vs%20Proposed%20Tx%20Narrowed%20Area%20of%20Interest_0.png)

species. There will be significant fragmentation of valleylands, conservation lands, and the few remaining natural corridors in the eastern portion of the project area.<sup>4</sup>

The proposed highway and its corridor will destroy a combined 5.95 km length of forests that support many sensitive forest bird species, and other wildlife and plants. This includes destroying seven entire woodlots, portions of other woodlots, and bisecting numerous forested valleys. The single biggest loss will be a 1.5 km stretch of forests around the twin valleys of the Humber and East Humber Rivers in Vaughan.<sup>5</sup>

Over 1,000 ha of land identified as important for local wildlife movement, some of which is also important at a regional scale, will either be removed or intersected by the proposed highway. Of note is the section located to the east of Bramalea Road, through an area classified as important for regional wildlife movement.<sup>6</sup>

The exact number of affected stream crossings involved in the GTA West Project and associated transmission infrastructure is not specified in the EA. The Toronto Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) has estimated 85 crossings are required.<sup>7</sup> Although some assessment documents include higher estimates of 93-118 water courses depending on the alternative that is under discussion.<sup>8</sup> Of these crossings, TRCA ranks 10 as “high priority” locations ecologically, as they are in deep valleys with relatively high quality existing or potential habitat, high regional connectivity, or high local connectivity. Of the remaining crossings, 58 are ranked as “medium priority” locations located in shallow valleys that have high quality existing or potential habitat, high regional connectivity, or high local connectivity.<sup>9</sup> Details are not known for crossings in Credit Valley Conservation Authority (CVCA) or Halton Conservation (HC) jurisdiction.<sup>10</sup>

## Public Concern

There has been significant public concern about the GTA West project. During the first provincial review process, there was so much public concern that the project was halted and the proponent hired an advisory panel to advise on alternatives. Ultimately that panel recommended

<sup>4</sup> TRCA, Staff Report: GTA West Transportation Corridor Individual EA – Stage 2 Update (January 24, 2020) [“TRCA Jan 2020 Report”] <https://pub-trca.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?DocumentId=5418>, p.7-9.

<sup>5</sup> AECOM, GTA West Natural Environment Existing Conditions Map <https://www.gta-west.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Section-04-Natural-Environment-Existing-Conditions-Map.pdf> Also derived from MNR Natural Heritage Mapping tool: [https://www.gisapplication.lrc.gov.on.ca/mamnh/Index.html?site=MNR\\_NHLUPS\\_NaturalHeritage&viewer=NaturalHeritage&locale=en-US](https://www.gisapplication.lrc.gov.on.ca/mamnh/Index.html?site=MNR_NHLUPS_NaturalHeritage&viewer=NaturalHeritage&locale=en-US).

<sup>6</sup> TRCA Jan 2020 Report, p.7-9; also AECOM map of NH features located at <https://www.gta-west.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Section-04-Natural-Environment-Existing-Conditions-Map.pdf>.

<sup>7</sup> TRCA Jan 2020 Report, p.7-9.

<sup>8</sup> AECOM, Assessment of Group 3 and Group 4 Transportation alternatives (Chapter 4) November 2018 [“AECOM alternatives assessment”] <https://www.gta-west.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Chapter3NaturalEnvironment.pdf>, p.53.

<sup>9</sup> TRCA 2020 <https://pub-trca.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?DocumentId=5418> p.7-9.

<sup>10</sup> Credit Valley Conservation Authority, Board of Directors Meeting Agenda (October 16, 2020) [https://cvc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Agenda-Package-Redacted-BOARD-OF-DIRECTORS-MEETING\\_Oct16\\_2020-1.pdf](https://cvc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Agenda-Package-Redacted-BOARD-OF-DIRECTORS-MEETING_Oct16_2020-1.pdf) p.24-29.

against the project. The project has received considerable media coverage particularly regarding opposition to the project.<sup>11</sup>

More recently, over 6000 people have requested that the GTA West project be cancelled. A recent letter opposing the project was signed by the David Suzuki Foundation, Environmental Defence, the Federation of Urban Neighbourhoods, Grandmothers Act to Save the Planet, Gravelwatch, Halton Environment Network, National Farmer's Union - Ontario, the Rescue Lake Simcoe Coalition, Sustainable Vaughan, Transport Action Ontario and the Wilderness Committee.

The municipality of Halton Hills, which lies along the western portion of the route, has passed a resolution opposing the highway.<sup>12</sup> The City of Brampton has unanimously endorsed a local boulevard option instead through its portion of the corridor/route through "heritage heights." However to-date the MTO has refused to consider this alternative. Concerns about effects turn on the destruction of natural heritage areas, climate change, and moving away towards single occupant passenger vehicle transportation models to enhance complete communities. The City of Orangeville also passed a motion opposing the project.

The TRCA, which is normally the regulatory authority for developments in floodplains, wetlands and valleylands has objected to the potential impact of the highway and the proposed streamlined regulatory process for early works (described in more detail below). As recently as September 2020 it was still awaiting responses from the proponent on how the project would impact TRCA managed protected areas and natural heritage features within TRCA jurisdiction.

### **The project is near a threshold set out in the project list**

Section 51 of the *Physical Activities Regulations* (SOR/2019-285) designates "The construction, operation, decommissioning and abandonment of a new all-season public highway that requires a total of 75 km or more of new right of way. "New right of way" is described as land that "is not alongside and contiguous to an area of land that was developed for an...all season highway".

The length of the new corridor portion of the GTA West highway is approximately 52 kilometres with a new 110-metre right of way. The associated transitway is another 52 kilometres in length and would be a separate corridor with a new 60-metre right of way. The width of the associated transmission right of way is unknown but also extends for 50 km. Both the highway and transitway portions of the GTA West Project independently meet the definition of a new right of

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<sup>11</sup> Paul Webster, "Highway 413: The Opposition Reloads" *In the Hills* (Nov 24 2020) <https://www.inthehills.ca/2020/11/highway-413-the-opposition-reloads/> ; Tabitha Wells, "GTA West does not align with Orangeville's Priorities: council opposes Highway 413 through Caledon, Vaughan, Milton" *Orangeville Banner* (Nov 13, 2020) <https://www.orangeville.com/news-story/10265191--gta-west-does-not-align-with-orangeville-s-priorities-council-opposes-highway-413-through-caledon-vaughan-milton/> ; Laura Broadly "It's just going to ruin everything" *King Connection* (Oct 15 2020) <https://www.yorkregion.com/news-story/10217411--it-s-just-going-to-ruin-everything-king-vaughan-groups-team-up-to-fight-hwy-413/> ; Opinion "Highway plan raises many questions" *Independent Free Press* (Oct 1 2020) <https://www.insidehalton.com/opinion-story/10212505-highway-plan-raises-many-questions/> ; Isaac Callan "Halton leaders are fighting against Ford's GTA West Highway" *Toronto Star* (Oct 3 2020) <https://www.thestar.com/news/canada/2020/10/03/halton-leaders-are-fighting-against-fords-gta-west-highway-bramptons-refuse-to-condemn-it.html>

<sup>12</sup> Isaac Callan, *Toronto Star* (October 3, 2020) "Halton leaders are fighting against Ford's GTA West Highway; Brampton's refuse to condemn it"

way, for a total of approximately 100 kilometres. The transmission corridor also requires a new right of way. The right of way runs through a rural, undeveloped area for most of its route.

The “project” as defined in the EA also includes associated highway widenings along unknown lengths of other 400 series highways. Associated highway expansions along the 410 and 427 corridors to connect them with the new GTA West highway would bring the GTA West highway project to over 60 kilometres of new, undeveloped right of way.

When all components are included, the project is at or approaching the Project list threshold of 75 kilometres under the *Impact Assessment Act*. To the extent that it does not meet this threshold, this relates at least in part to project-splitting of the main corridor from the connections between the GTA West to other 400 series highways and widenings of other public highways. There is also project splitting as between the highway and the associated transmission corridor, and the highway and associated transitway, each of which requires an entirely new 50 km long right of way.

**There are proposals for multiple activities within the same region that may be a source of cumulative effects.**

The GTA West Project has the potential to exacerbate the cumulative effects of sprawl and climate change, as well as to create cumulative effects with other highway proposals along the same vulnerable natural corridors. This includes the extension of Highways 410 and 427 to the GTA West Highway, as well as widening and expansion projects impacting major north-south natural waterways and corridors along the 401 and 407 corridors.<sup>13</sup> These related projects will impact 129 watercourses in the same region and on the same natural corridors such as the Humber River and Credit River along existing highway crossings.<sup>14</sup>

In addition to this the Regions of York (City of Vaughan) and Peel (Town of Caledon) clearly intend to expand settlement and employment area boundaries in the vicinity of 400 series highways, including the GTA West corridor. Peel is considering official plan amendments to this effect, including approval of developments in Mayfield in Caledon which would expand urban areas north from Brampton up towards the GTA west through prime agricultural lands.<sup>15</sup> Peel also contemplates expanding areas of Bolton westward towards the Humber River along the GTA West corridor.<sup>16</sup> York Region recently requested that the province allow development in protected greenbelt lands along all 400 series highways.<sup>17</sup> There has been no examination of the

<sup>13</sup> AECOM Assessment of alternatives report, p.53.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p.53.

<sup>15</sup> Caledon official plan Schedule A [https://www.caledon.ca/en/town-services/resources/Documents/business-planning-development/Official\\_Plan\\_Schedule\\_A.pdf](https://www.caledon.ca/en/town-services/resources/Documents/business-planning-development/Official_Plan_Schedule_A.pdf). Also see “Highway 413 opposition reloads” cited above <https://www.inthehills.ca/2020/11/highway-413-the-opposition-reloads/>

<sup>16</sup> Region of Peel Official Plan. [https://www.peelregion.ca/planning/officialplan/pdfs/ropdec18/ROPConsolidationDec2018\\_TextSchedules\\_Final\\_SCHEDULES\\_Part12.pdf](https://www.peelregion.ca/planning/officialplan/pdfs/ropdec18/ROPConsolidationDec2018_TextSchedules_Final_SCHEDULES_Part12.pdf).

<sup>17</sup> Report, York Region Council (October 8, 2020). <https://yorkpublishing.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?DocumentId=16293>.



cumulative effects of the development of the highway along with other anticipated development of rural/agricultural and natural heritage areas adjacent to the Highway.

Additionally, the associated transmission corridor would entail an unknown number of additional crossings of watercourses and disruption of natural corridors. The cumulative effects of the transmission corridor and the GTA West Project have not been considered, nor are they included within the scope of the current provincial EA processes.

### **Adverse effects cannot be adequately managed through other existing legislative or regulatory mechanisms**

#### The provincial regulatory process is grossly inadequate

In Ontario until 2020 the strategic planning of highways was subject to a full environmental assessment but the site specific impacts of individual projects are not fully assessed. Individual highway projects are assessed under the Ministry of Transportation Class Environmental Assessment Process.

As described below, the GTA West Highway proposal was subject to an EA process that was heavily criticized on need and alternatives by the proponent's own Advisory Panel. As a result, the EA was terminated in 2015. An Advisory Panel was appointed by the proponent to review the EA. The Advisory Panel concluded that the EA was fundamentally flawed, particularly on need and alternatives. Despite these critiques the EA was recommenced in 2019 and a preferred route was identified. Now, the Ontario Government proposes to exempt the project from completing the EA process.

#### Proposed exemption from Provincial EA

In July 2020, the Ontario Government proposed to exempt the GTA West highway from completing its environmental assessment before commencing what it referred to as "early works." The nature of these early works were not defined. As noted by other regulatory agencies, it remains unclear how natural heritage features including Fish and Migratory Bird habitat will be identified and protected before early works commence under the proposed exemption. The proposal suggested that early works could include bridges over water courses.<sup>18</sup> Despite proposing to rapidly develop water crossings there have been no communications with the federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans regarding potential fish habitat destruction. Ontario also proposes to exempt all highways less than 75 kilometres from provincial individual EA under recent legislative changes.<sup>19</sup>

TRCA has expressed concerns with this exemption, noting that in its view, the usual environmental development permit requirements for floodplains under s.28 of the *Conservation Authorities Act* does not apply to this proponent and that the proposed exemption would fail to protect natural heritage features (i.e. significant wetlands, woodlands, species habitat):

As MTO is exempt from the regulatory requirements of the CA Act, TRCA has significant concerns **there is no mechanism in place for the protection of life and**

<sup>18</sup> Proposed Regulation for a streamlined environmental assessment process for the Ministry of Transportations' Greater Toronto Area West Transportation Corridor project (July 8, 2020) <https://ero.ontario.ca/notice/019-1882>

<sup>19</sup> Proposed Project List for comprehensive Environmental Assessment <https://ero.ontario.ca/notice/019-2377>



**property or the management of natural resources at the detailed design stage of the GTA West**, which fails to fulfill the objects of the EA Act. The mandate of CAs strongly aligns with provincial objectives for resilient public infrastructure and meeting the intent of the EA Act to provide for the protection, conservation and wise management of Ontario's environment. Accordingly, TRCA's Board of Directors have recommended that MTO commit to receiving VPR signoff at the design stage as it relates to TRCA's regulatory and policy interest, as well as provincially delegated responsibilities. ...

...This project will have significant, unavoidable and permanent impacts to the existing natural heritage system and the Humber River and Etobicoke Creek watersheds and could exacerbate risks to natural hazards, and negatively impact drainage patterns, wildlife habitat and the surrounding landscape.

...Early works, including bridge works drive many impacts on the natural environment. It is not appropriate to allow construction to proceed prior to the completion of the Environmental Impact Assessment Report. This, in effect would render the EIAR ineffective as it would not have an opportunity to identify and avoid impacts.<sup>20</sup>

Similarly the Credit Valley Conservation Authority has commented that: "it is unclear how the proposed streamlined approach [to the GTA West EA] allows for an appropriate level of regulation of the proposed project components..."<sup>21</sup> The full implications of the proposed exemption are not yet clear because no draft regulation was provided for public consultation.

#### Other provincial regulatory processes are inadequate

The Ontario *Endangered Species Act* does not adequately protect species at risk from the project. Under Regulation O.Reg 242/08, the laying down of highways and activities authorized under the Class Environmental Assessment for Provincial Transportation Facilities are exempt from the prohibitions under ss.9 and 10 of the Act pursuant to s.23(1) of the Regulation. Further, s.23.1(1) may exempt the GTA West project from permitting requirements under the *Endangered Species Act* to the extent that it is carrying out an undertaking under the Class Environmental Assessment for Provincial Transportation Facilities. This exemption applies specifically to the protections in ss.9 and 10 of the Ontario *Endangered Species Act* for Redside Dace, the species at risk that is affected by a large number of proposed watercourse crossings. There are a variety of other regulatory exemptions which may reduce or eliminate protections for a variety of other federally listed species at risk (for example Bobolink) within the project area.

TRCA takes the position that the usual permits for development and site alteration under section 28 of the *Conservation Authorities Act* are not applicable to projects undertaken by MTO. Accordingly, the usual environmental protections of that permitting process, which applies to regulated lands (typically valleys and water crossings) is not likely to be applied to protect sensitive natural heritage features such as fish habitat and migratory bird habitat.

<sup>20</sup> TRCA, letter to Ministry of the Environment on proposed exemption for GTA West (August 21, 2020). <https://pub-trca.escrimetings.com/filestream.ashx?DocumentId=6188> (emphasis added).

<sup>21</sup> CVCA, letter to Ministry of the Environment on proposed exemption for GTA West (August 21, 2020) [https://cvc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Agenda-Package-BOARD-OF-DIRECTORS-MEETING\\_Sep11\\_2020\\_Redacted.pdf](https://cvc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Agenda-Package-BOARD-OF-DIRECTORS-MEETING_Sep11_2020_Redacted.pdf)

## Predicted adverse effects on core areas of federal jurisdiction

### Federal Approvals

The project has the potential for direct and incidental effects arising from the exercise of a federal power or authority. Based on the project description to date the project would likely require authorization by Fisheries and Oceans Canada under the *Fisheries Act*. It may also require authorization by Environment and Climate Change Canada under the *Species at Risk Act* and the *Migratory Birds Convention Act*. There may also be navigable waterways and rail infrastructure permits required. The full suite of approvals required is not known as the project is at an early stage of design.

### Fish and Fish Habitat

The project would cause adverse effects on fish and fish habitat as well as aquatic species and species at risk. The 2018 Natural Environment Report indicates that the highway corridor study area includes numerous locations representing high quality cold water habitat for fish, including federal species at risk such as Redside Dace.<sup>22</sup> The assessments conducted to date note that the project has the potential to impact fish communities along existing corridors as well as 24 water crossings containing species at risk.<sup>23</sup> Approximately 85-100 stream crossings are implicated in the preferred route. Accordingly, the project would also cause adverse effects that are directly related or incidental to a federal authority to authorize harmful alteration, destruction or disruption of fish habitat under s.35(1) of the *Fisheries Act*.

The highway will destroy or partially destroy 75 wetlands, 28 of which are designated by the Province as provincially significant. These wetlands are critical to the ecological health of the Humber, Etobicoke and Credit River Watersheds. They support numerous breeding amphibian ponds, significant swamps and marshes and many rare plant and animal species. TRCA predicts that approximately 220 wetlands covering 130 ha, will be impacted.<sup>24</sup>

According to TRCA, the proponent's Comparative Evaluation of Net Effects and Ranking of alternatives does not appear to consider the significance, sensitivities, or quality of all the natural heritage features within the alternative routes, which significantly diminishes the weighting of individual natural features. All natural heritage features should be evaluated using these criteria so that the review of alternatives considers natural heritage features equally and ensures overall impacts for each evaluation criterion is weighted appropriately.

- Some unevaluated wetlands may in fact be Provincially Significant Wetlands (PSW) but may not have been classified as such in the table. Once they have been evaluated, the significance of each natural feature can better inform the Route Evaluation.
- Woodlands should be assessed using standardized criteria for significance in such a way that they are compared on equal footing. Many of the unevaluated woodlands may in fact prove to be significant, particularly the larger features connected to valleys.

<sup>22</sup> AECOM alternatives assessment, pp.36-42.

<sup>23</sup> AECOM alternatives assessment, p.53.

<sup>24</sup> TRCA Jan 2020 Report, p.7.

- There are several locations where natural features have not been identified. For example, there are extensive riverine wetlands located adjacent to Airport Road where segments 6-1 and 6-2 are located. The proposed intersection 6-1 will remove a large proportion of these wetlands.<sup>25</sup>

The project would also traverse several key natural aquatic habitat features including but not limited to the Humber River, Credit River, Sixteen Mile Creek, Fletcher's creek, Mullet Creek, Spring Creek, Levi Creek and Etobicoke Creek. It would also impact Greenbelt Plan areas and the Niagara Escarpment as well as significant prime agricultural lands.<sup>26</sup> The project would also traverse a large conservation area, the Nashville Conservation Area managed by the Toronto Region Conservation Authority (TRCA).<sup>27</sup>

In July 2020, the Ontario Government proposed to exempt the GTA West highway from completing its environmental assessment before commencing what it referred to as “early works.” The nature of these early works were not defined. As noted by other regulatory agencies, it remains unclear how natural heritage features including Fish and Migratory Bird habitat will be identified and protected before early works commence under the proposed exemption. The proposal suggested that early works could include bridges over water courses.<sup>28</sup> Despite proposing to rapidly develop water crossings there have been no communications with the federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans regarding potential fish habitat destruction.<sup>29</sup> While the proposed exemption would require the proponent to prepare a “draft” Environmental Conditions Report, this would just be a collection of documentation already completed up to the preliminary design phase. Detailed design would entail preparing a draft EIA only for those components of the project that are not subject to early works approvals.<sup>30</sup> The exemption appears to permit construction of early works such as bridges before these reports are completed.

### Migratory Birds

Highways cause significant adverse impacts to birds in four ways: direct mortality, indirect mortality (such as habitat loss and habitat sinks), habitat fragmentation and disturbance.<sup>31</sup> No mitigation can remove the impacts of highways to wildlife.<sup>32</sup> The well-known direct effects of

<sup>25</sup> TRCA Jan 2020 Report, p.8.

<sup>26</sup> AECOM, GTA West Executive Summary, <https://www.gta-west.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Executive-Summary-November-2012-1.pdf>, p.xx; AECOM, GTA West Existing Conditions Report, [https://www.gta-west.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/GTA\\_West\\_Env\\_Existing\\_Conditions\\_Report\\_Jan\\_27\\_11-Appendices.pdf](https://www.gta-west.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/GTA_West_Env_Existing_Conditions_Report_Jan_27_11-Appendices.pdf); AECOM, GTA West Chapter 2 – Natural Environment, <https://www.gta-west.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Chapter3NaturalEnvironment.pdf>, pp.33-36

<sup>27</sup> TRCA Jan 2020 Report, pp.10-13

<sup>28</sup> Proposed Regulation for a streamlined environmental assessment process for the Ministry of Transportation's GTA West Transportation Corridor Project (July 8, 2020) <https://ero.ontario.ca/notice/019-1882>

<sup>29</sup> Ceasar Kagame, DFO to Charlotte Ireland, Ecojustice (Oct 7, 2020).

<sup>30</sup> Proposed Regulation for a streamlined environmental assessment process for the Ministry of Transportation's GTA West Transportation Corridor Project (July 8, 2020) <https://ero.ontario.ca/notice/019-1882>.

<sup>31</sup> Sandra L Jacobson, Mitigation Measures for Highway-caused impacts to birds, (2002) <https://www.fws.gov/migratorybirds/pdf/management/jacobsen2005highwaymeasures.pdf>

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.; also see A V Kociolek et al, “effects of road networks on bird populations” *Conservation Biology* (February 2011); and see US Environmental Protection Agency *Evaluation of Ecological Impacts From Highway Development*

roads on birds include habitat loss and fragmentation, vehicle-caused mortality, pollution, and poisoning. Nevertheless, indirect effects may exert a greater influence on bird populations. These effects include noise, artificial light, barriers to movement, and edges associated with roads. Moreover, indirect and direct effects may act synergistically to cause decreases in population density and species richness. Of the many effects of roads, it appears that road mortality and traffic noise may have the most substantial effects on birds relative to other effects and taxonomic groups.<sup>33</sup> The project also has the potential to cause cumulative effects when considered in relation to the transmission line which is proposed for the corridor.

The project would likely cause adverse effects to migratory birds. The project would traverse large areas of significant woodlands including important ravine corridors and protected areas (for example the Nashville Conservation Area). It does not appear that breeding bird or other terrestrial wildlife surveys have been completed. The preferred alternative impacts numerous evaluated wetlands, five along existing corridors that would be widened and eight along the new corridor. The project would traverse approximately 17 linear km of woodlots that are each over 40 hectares in size.<sup>34</sup> The area of Nashville Conservation Area which contains the Humber River Valley that would be traversed by the project includes two e-bird birding “hotspots” in proximity to the proposed corridor. Another birding hotspot is located at the proposed 413/400 highway interchange. At these birding hotspots, e-bird reports contain approximately 100 species of migratory birds.<sup>35</sup> Wildlife surveys have been requested from the proponent, however the proponent has not produced any wildlife surveys for the preferred route. As noted elsewhere in this submission, the province proposes to exempt the proponent from completing the environmental assessment before commencing work that would adversely affect migratory birds. No beneficial management practices have been incorporated into the project and no mitigation measures have been proposed to address potential significant adverse effects on migratory birds.

### Species at Risk

A complete list of species at risk in the project area is not available from the proponent. It appears that no terrestrial or aquatic wildlife surveys are available.<sup>36</sup> No known mitigation measures have been proposed for fish or fish habitat, species at risk or migratory birds.

However, TRCA predicts that over 110 occurrences (representing 10 different species) of federal and/or provincial species at risk have been found in the study area: these species are found in a variety of habitat types including meadow (e.g., Bobolink), forest (e.g., Eastern Wood-Pewee, Butternut), wetland (e.g., Snapping Turtle) and within specific watercourses.<sup>37</sup> The project would impact 35 different fauna species of local concern (with approximately 240 separate occurrences) have been found inhabiting the project study area.<sup>38</sup>

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(April 1994) [https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2014-08/documents/ecological-impacts-highway-development-pg\\_0.pdf](https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2014-08/documents/ecological-impacts-highway-development-pg_0.pdf)

<sup>33</sup> Kociolek et al, Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> AECOM alternatives assessment, p.54.

<sup>35</sup> E-Bird hotspot listing, Nashville Conservation Reserve, Vaughan-Huntington Road Bridge, Highway 400 storm water ponds.

<sup>36</sup> These were requested from the proponent but not provided.

<sup>37</sup> TRCA Jan 2020 Report, pp.7-9

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.7-9

In the three birding hotspots on e-bird that would be destroyed by the proposed route, there are numerous migratory birds that are also species at risk including Chimney Swift, Bank Swallow, Barn Swallow, Bobolink, Eastern Meadowlark, Eastern Wood-Pewee, Loggerhead Shrike, Wood Thrush and Grasshopper Sparrow. No terrestrial wildlife surveys have been prepared for the location and no mitigation measures have been proposed for the protection of these species.

There are aquatic species at risk (Redside Dace) at 31 different watercourse crossings along the existing highway corridor and the new corridor section has aquatic species at risk along approximately 24-31 water crossings.<sup>39</sup> According to the proponent's documentation Middle Sixteen Mile Creek within the new corridor may potentially support several species at risk (Bridle Shiner, Deepwater Sculpin). As well as recently species such as American Eel and Western Chorus Frog, Atlantic Salmon and Lake Sturgeon with recent COSEWIC assessments.<sup>40</sup> Nashville Conservation Area is also reportedly home to Eastern Milksnake (SARA Special Concern).<sup>41</sup>

There has not been a public assessment of the potential impacts on species at risk (either aquatic or terrestrial) along the preferred route. Given the proposed exemption, this will likely not be required prior to construction. There are no proposed mitigation measures and there may not be any prior to construction.

The project threatens to extirpate Redside Dace, a species listed as endangered under the federal *Species at Risk Act*. The project impacts stream crossings and adds impervious surfaces in some of the last remaining potential Redside Dace habitat in the northern reaches of the Greater Toronto Area, the region where most Canadian Redside Dace habitat is located. Redside Dace is found primarily in heavily populated regions of Ontario. The provincial Recovery strategy for the Redside Dace identifies headwaters such as those found extensively in the GTA West project area as essential for survival and recovery.<sup>42</sup> It identifies urban development as the primary cause of habitat loss and population decline.<sup>43</sup> In particular, the cumulative effects of development adjacent to the highway along with the highway itself could destroy what few healthy Redside Dace populations remain.

The integrity of headwater areas upstream of reaches currently occupied by Redside Dace is also extremely important. Headwater streams, groundwater discharge areas and wetlands play an important physical role in augmenting and maintaining baseflows, coarse sediment supply and surface water quality, and the protection of headwater systems should be given a high priority in freshwater conservation efforts (Saunders et al. 2002). It is recommended that headwater streams, groundwater discharge areas and wetlands that physically support the reaches occupied by Redside Dace also be regulated as habitat of the species.<sup>44</sup>

<sup>39</sup> AECOM alternatives assessment, p.53.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, p.53.

<sup>41</sup> Inaturalist reptile and amphibian atlas: <https://www.inaturalist.org/observations/50445025>.

<sup>42</sup> Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry, Redside Dace Recovery Strategy (2010) <https://www.ontario.ca/page/redside-dace-recovery-strategy>.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*



The provincial Redside Dace recovery strategy recommended that all upstream headwaters (natural heritage features and supporting functions) be protected.<sup>45</sup> There has been no assessment of the cumulative impacts of stormwater from the highway and associated infrastructure and development on the Redside Dace. The GTA West project is incompatible with the provincial Recovery Strategy recommendation to maintain impervious cover at less than 10% of a stream's catchment area.<sup>46</sup>

Additionally, TRCA has indicated that 35 different fauna species of local concern (with approximately 240 separate occurrences) have been found inhabiting the proposed study area. 74 different flora species of local concern (with approximately 275 separate occurrences) have been found inhabiting the proposed study area.<sup>47</sup> Because we do not have access to TRCA's full assessment, it is not known how many of these may be listed federal species at risk.

The habitat impacts of the proposed project suggest that species at risk may be more broadly affected. Approximately 220 wetlands, many of which have never been evaluated, covering 130 ha, will be impacted. Approximately 680 ha of habitat representing 224 separate habitat patches (forest, wetland, meadows) will be directly removed or indirectly impacted. This includes 240 ha (representing 40 separate habitat patches) of high-quality habitat (based on TRCA's landscape analysis model assessing size, shape and surrounding land use) and over 300 ha (representing 206 separate habitat patches) of habitat deemed highly vulnerable to impacts of climate change.<sup>48</sup>

### **Lack of need and alternatives assessment**

The GTA West Highway stage 1 environmental assessment commenced under the Ontario *Environmental Assessment Act* in 2008 and was completed in 2012 with the release of a Transportation Development Strategy. A notice of commencement for Phase 2 was released in February 2014.<sup>49</sup> In December 2015, the Ministry of Transportation temporarily suspended the EA due to public concerns. An independent panel, the 2017 GTA West Advisory Panel appointed by the Ministry of Transportation to peer review the environmental assessment documentation that was prepared to that date.<sup>50</sup>

The Advisory Panel recommended that the GTA West EA be discontinued and that the Ministry of Transportation look at transportation alternatives on a regional basis.<sup>51</sup> The Advisory Panel found that the EA's recommended alternatives did not conform to provincial policies for the optimization of existing infrastructure, protection of valuable lands, and encouragement of transit use and complete communities.

The Advisory Panel found that the EA also did not demonstrate that a new highway corridor which crosses protected agricultural lands, key natural heritage and hydrologic features was the only option to address regional transportation needs. The Advisory Panel found that other alternative actions were capable of providing benefits equivalent or greater than a new highway

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<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, executive summary.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>47</sup> TRCA Jan 2020 Report.

<sup>48</sup> TRCA Jan 2020 Report, pp.7-9

<sup>49</sup> Ontario Government, Notice of commencement – GTA West Transportation corridor Route Phase 2 Study.

<sup>50</sup> GTA West Advisory Panel Report (May 29, 2017).

<sup>51</sup> GTA West Advisory Panel Report (May 29, 2017).

including congestion pricing, better use of existing highway infrastructure and growth management.<sup>52</sup> More specifically, the Advisory Panel concluded that “In the Panel’s view, the GTAW EA considered but did not apply the complete policy test requiring demonstration of need and no reasonable alternative/alternative location in order to cross key natural heritage and key hydrological features (Greenbelt Plan 2005) and in order to exclude prime agricultural areas from long-term agricultural use (Provincial Policy Statement 2005).”<sup>53</sup> The Advisory Panel Report also criticized the EA for using an inconsistent and unclear approach to the evaluation of need, which it conflated with opportunity and that the EA failed to evaluate the do nothing alternative.<sup>54</sup>

The Panel also found that the EA reached different conclusions in different sections about the same topics and did not follow a clear logic.<sup>55</sup> The report noted that there is a much higher uncertainty about future travel demand than when the EA was initiated 10 years ago. This includes uncertainties in transportation technology (e.g. automated vehicles, shared mobility), economic changes (e-commerce and working from home/remote office, different manufacturing centres, a bigger service economy) and policy changes (climate change mitigation, protection of valuable land, complete communities). With the advent of COVID-19 and increases in people working from home, the need to re-evaluate proceeding with large highway expansions that was originally identified by the Advisory Panel is only increased.

These critiques have not been addressed. In June 2019, the GTA West EA was recommenced and proceeded to identify a preferred route for a new highway corridor relying on the prior analysis that the Advisory Panel was critiquing. A preferred route was identified in August 2020. The Provincial assessment is not yet complete.

## Climate Change

The potential greenhouse gas emissions associated with the project may hinder the Government of Canada’s ability to meet its commitments in respect of climate change, including in the context of Canada’s 2030 emissions targets and forecasts.

Under the Paris Agreement, Canada committed to reducing its greenhouse gas emission by 30% below 2005 levels by 2030. This requires a reduction in emissions of 142 Mt CO<sub>2</sub>e. Current projections rely on a reduction of transportation emissions. For example, to meet the Paris Agreement targets, Ontario must reduce transportation emissions by 26 Mt CO<sub>2</sub>e by 2030 and by 63 Mt CO<sub>2</sub>e by 2050.<sup>56</sup>

The environmental review of the project to date has not considered the potential for the project to cause significant increases in greenhouse gas emissions.<sup>57</sup> Climate change was not a factor in the identification of preferred alternatives, although the assessment of alternatives noted that the

<sup>52</sup> GTA West Corridor Advisory Panel Report (2017).

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, Chapter 5, “policy context”.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, Chapter 6.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>56</sup> Environmental Commissioner of Ontario, 2018 Greenhouse Gas Emissions Report, p.116 [ECO 2018] <http://docs.assets.eco.on.ca/reports/climate-change/2018/Climate-Action-in-Ontario.pdf>.

<sup>57</sup> GTA West April 2020 Meeting Minutes, <https://www.gta-west.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/02-GTAG-Meeting-Minutes-November-14-2019.pdf>, p.4.

chosen alternative resulted in higher vehicle kilometres travelled.<sup>58</sup> The 2017 Advisory Panel Report found that the proposed highway would not have a significant impact on reducing congestion and would only save drivers 30-60 seconds per trip.<sup>59</sup>

Transportation emissions are the largest greenhouse gas emissions sector in Ontario and the fastest growing source of greenhouse gases in Ontario. Ontario is the second-largest greenhouse Gas emitter jurisdiction in the country.<sup>60</sup> From 1990 to 2018, greenhouse gas emissions from transportation grew from 40.8 Mt of CO<sub>2</sub>e to 57.4 Mt of CO<sub>2</sub>e.<sup>61</sup> Much of this was fueled by increases in both passenger and freight transportation.<sup>62</sup> Transportation accounts for approximately 33% of all emissions in the GTA. York and Halton Regions, through which the proposed highway would pass, have the highest proportion of their emissions from transportation at 47% each.<sup>63</sup> Nearly 98% of all transportation emissions in Ontario were sourced to fossil fuel use in vehicles.<sup>64</sup>

GHG emissions can be roughly estimated by multiplying additional vehicle kilometres travelled by an average emissions factor per vehicle.<sup>65</sup> The increase in vehicle kilometres travelled can be estimated using the “fundamental law of road congestion”.<sup>66</sup> Vehicle kilometres travelled is known to increase “in exact proportion to” percent increase in additional lane kilometres on highways.<sup>67</sup> Accordingly, building roads “elicits a large increase in vehicle kilometres travelled,”<sup>68</sup> in addition to generating significant construction-related greenhouse gas emissions.

<sup>58</sup> AECOM Alternatives assessment.

<sup>59</sup> GTA West Advisory Panel Report (May 29, 2017).

<sup>60</sup> ECO 2018, p.83.

<sup>61</sup> Government of Canada, National Inventory Report 1990-2018: Greenhouse Gas Sources and Sinks in Canada, 2020, Table A-12, [http://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection\\_2020/eccc/En81-4-2018-3-eng.pdf](http://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection_2020/eccc/En81-4-2018-3-eng.pdf).

<sup>62</sup> Natural Resources Canada, Energy Use Statistics, Transportation Sector (Ontario) GHG Emissions by Transportation Mode.

<https://oee.nrcan.gc.ca/corporate/statistics/neud/dpa/showTable.cfm?type=CP&sector=tran&juris=on&rn=8&page=0>.

<sup>63</sup> Environmental Defence, Is building highway 413 the best option? (August 2020)

[https://d36rd3gki5z3d3.cloudfront.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/IsBuildingHighway413TheBestOption\\_Report\\_Final.pdf?x38078](https://d36rd3gki5z3d3.cloudfront.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/IsBuildingHighway413TheBestOption_Report_Final.pdf?x38078), p.6.

<sup>64</sup> ECO 2018, p.43. <https://www.auditor.on.ca/en/content/reporttopics/envreports/env18/Climate-Action-in-Ontario.pdf>

<sup>65</sup> National Academies of Science “Modelling on-road transport greenhouse gas emissions under various land use scenarios, <https://trid.trb.org/view/1393792>; According to the EPA the average passenger vehicle emits approximately 0.25 kg of CO<sub>2</sub> per 1 km see US EPA “Greenhouse Gas Emissions from a Typical Passenger Vehicle” <https://www.epa.gov/greenvehicles/greenhouse-gas-emissions-typical-passenger-vehicle>

<sup>66</sup> G. Duranton and M. Turner, University of Toronto, Department of Economics, Working paper 370 “The fundamental law of road congestion: Evidence from US cities” (September 8, 2009). <https://www.economics.utoronto.ca/workingPapers/tecipa-370.pdf>; S. Handy and M. Boarnet (Sept 30, 2014) Impact of Highway Capacity and Induced Travel on Passenger Vehicle Use and Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Policy Brief. [https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/sites/default/files/2020-06/Impact\\_of\\_Highway\\_Capacity\\_and\\_Induced\\_Travel\\_on\\_Passenger\\_Vehicle\\_Use\\_and\\_Greenhouse\\_Gas\\_Emissions\\_Policy\\_Brief.pdf](https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/sites/default/files/2020-06/Impact_of_Highway_Capacity_and_Induced_Travel_on_Passenger_Vehicle_Use_and_Greenhouse_Gas_Emissions_Policy_Brief.pdf)

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*



In the assessment of alternatives, the chosen alternative represented higher estimated network-wide vehicle kilometres travelled than some of the other alternatives.<sup>69</sup> The assessment does not provide the total estimate of increase to vehicle kilometres travelled. However, it estimates that the capacity of each of the six lanes is 2,200 vehicles per hour, and a daily capacity for the total of the six lanes of 120,000 vehicles.<sup>70</sup> Based on the 52 km road length and an average passenger vehicle emission factor of 0.25kg/1km VKT,<sup>71</sup> this results in a potential greenhouse gas contribution of approximately 0.57Mt of CO<sub>2</sub>e per year. Over the lifetime of the highway, this could represent a significant increase in Ontario's GHG emissions. Understood in the context of rapidly ballooning transportation emissions in Ontario the proposal represents a long-term entrenched policy decision to continue allowing transportation emissions to increase by continuing to increase road capacity which in turn induces further demand.

Both the Environmental Commissioner of Ontario and the proponent's own 2017 independent Advisory Panel recommended road pricing as an alternative that was more consistent with provincial and federal climate goals.<sup>72</sup> The City of Brampton has also proposed a boulevard alternative that is not currently under consideration by the proponent that would reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Without a Federal EA it will not be known if the project is compatible with Canada's climate change commitments or what the impact of the project would be on the long-term ability of Canada to meet its climate targets.

## Air Quality and Health

Traffic related air pollution from highways entails contamination from a variety of air pollutants including nitrogen oxides, carbon monoxide, sulphur dioxide, particulate matter and volatile organic compounds. The health effects of these pollutants include asthma, allergies and reduced lung function as well as lung cancer and heart disease. Children are more sensitive to air pollution than people in other age groups, because children breathe in more air in relation to their body weight and less developed lungs.<sup>73</sup> Emerging evidence links air pollution to pre-term births and low birth weight,<sup>74</sup> cognitive impairment and other illnesses,<sup>75</sup> as well as increased vulnerability to COVID-19.<sup>76</sup> Canadian studies have documented that the induced demand and

<sup>69</sup> AECOM, 2012 GTA West Transportation Demand Study Report p.62

[http://madgic.library.carleton.ca/deposit/govt/ca\\_prov/on/on\\_mto\\_GTA\\_west\\_corridor\\_2012.pdf](http://madgic.library.carleton.ca/deposit/govt/ca_prov/on/on_mto_GTA_west_corridor_2012.pdf)

<sup>70</sup> <https://www.gta-west.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/GTA-West-Travel-Demand-Backgrounder-v1-Chp-3-4-red.pdf>, pp.48-49.

<sup>71</sup> US EPA "Greenhouse Gas Emissions from a Typical Passenger Vehicle"

<https://www.epa.gov/greenvehicles/greenhouse-gas-emissions-typical-passenger-vehicle>

<sup>72</sup> ECO 2018 p.128; GTA West Advisory Panel Report (May 29, 2017).

<sup>73</sup> Health Canada, Road traffic air pollution <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/air-quality/road-traffic-air-pollution.html>; Region of Peel, Effective Interventions to Mitigate Adverse Human Health Effects from Transportation-Related Air pollution (2015) <https://www.peelregion.ca/health/library/pdf/Rapid-Review-TRAP%20Mitigation.pdf>

<sup>74</sup> Marie Lynn Miranda et al. "Proximity to roadways and pregnancy outcomes" *Journal of Exposure Science and Environmental Epidemiology* 23:32 (2013) <https://www.nature.com/articles/jes201278>

<sup>75</sup> Weiran Yuchi et al, "Road Proximity, air pollution, noise, green space and neurologic disease incidence: a population-based cohort study" *Environmental Health*, 9:18 (2020) <https://ehjournal.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12940-020-0565-4>.

<sup>76</sup> Andrea Pozzer et al, "Regional and global contributions of air pollution to risk of death from COVID-19", *Cardiovascular Research*. doi:[10.1093/cvr/cvaa288](https://doi.org/10.1093/cvr/cvaa288)

higher vehicle densities from new highways result in increased nitrogen dioxide concentrations in close proximity to new highways and on arterials and access roads in the vicinity of a new highway.<sup>77</sup> A 2014 report estimated that traffic-related air pollution was responsible for approximately 700 premature deaths and over 2,800 annual hospitalizations due to heart and lung conditions in the GTHA each year with an annual economic impact of over \$4.6 billion.<sup>78</sup>

The Region of Peel has been experiencing an increasing number of smog days,<sup>79</sup> and Peel's numerous major highways and airport contribute to close to 200 estimated premature deaths every year – more than Halton, York, or Durham region.<sup>80</sup> Transportation is the most significant source of nitrogen oxides and carbon monoxide emissions throughout Ontario.<sup>81</sup> Region of Peel staff have requested a health impact assessment of the GTA West project that would evaluate cardiovascular and respiratory health, cancers associated with traffic-related air pollution as well as other health issues.<sup>82</sup> Specifically, staff at the Region of Peel raised concerns that the air pollution impacts of the proposal were not clearly included in the streamlined EA process that was proposed by the Province, and asked for clarification that a traffic analysis and health impact assessment would be included.<sup>83</sup> Although the GTA West highway has been planned for many years, there is as of yet no analysis of potential health impacts. This is despite the location of the proposed highway adjacent to or even through significant planned residential areas, for example Heritage Heights in Brampton and Mayfield in Caledon, as well as areas in Bolton and Vaughan. The province has not made a clear commitment to addressing the health impacts of increases in vehicle kilometres travelled in terms of regional air quality nor has it committed to a health impact assessment on adjacent communities. The Ontario Public Health Association has raised concerns that traffic related air pollution causes 900 premature deaths annually in the greater Toronto area and that more information is needed about the potential health effects of the GTA West highway specifically, noting support for a health impact assessment.<sup>84</sup>

A preliminary estimate from modelling commissioned by Environmental Defence (but not yet released) calculated that, if the 2020 mix of vehicles does not change over the lifetime of the highway, the damage costs from air pollution could be approximately CAD\$8.8 billion, nominally. This modelling is expected to be released in full in April 2021.

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<sup>77</sup> Shohel Reza Amin et al, "Understanding Air pollution from Induced Traffic during and after the Construction of a New Highway: Case Study of Highway 25 in Montreal" *Journal of Advanced Transportation* (2017) <https://www.hindawi.com/journals/jat/2017/5161308/>

<sup>78</sup> Dr. David Mowat et al, *Improving Health by Design in the Greater Toronto Hamilton Area - A Report of Medical Officers of Health in the GTHA*. 2nd Edition, May 2014, <https://www.peelregion.ca/health/resources/healthbydesign/pdf/moh-report.pdf>.

<sup>79</sup> Region of Peel, Air Quality Discussion Paper <https://www.peelregion.ca/health/library/pdf/Rapid-Review-TRAP%20Mitigation.pdf> p.5.

<sup>80</sup> Environmental Defence & the Ontario Public Health Association, June 2020, "Clearing the Air: Stakeholder Report," (p.18), <https://clearingtheair.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Clearing-The-Air-Stakeholder-Report.pdf>.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid*, p.17.

<sup>82</sup> Region of Peel (undated) staff concerns on preferred route. <https://pub-peelregion.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?DocumentId=6311>

<sup>83</sup> Region of Peel (Aug 21, 2020) Comments on Proposed regulation for streamlined environmental assessment

<sup>84</sup> Ontario Public Health Association, (Aug 22, 2020) comments on proposed streamlined EA for GTA West <https://opha.on.ca/getattachment/813cbc13-cd03-4688-a405-3973f00bf6be/ERO-019-1882-OPHA-Submission-GTA-West-Transportation-Project-Aug-22-2020.pdf.aspx?ext=.pdf> p.2

## First Nation Consultation

Based on a TRCA analysis there is high potential for both Indigenous and Euro-Canadian archaeological sites and artifacts specifically in the Nashville Conservation Area, and potentially in other TRCA-owned lands.<sup>85</sup> The highway corridor traverses the Gunshot Treaty, Williams Treaties and Toronto Purchase specific claim. The area is historically home to a number of First Nations including Huron-Wendat, Mississauga, Chippewa, Six Nations and Haudenosaunee territory. At this time it is not known how the project may impact First Nations harvesting and Treaty rights or cultural claims.<sup>86</sup>

The Chiefs of Ontario and several individual First Nations and First Nations coalitions have publicly opposed Ontario's efforts to weaken provincial environmental assessments. These changes include Ontario's proposed exemptions for the GTA West Highway.<sup>87</sup>

## Conclusion

In the absence of a Federal EA there will be inadequate assessment of water crossings and their impact on both terrestrial and aquatic wildlife including fisheries, migratory birds and species at risk. Such works may commence under the provincial regulatory system before proper surveys or mitigation are conducted related to impacts on these features. The same issue will arise if other elements of the project are exempted as "early works" as the scope of potential early works that would proceed without further assessment of environmental effects has not yet been defined.

In the absence of a Federal EA the need and alternatives defects in the EA identified by the proponent's 2017 Advisory Panel will not be addressed – particularly alternatives that would lower greenhouse gas emissions and avoid the need for land use change in protected areas.

In the absence of a Federal EA there will be no assessment of the cumulative effects of the project through any provincial or federal regulatory process.

In the absence of a Federal EA there will be no assessment of the impact of the project on Canada's climate change commitments.

Because of the proposed exemption it appears that there would never be a final report on the environmental impacts of the project carried out by Ontario prior to construction of early works and that a final report may never be required to assess fish habitat, species at risk, and migratory bird impacts. Mitigation measures have not been proposed for federal effects.

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<sup>85</sup> TRCA Jan 2020 Report, p.12.

<sup>86</sup> AECOM, GTA West Environmental Existing Conditions Report (Jan 27, 2011) Chapters 4-6. [https://www.gta-west.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/GTA\\_West\\_Env\\_Existing\\_Conditions\\_Report\\_Jan\\_27\\_11-Chp-4.pdf](https://www.gta-west.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/GTA_West_Env_Existing_Conditions_Report_Jan_27_11-Chp-4.pdf) And [https://www.gta-west.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/GTA\\_West\\_Env\\_Existing\\_Conditions\\_Report\\_Jan\\_27\\_11-Chp-5-6.pdf](https://www.gta-west.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/GTA_West_Env_Existing_Conditions_Report_Jan_27_11-Chp-5-6.pdf)

<sup>87</sup> CBC News "Ontario using COVID-19 as a 'smokescreen' to trample treaty rights, chiefs say" (Sept 5, 2020) <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/thunder-bay/bill-197-first-nations-1.5712623>

There has been no detailed public assessment of the potential impacts on species at risk, fish or fish habitat or migratory birds for the project along the preferred route.

We ask that you designate the GTA West project for a federal EA pursuant to the Minister's power under s.9(1) of the *Impact Assessment Act*. We would be pleased to provide you with any information or materials that we have available to us at any time.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'LB' with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Laura Bowman  
Staff Lawyer

cc: client, supporters

encl. <https://ln2.sync.com/dl/43236dcc0/waiaqqh7-kgbbsyx6-ew2purax-2cpzaiye>



Impact Assessment  
Agency of Canada

Ontario Region  
600-55 York Street  
Toronto ON M5J 1R7

Agence d'évaluation  
d'impact du Canada

Région de l'Ontario  
600-55 rue York  
Toronto ON M5J 1R7

February 12, 2021

Sent by email

### **Invitation for Input**

Henrik Zbogar, City of Brampton  
Kant Chawla, Town of Caledon  
Mark Vandersluis, City of Mississauga  
Shirley Kam, City of Vaughan  
Bill Andrews, Halton Region  
Christopher Raynor, Regional Municipality of York  
Gary Kocialek, Region of Peel  
Maureen Van Ravens, Town of Halton Hills  
Peter Angelo, Township of King

Dear Colleagues:

### **Subject: Designation Request for the Proposed GTA West Project under the *Impact Assessment Act***

On February 3, 2021, the Minister of Environment and Climate Change received a request to designate the proposed GTA West Project under subsection 9(1) of the *Impact Assessment Act* (IAA). The designation request from Ecojustice, on behalf of Environmental Defense, is enclosed (Enclosure 1).

### **The Proposed Project**

The Ontario Ministry of Transportation is proposing the construction and operation, including maintenance, of a new 59-kilometre all-season public highway in the northwest Greater Toronto Area. The proposed new highway, which would be named Highway 413, would connect highway 400 between Kirby Road and King-Vaughan Road in the east, to the highway 401/407 interchange area, near the northern end of highway 403, in the west. The highway would stretch through the municipalities of Vaughan, Caledon, Brampton and Halton Hills in the regions of York, Peel and Halton. The Project as proposed is not a designated project as described in the *Physical Activities Regulations*. The impact assessment process under IAA only applies to designated projects.

Further information on the Project can be found on the proponent's website (<https://www.gta-west.com/>).

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-2-

### Provincial Process

The Government of Ontario is proposing to create a new streamlined process for assessing potential environmental impacts of the Project, as well as consulting on it. More information on this is available at: [ero.ontario.ca/notice/019-1882](http://ero.ontario.ca/notice/019-1882)

### Designation Request

Under subsection 9(1) of IAA the Minister may, by order, designate a physical activity that is not prescribed in the *Physical Activities Regulations*. The Minister may do this, if, in the Minister's opinion, the physical activity may cause adverse effects within federal jurisdiction or adverse direct or incidental effects (resulting from a federal decision), or public concerns related to those effects warrant the designation. In accordance with subsection 9(4) of IAA, it is expected that the Minister will respond, with reasons, to the request by May 4, 2021.

The Impact Assessment Agency of Canada will review information about the Project, any concerns expressed by the public and Indigenous groups, expert advice from federal authorities and input from provincial ministries and municipalities to prepare a recommendation to the Minister on whether to designate the Project. If the Project were designated by the Minister, the Ontario Ministry of Transportation (the proponent) would be prohibited from carrying out the Project and would be required to submit an Initial Project Description, thereby commencing the planning phase of IAA. During the planning phase, the Agency would determine whether an impact assessment is required.

Additional information regarding the process for designation requests can be found at the following link: <https://www.canada.ca/en/impact-assessment-agency/services/policy-guidance/designating-project-impact-assessment-act.html>

### Invitation for Input

The Agency notes that the project assessment process by the Ontario Ministry of Transportation has included consultation with your municipality. However, to support the Agency's analysis of the designation request, we wish to invite the views and input from representatives of your municipality.

In particular, the Agency would like to confirm whether any bylaws or requirements of your municipality apply to the Project.

- If applicable, would any of those involve consultation with the public and Indigenous groups?
- If applicable, what environmental, social, economic or health issues would those bylaws or requirements address?

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-3-

In general, please confirm whether the Ontario Ministry of Transportation is addressing the interests and issues of importance to your municipality. The Agency will be pleased to receive any other comments. Given the legislated timeline for the Minister to make a decision, your response is requested by **Wednesday, March 3, 2021**.

In the coming days, a Registry page for the Project will be available on the Canadian Impact Assessment Registry Internet site at [iaac-aeic.gc.ca/050/evaluations](https://www.iaac-aeic.gc.ca/050/evaluations). Please use the *Submit a Comment* feature on the Project's Registry page to provide the Agency with information regarding this file. Letters can be uploaded using this feature. If you have difficulties using this feature, please immediately contact Owais Khurshid, Project Manager, at [owais.khurshid@canada.ca](mailto:owais.khurshid@canada.ca) or 647-262-8046.

**Important Note:**

All records produced, collected or received in relation to the designation request process – unless prohibited under the *Access to Information Act* or *Privacy Act*<sup>1</sup> – are considered public and may be released. The Agency's Submission Policy determines which submitted information can be shared publicly, and what should remain private. For further information on how we protect your privacy, please refer to the Privacy Notice<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.iaac-aeic.gc.ca/050/evaluations/participation/condition>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.iaac-aeic.gc.ca/050/evaluations/protection>

-4-

If you have any questions regarding the designation process or the response sheet, please do not hesitate to contact Owais Khurshid by telephone or email.

Sincerely,



Anjala Puvananathan  
Director, Ontario Region

Enclosure      Designation request letter from Ecojustice on behalf of  
Environmental Defence

c.c.              Steve Mota, Regional Municipality of York  
Richa Dave, Region of Peel  
Ann Larkin, Halton Region



**MARKHAM VILLAGE B.I.A.**  
**REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES**  
**AUG 22, 2019 7:30 AM**  
Approved Jan 23,2020

Present:

Paul Cicchini (Chair)

Brian Rowsell (Secretary)

Karen Rea

Tony Paul

Staff: Victoria Campbell, Kayla, Alex

Guests: Phil Howes

Regrets: Daniel Imbrogno, Linda Tsang, Andrew Keyes, Carolina Billings

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**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 7:42 a.m. by Chairman Paul Cicchini. .

**2. DECLARATION OF TAX AND ENVIRONMENTAL OBLIGATIONS**

The board was advised by the Chair that to the best his knowledge and abilities the BIA is meeting all taxation and environmental obligations.

**3. DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY INTEREST**

The Chair requested that Board Members advise of any conflicts of interest as they arise throughout the meeting.

**4. ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES**

Minutes of the Board Meeting held July 4, 2019 were approved. Motion was made by Tony and seconded by Brian

**5. DELEGATIONS - None**

**6. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES** – It was noted that the Auto Classic could have an issue regarding the United Church accessibility. We were looking at the possibility of a golf cart rental to move people from the Community Center to the church, but no BIA driver would be available.

Festival of Lights road closure costs would be approximately \$1000 as it will be done by the City. The City is considering the possibility of providing some advertising for this Festival.

**MARKHAM VILLAGE B.I.A.  
REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
AUG 22, 2019 7:30 AM**

Approved Jan 23, 2020

**7. FINANCIAL**– Phil reported that the Festival of Lights budget was \$20,000 over budget and the Auto Classic was \$6000 over budget.

8. Karen reported that the Handicap Parking Signs on Main Street had been removed as they did not conform to handicap specifications.

Signage enforcement may be enforced by By-Laws

Street Parking is still an issue.

A Sponsorship Package was presented by Victoria in order to look at ways to generate additional funding for the Festival of Lights.

Large lighted structures were presented as an additional way to attract people to Main Street during the Holiday Season, further exploration was asked for. The cost of these structures, \$25,000, was to be taken from the reserve funds.

**9. ADJOURNMENT** – The meeting was adjourned at 9:02 am.

**MARKHAM VILLAGE B.I.A.  
REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
JANUARY 23, 2020 7:30 AM**

Present:

Paul Cicchini (Chair)

Brian Rowsell (Secretary)

Karen Rea

Tony Paul

Daniel Imbrogno

Staff: Victoria Campbell

Guests: Phil Howes

Regrets: Linda Tsang, Andrew Keyes, Carolina Billings

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**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 8:02 a.m. by Chairman Paul Cicchini. .

**2. DECLARATION OF TAX AND ENVIRONMENTAL OBLIGATIONS**

The board was advised by the Chair that to the best his knowledge and abilities the BIA is meeting all taxation and environmental obligations.

**3. DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY INTEREST**

The Chair requested that Board Members advise of any conflicts of interest as they arise throughout the meeting.

**4. ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES**

Minutes of the Board Meeting held August 4, 2019 were approved. Motion was made by Tony and seconded by Danny

**5. DELEGATIONS - None**

**6. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES –**

**7. FINANCIAL–** Phil reported that the anticipated chargeback of \$10,000 from the municipal levy was not required. As a result we removed this item from the budget. We are on target for a breakeven year.

Budgeting for this year is underway with input from Victoria and others in preparation for the MVBIA Annual Meeting.

**MARKHAM VILLAGE B.I.A.  
REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
JANUARY 23, 2020 7:30 AM**

8. There are a number of potential date changes for our events being considered, Auto Classic to July and Festival of Lights a week earlier as it was in 2019. Concerns are still present with regards to the Music Festival and the handling of 68 Main Street access and YRP charges. Dates for our other Main Street events were confirmed.

9. Annual General Meeting: The date for the AGM was set for March 2, 2020, location to be confirmed

10. Other Business – Motion by Tony, second by Paul to write a thank you letter to Stephen Chaite for his past support of the Science Rendezvous.

The Summer Student Grant application has yet to be announced.

**9. ADJOURNMENT** – The meeting was adjourned at 8:53 am.

**NEXT MEETING – February 20, 2020 - BIA Office, 7:30 am.**

**MARKHAM VILLAGE B.I.A.  
REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
FEBRUARY 20, 2020 7:30 AM  
Approved April 14 2020**

Present:

Paul Cicchini (Chair)  
Brian Rowsell (Secretary)  
Karen Rea  
Tony Paul (PHONE)  
Daniel Imbrogno

Staff: Victoria Campbell  
Guests: Phil Howes, David Bainbridge  
Regrets: Andrew Keyes

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**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 7:41 a.m. by Chairman Paul Cicchini. .

**2. DECLARATION OF TAX AND ENVIRONMENTAL OBLIGATIONS**

The board was advised by the Chair that to the best his knowledge and abilities the BIA is meeting all taxation and environmental obligations.

**3. DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY INTEREST**

The Chair requested that Board Members advise of any conflicts of interest as they arise throughout the meeting.

**4. ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES**

No minutes from our last meeting as there was no Quorum

**5. DELEGATIONS - None**

**6. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES –**

**7. FINANCIAL**

**2020 Budget**

A proposed budget for 2020 was presented as prepared by Victoria and Phil

Phil reported that the anticipated chargeback of \$10,000 from the municipal levy was not required, resulting in a surplus for 2019 which is carried forward to 2020. Due to the uncertainties from potential chargebacks still coming back it was

**MARKHAM VILLAGE B.I.A.  
REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
FEBRUARY 20, 2020 7:30 AM**

**Approved April 14 2020**

decided to put it back into this year's budget, resulting in cutbacks to the advertising and event projected expenses. The 2020 budget projects an operating deficit equal to the surplus from 2019. Motion by Daniel Imbrogno, seconded by Brian Rowsell to approve this budget with changes noted above for presentation at the Annual General Meeting to be held March 2

8. Victoria reported that there is a Neighborhood Networks program that will monitor 28 networks to monitor reviews at a very nominal cost of \$100.

9. Doors Open is scheduled for September

**10. ADJOURNMENT** – The meeting was adjourned at 8:53 am.

**NEXT MEETING – March 26th - BIA Office, 7:30 am.**

**MARKHAM VILLAGE B.I.A.  
REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
April 23, 2020 10:00 AM  
Via ZOOM Videoconference**

Present:

Paul Cicchini (Chair)  
Brian Rowsell (Secretary)  
Councillor Karen Rea  
Councillor Andrew Keyes  
Michelle McDermott

Staff: Victoria Campbell  
Phil Howes

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**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 10:05 a.m. by Chairman Paul Cicchini.

**2. DECLARATION OF TAX AND ENVIRONMENTAL OBLIGATIONS**

The board was advised by the Chair that to the best his knowledge and abilities the BIA is meeting all taxation and environmental obligations.

**3. DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY INTEREST**

The Chair requested that Board Members advise of any conflicts of interest as they arise throughout the meeting.

**4. ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES**

No minutes from our last meeting as there was no Quorum

**5. DELEGATIONS - None**

**6. Markham Village Music Festival**

The board was presented with a request for sponsorship for the Markham Village Music Festival 2020 version. The festival plans to create an online video streaming event on June 19 & 20.

After discussion it was agreed that the funds could be better spent in other business revitalization or promotion once the pandemic is over, and to provide enhanced funding and support for the 2021 Markham Village Music Festival.

Motion by Brian Rowsell to decline the sponsorship of the 2020 Markham Village Music Festival, seconded by Andrew Keyes, Carried

**MARKHAM VILLAGE B.I.A.  
REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
April 23, 2020 10:00 AM  
Via ZOOM Videoconference**

**7. FINANCIAL**

**2019 Auditor's report and Financial Statements**

The 2019 Auditor's report and Financial Statements have now been received and were presented for approval.

Motion by Brian Rowsell to accept and approve the 2019 Financial Statements.  
Seconded by Councillor Keyes. Carried

**8. ADJOURNMENT** – The meeting was adjourned at 11:45 am.

**NEXT MEETING – To be determined.**



**MARKHAM VILLAGE B.I.A.  
REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
June 11, 2020 9:30 AM  
Via ZOOM Videoconference**

Present:

Paul Cicchini (Chair)  
Brian Rowsell (Secretary)  
Councillor Karen Rea  
Tony Paul  
Danny Imbrogno  
Michelle McDermott

Staff: Victoria Campbell  
Phil Howes

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**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 9:24 a.m. by Chairman Paul Cicchini.

**2. DECLARATION OF TAX AND ENVIRONMENTAL OBLIGATIONS**

The board was advised by the Chair that to the best his knowledge and abilities the BIA is meeting all taxation and environmental obligations.

**3. DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY INTEREST**

The Chair requested that Board Members advise of any conflicts of interest as they arise throughout the meeting.

**4. ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES**

No minutes from our last meeting as there was no Quorum

**5. DELEGATIONS - None**

**6. COVID Relief**

A financial update was provided on revenues which will not be received and expenses which will not be incurred as originally planned for 2020 due to the COVID19 pandemic. The net amount which will be available is \$85,417.

Expenses for COVID relief that have been incurred to date total \$15,156 (Food for front line workers - \$9,956, Decals -\$1,600, signage - \$3,600).

Discussion was held on plans to spend the balance of the remaining funds. Motion by Councillor Rea to approve the expenditure of \$75,000 – or \$500 per MVBIA member either as a gift card for business expenses related to COVID, or towards

**MARKHAM VILLAGE B.I.A.  
REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
June 11, 2020 9:30 AM  
Via ZOOM Videoconference**

marketing costs at the member's discretion, plus the purchase of \$2,500 in PPE for distribution to MVBIA members. Seconded by Danny Imbrogno. Carried.

**7. ADJOURNMENT** – The meeting was adjourned at 11:15 am.

**NEXT MEETING – To be determined.**

**MARKHAM VILLAGE B.I.A.  
REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
August 27, 2020 10 AM  
Via ZOOM Videoconference**

Present:

Paul Cicchini (Chair)  
Brian Rowsell (Secretary)  
Councillor Karen Rea  
Tony Paul  
Daniel Imbrogno  
Michelle McDermott

Staff: Victoria Campbell  
Phil Howes

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**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 10:13 a.m. by Chairman Paul Cicchini.

**2. DECLARATION OF TAX AND ENVIRONMENTAL OBLIGATIONS**

The board was advised by the Chair that to the best his knowledge and abilities the BIA is meeting all taxation and environmental obligations.

**3. DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY INTEREST**

The Chair requested that Board Members advise of any conflicts of interest as they arise throughout the meeting.

**4. ELECTION TO ALLOW MEETINGS BY VIDEOCONFERENCE**

Motion was made by Daniel Imbrogno to permit meetings via videoconferencing in accordance with and on the same basis as the City of Markham through to December 31, 2020. Seconded by Tony Paul, Carried.

**5. ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES**

Motion by Brian Rowsell, seconded by Tony Paul to adopt the minutes of the Board Meetings held by videoconference on April 23, 2020. Carried

Motion by Brian Rowsell, seconded by Tony Paul to adopt the minutes of the Board Meetings held by videoconference on June 11, 2020. Carried

**6. DELEGATIONS - None**

**MARKHAM VILLAGE B.I.A.**  
**REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES**  
**August 27, 2020 10 AM**  
**Via ZOOM Videoconference**

**7. COVID Relief**

Victoria provided an update on the Covid financial relief program. 59 members have participated so far – 10 for marketing and 49 for prepaid VISA cards. There was no interest in the on-line gift card program. More members are expected to participate as they have up to October 31.

**8. FINANCIAL REPORT**

Phil provided a report on financial operations to date. Covid expenditures to date are \$41,000 from the \$75,000 allocated at the June 11 meeting.

**9. PROMOTION AND EVENT UPDATE**

Victoria provided several proposals on promotion and virtual event possibilities. Halloween on Main Street Festival of Lights will both be cancelled. Victoria provided several alternative suggestions such as a Virtual Tree Lighting, with celebrities such as the Mayor, Town Crier and other celebrities and business owners, a Scavenger Hunt around Halloween, interviews with Santa on Main Street, and investing in enhanced Christmas street décor.

The Santa Claus parade committee has still not decided if they intend to proceed this year and will advise after labour day.

Brian reported that the owners of Markham Guardian Pharmacy have purchased the property they are operating in, and that they would be amenable to moving the Saturday morning Farmers' Market to their parking lot which would eliminate the need to close the Robinson Street.

**10. SERVICE CANADA GRANT**

Victoria reported that the Canada Summer Jobs program has been extended until February 2021 and we still have approval to hire under that program

**11. ADJOURNMENT** – The meeting was adjourned at 11:20 am.

**NEXT MEETING – To be determined.**

**MARKHAM VILLAGE B.I.A.  
REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
September 30, 2020 10 AM  
Via ZOOM Videoconference**

**Present:**

Paul Cicchini (Chair)  
Brian Rowsell (Secretary)  
Councillor Karen Rea  
Tony Paul  
Daniel Imbrogno  
Michelle McDermott

**Staff:** Victoria Campbell  
Phil Howes

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**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 10:20 a.m. by Chairman Paul Cicchini.

**2. DECLARATION OF TAX AND ENVIRONMENTAL OBLIGATIONS**

The board was advised by the Chair that to the best his knowledge and abilities the BIA is meeting all taxation and environmental obligations.

**3. DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY INTEREST**

The Chair requested that Board Members advise of any conflicts of interest as they arise throughout the meeting.

**4. FINANCIAL REPORT**

Phil provided a report on financial operations. Covid expenditures to date are \$50,470 from the \$75,000 allocated at the June 11 meeting.

**5. DELEGATIONS - None**

**6. COVID Relief**

Victoria provided an update on the MVBIA COVID financial relief program. Sixty-six prepaid VISA cards have been distributed so far and a further fourteen are still to be processed, There are 10 members who have chosen to use the funds for marketing. The deadline for application is October 31 so we are still waiting for additional members to apply.

**MARKHAM VILLAGE B.I.A.  
REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
September 30, 2020 10 AM  
Via ZOOM Videoconference**

**7. DIGITAL MAIN STREET**

Victoria reported that MVBIA has again received funding from the OBIAA and Provincial Government for Digital Main Street promotion in the amount of \$15,000. Funds from this grant have to be used for specific expenditures as per the grant conditions. Other board members reported that they were also successful in getting funding – Duchess of Markham, denThreesixty, and Solace.

We also still have approval for the Canada Summer Jobs program.

**8. STREETSCAPING**

Victoria presented a proposal for enhanced street lighting during the Christmas season, with extra lights and garland placed at each lamp post as well as the winter banners, banner enhancers, extra lighting at the gazebo and archway. The cost would exceed our budgeted amount by approximately \$5000. Discussion was held and Victoria was requested to see if the proposal could be reduced and seek approval from the board members before the next meeting.

**9. PROMOTION AND EVENT UPDATE**

Victoria advised the board that virtually all fall and Christmas related events have been cancelled – Remembrance Day, the Santa Claus Parade, Unionville Parade, City of Toronto Santa Claus parade, the Distillery District Christmas market – everything.

Victoria proposed a virtual tree lighting ceremony could be pre-filmed and broadcast on Friday November 27, and a giveaway contest during the month of December leading up to Christmas.

**10. OTHER ITEMS**

A discussion was held on the future impact of the COVID pandemic. It was pointed out that we could see the impact carrying through until June of 2021, and the effect this would have on MVBIA operations during 2021 may reduce the need for a full levy in budgeted requirements for 2021.

**11. ADJOURNMENT** – Motion to adjourn at 11:29 am by Tony, seconded by Brian. Carried.

**NEXT MEETING – To be determined.**

**MARKHAM VILLAGE B.I.A.  
REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
October 22, 2020 10 AM  
Via ZOOM Videoconference  
Approved Dec 3 2020**

**Present:**

Paul Cicchini (Chair)  
Brian Rowsell (Secretary)  
Councillor Karen Rea  
Councillor Andrew Keyes  
Tony Paul  
Daniel Imbrogno  
Michelle McDermott

**Staff:** Victoria Campbell  
Phil Howes

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**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 10:08 a.m. by Chairman Paul Cicchini.

**2. DECLARATION OF TAX AND ENVIRONMENTAL OBLIGATIONS**

The board was advised by the Chair that to the best his knowledge and abilities the BIA is meeting all taxation and environmental obligations.

**3. DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY INTEREST**

The Chair requested that Board Members advise of any conflicts of interest as they arise throughout the meeting.

**4. ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES**

Motion by Brian Rowsell, seconded by Tony Paul to adopt the minutes of the Board Meetings held by videoconference on August 27, 2020. Carried

Motion by Brian Rowsell, seconded by Tony Paul to adopt the minutes of the Board Meetings held by videoconference on September 30, 2020 and the approval of Christmas Decoration expenditures circulated by email on October 5. Carried

**5. COVID Relief**

Victoria provided an update on the MVBIA COVID financial relief program. Eighty-six members received either prepaid credit cards or marketing funds support, and the response from members has been extremely positive. The deadline for application is October 31 so we still may have more members apply. Many members are in industries that have not been as negatively impacted by the COVID measures and

**MARKHAM VILLAGE B.I.A.  
REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
October 22, 2020 10 AM  
Via ZOOM Videoconference  
Approved Dec 3 2020**

therefore they have simply not bothered to apply.

**6. FINANCIAL REPORT**

A financial report was distributed providing actuals to September 30 and projections to December 31, 2020. Festival of Lights has now been cancelled. As a result of this and other events not being held, we would be left with an operating budget surplus of approximately \$45,000. A discussion was held on a second COVID relief plan to our merchants to facilitate in assisting our struggling businesses. It was decided to offer a COVID relief offer of \$500 prepaid credit card to any member business who wished to participate.

With the cancellation of our 2020 events we discussed the possibility of reducing the 2021 operating budget to reflect the potential cancellation of our 2021 events. It was agreed that we would prepare a budget for 2021 reflecting a reduction of the BIA levy of 33% for consideration by the Board.

Motion by Tony to adopt the additional \$500 relief program for the 2020 fiscal period and to prepare a 2021 budget reflecting a reduction in BIA levy of 33%. Seconded by Paul. Carried

**7. DELEGATIONS - None**

**8. OTHER BUSINESS**

Michelle introduced a proposal from the Brother Andre PTA to support local businesses. They are looking to purchase several \$5-\$10 gift cards or small items to use as an incentive for their students and staff. Michelle and Victoria will reach out to the membership.

**9. ADJOURNMENT** – Motion to adjourn at 11:00 am by Tony, seconded by Brian. Carried.

**NEXT MEETING – To be determined.**



**MARKHAM VILLAGE B.I.A.  
REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
December 3, 2020 10 AM  
Via ZOOM Videoconference  
Approved February 19 2021**

**Present:**

Paul Cicchini (Chair)  
Brian Rowsell (Secretary)  
Councillor Karen Rea  
Councillor Andrew Keyes  
Tony Paul  
Daniel Imbrogno  
Michelle McDermott

**Staff:** Victoria Campbell  
Phil Howes

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**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 10:06 a.m. by Chairman Paul Cicchini.

**2. DECLARATION OF TAX AND ENVIRONMENTAL OBLIGATIONS**

The board was advised by the Chair that to the best his knowledge and abilities the BIA is meeting all taxation and environmental obligations.

**3. DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY INTEREST**

The Chair requested that Board Members advise of any conflicts of interest as they arise throughout the meeting.

**4. ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES**

Motion by Tony Paul, seconded by Daniel Imbrogno to adopt the minutes of the Board Meetings held by videoconference on October 22, 2020. Carried

**5. FINANCIAL REPORT & 2021 BUDGET**

A financial report was distributed providing actuals to October 31 and proposed budget for fiscal 2021. The 2021 proposed budget reflects a reduction in BIA levy of 33% as decided at the October 22 meeting, and includes funding for the Farmers' Market, Music On Main and Festival of Lights for 2021, resulting in a net operating deficit of \$59,367, which is to be provided from the accumulated surplus.

Motion to approve the proposed 2021 budget for presentation at the Annual General Meeting of members by Daniel Imbrogno, seconded by Tony Paul. Carried

**MARKHAM VILLAGE B.I.A.  
REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
December 3, 2020 10 AM  
Via ZOOM Videoconference  
Approved February 19 2021**

**6. COVID Relief**

Victoria provided an update on the MVBIA COVID financial relief program. The second round of prepaid credit cards were taken by 63 members. The first round was taken by 98 members who received either prepaid credit cards or marketing funds support. The response from members has been extremely positive.

**7. DELEGATIONS - None**

**8. OTHER BUSINESS**

**a. Promotions:**

Victoria reported that the 24 days of Christmas has been well received and we already have 250 entries.

**b. Signs:**

Discussion was held regarding the City's sign bylaw requirements – particularly regarding temporary or mobile signs in heritage districts. Victoria will reach out to the Unionville BIA and research what rules are in place.

**c. Annual General Meeting**

The date for the 2020 Annual General Meeting was discussed, and the possibility of holding it over ZOOM. Motion was made by Tony Paul, seconded by Danny Imbrogno to hold the 2020 MVBIA Annual General Meeting on March 9, 2021 over ZOOM. Carried.

**d. Associate BIA Memberships**

Some local businesses who are not in the BIA geographic area have inquired. This has been discussed before but we have not found an appropriate legal way to make it work, but we can certainly work collaboratively with any local business in the meantime.

**9. ADJOURNMENT** – Motion to adjourn at 11:22 am by Tony, seconded by Brian. Carried.

**NEXT MEETING – To be determined.**



Report to: General Committee

Meeting Date: April 6, 2021

**SUBJECT:** Development Charges December 31, 2020 Reserve Balances and Annual Activity of the Accounts

**PREPARED BY:** Shannon Neville, Financial Analyst, ext. 2659  
Kevin Ross, Manager, Development Finance & Payroll, ext. 2126

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

- 1) That the report titled “Development Charges December 31, 2020 Reserve Balances and Annual Activity of the Accounts” be received by Council as required under Section 43(1) of the *Development Charges Act, 1997, as amended*; and further,
- 2) That staff be directed to do all things necessary to give effect to this report.

### **PURPOSE:**

Section 43(1) of the *Development Charges Act, 1997, as amended*, requires the Treasurer to submit annually to Council a financial statement relating to Development Charges by-laws and reserve funds established under Section 33 of the *Development Charges Act, 1997*. This report includes the financial statement required under the Act, as well as information regarding the semi-annual indexing that occurred during 2020.

### **BACKGROUND:**

As part of the *Development Charges Act, 1997, as amended*, the Treasurer is to report annually on the funds received and dispersed as shown in the attached schedules.

Enclosed are the statistics for the twelve (12) months ended December 31, 2020.

### **FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

#### **Summary of Activity**

The December 31, 2020 closing balance of the development charges (DC) reserve accounts, before accounting for approved capital commitments, was \$78,662,719 (Schedule A). This balance represents the cash, letters of credit and receivable balances in the reserves, but does not take into account commitments for approved capital projects.

Approved capital commitments against the reserves as at December 31, 2020 totaled \$57,117,182 resulting in an adjusted (committed) reserve balance of \$21,545,537 (\$78,662,719 less \$57,117,182).

As depicted in Schedule B, the net increase in the reserve fund before capital commitments from January 1, 2020 to December 31, 2020 was \$35,100,234 (\$78,662,719 less \$43,562,485). Schedule B also outlines the net amount of \$3,922,523 transferred to capital

projects in 2020, which is broken down into two components: transfer to capital and transfer from capital. These two components of the transfer include \$25,747,349 of growth-related projects funded from development charges (Schedule C), as well as transfers to development charges of \$21,824,826 resulting mainly from the closure of capital projects as well as the realignment of funding sources.

In addition to the \$25,747,349 of growth-related capital projects funded from development charges in 2020, there are other associated sources of project funding which are identified in Schedule C.

A summary of the development charge activity for the year is as follows:

January 1, 2020 opening balance	\$43,562,485
Development Charges received	\$38,900,721
Interest	\$122,036
Net amount transferred to capital projects	(\$3,922,523)
Balance as at December 31, 2020	<u>\$78,662,719</u>

The balance of the Development Charge Reserve Fund is made up of the following major categories:

City-Wide Soft	(\$5,174,711)
City-Wide Hard	\$76,371,372
Area-Specific	\$7,466,058
Total	<u>\$78,662,719</u>

In accordance with the Council-approved Development Charges Borrowing Policy, the City loaned \$20,000,000 to the development charges reserve in February 2020 to offset the negative balances of some reserves, and assist with cash flow. The negative reserves resulted from the pre-emplacment of facilities ahead of growth (i.e. Aaniin Community Centre). In June 2020, the \$20,000,000 loan was repaid from the DC reserves as the reserves had recovered and had an overall positive balance. The City charged interest at the prime rate on the loan, which dropped from 3.95% to 2.45% between February and June 2020 when the loan was repaid.

### **Interest**

During 2020, there were no long term investments of development charge reserve funds however, the cash on hand earned interest at a competitive rate at the bank in line with short term investment rates. The interest cost on the internal borrowing of \$20,000,000, which was repaid from the development charge reserves in June of 2020, amounted to less than the interest earned and therefore resulted in a positive net interest of \$122,036 (Schedule D).

**Development Charge Credits**

Schedule E provides information on credit agreements that the City has with developers. The City has future credit obligations in the amount of \$10,230,087, which is to be offset from development charges payable when the respective developers execute their agreements.

**Component Categories**

Schedule F provides the year-end balance of each reserve for 2018 through 2020 along with the percentage change over the three-year period.

The chart below summarizes the year-end DC reserve balances by component category, taking into account the total approved capital commitments:

	YEAR-END BALANCES			% CHANGE
	2018	2019	2020	2018 - 2020
CITY-WIDE SOFT SERVICES	(\$13,220,358)	(\$22,945,786)	(\$5,174,711)	61%
CITY-WIDE HARD SERVICES	\$53,416,339	\$60,034,173	\$76,371,372	43%
AREA SPECIFIC CHARGES	\$6,982,936	\$6,474,098	\$7,466,058	7%
TOTAL DEVELOPMENT CHARGE RESERVE	\$47,178,917	\$43,562,485	\$78,662,719	67%
CAPITAL COMMITMENTS AT YEAR-END	(\$28,611,850)	(\$50,982,025)	(\$57,117,182)	-100%
<b>ADJUSTED DC RESERVE BALANCES</b>	<b>\$18,567,067</b>	<b>(\$7,419,540)</b>	<b>\$21,545,537</b>	<b>16%</b>

The City Wide Soft services reserves negative balance has improved since 2018 due to reduced capital spending. The City Wide Soft services reserves are in a negative balance due to the pre-employment of recreational facilities.

The increase in the City Wide Hard reserve is primarily due to a slower pace of expenditures on engineering-related infrastructure than anticipated, to match growth patterns.

**Development Charges Committed To Approved Projects**

Growth-related capital projects approved as part of the annual budgets generally denote development charges as the major funding source, but the actual cash funding for capital expenditures totaling one million dollars or greater is not transferred to the project until required. This process retains cash within the Development Charge Reserve Fund to earn as much interest as possible for the reserve. Upon the approval of the budget, the reserve balances in the Development Charge Reserve Fund are considered to be committed to projects underway, or about to start.

The reserve balance for the year ended December 31, 2020 is significantly lower when capital commitments of \$57,117,182 are taken into account, leaving an adjusted (committed) reserve balance of \$21,545,537. The total capital commitments for 2020 represent an increase of \$6,135,157 (\$57,117,182 less \$50,982,025) compared to the prior year.

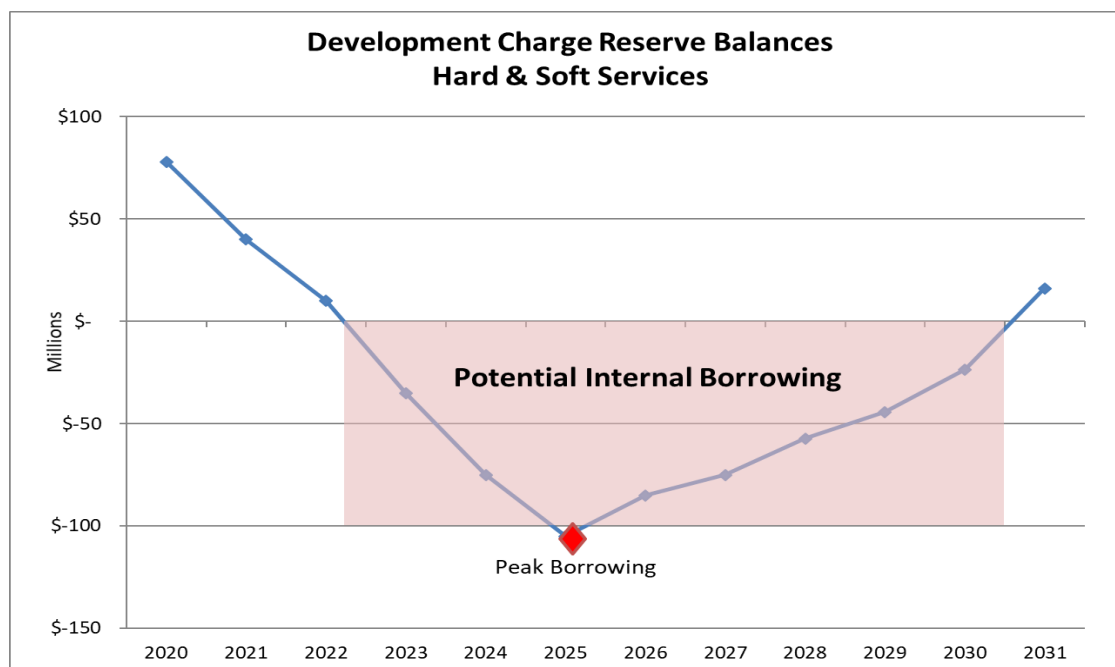
The capital commitments relate mainly to City Wide Hard and City Wide Soft services projects which total approximately \$32M and \$25M respectively. The City Wide Hard includes projects such as the Miller Pond Site Preparation and Property Acquisition (\$15M), Highway 404 Midblock Crossing, North of 16<sup>th</sup> Ave (\$5M), Miller Avenue – CN to Kennedy Road (\$4M), and construction of the John Street Multi-Use Pathway (\$3M). The City Wide Soft capital commitments includes projects such as the design & construction of the East Works Yard (\$8M) and projects relating to park development, such as construction for the Cornell Community Park (\$8M) and Box Grove Community Park (\$4M). The adjusted (committed) reserve balance of \$21.5M represents a \$28.9M increase from the prior year closing balance of (\$7.4M).

The chart below summarizes the 2020 year-end reserve balances and capital commitments:

	<b>YEAR-END RESERVE BALANCE</b>	<b>CAPITAL COMMITMENTS</b>	<b>ADJUSTED RESERVE BALANCE</b>
CITY-WIDE SOFT SERVICES	(\$5,174,711)	(\$24,840,698)	(\$30,015,409)
CITY-WIDE HARD SERVICES	\$76,371,372	(\$32,276,484)	\$44,094,888
AREA-SPECIFIC CHARGES	\$7,466,058	\$0	\$7,466,058
<b>TOTAL DEVELOPMENT CHARGE RESERVE</b>	<b>\$78,662,719</b>	<b>(\$57,117,182)</b>	<b>\$21,545,537</b>

### **Debt**

A DC cash-flow forecast was developed taking into consideration current capital commitments, identified growth-related projects included in the 2017 DC Background Study capital program, and anticipated DC collections. The capital infrastructure to service anticipated growth is required to be installed ahead of the new population and, this pre-emplacment of facilities will result in debt in the DC reserves (expenditure preceding revenue inflow). The forecast shows that peak borrowing is projected to occur in 2025 at approximately \$100M with recovery expected to occur around 2030, as shown in the graph below. The anticipated debt will mainly be financed through internal borrowing from the City's reserves. The timing and quantum of projected debt will be updated when the new Regional growth forecast (to 2051) and associated infrastructure requirements are received and assessed.



### **Indexing**

Section 15 of the City's Development Charge by-laws state that the charges referred to in each of the by-laws' shall be increased, if applicable, semi-annually without an amendment to the by-laws, on the first day of January and the first day of July, of each year, in accordance with the most recent change in the Statistics Canada Quarterly, *Construction Price Statistics* (Catalogue No. 62-007). Indexing the City's development charges helps to partially mitigate the impact of inflationary increases on future growth-related costs.

In accordance with the by-laws, the development charge rates were indexed up by 1.7% on January 1, 2020 and 1.2% on July 1, 2020. This represents the increase in the prescribed index, the Statistics Canada Quarterly, *Construction Price Statistics* for non-residential buildings in Toronto.

### **Compliance with the Development Charges Act, 1997**

For the year ended December 31, 2020, the Reserve Balance and Annual Activity Statement is in compliance with the *DCA 1997, as amended*. The City has not imposed additional levies in accordance with Subsection 59.1 (1) of the Act.

### **HUMAN RESOURCES CONSIDERATIONS:**

Not Applicable.

### **ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:**

Not Applicable.

**BUSINESS UNITS CONSULTED AND AFFECTED:**

Not Applicable.

**RECOMMENDED BY:**

Joel Lustig  
Treasurer

Trinela Cane  
Commissioner, Corporate Services

**ATTACHMENTS:**

Schedule A – Summary Statement - Balances by Component of the Reserve Fund  
Schedule B – Continuity Statement - Funds Received and Dispersed by Category  
Schedule C – Capital Fund Transfers Addendum  
Schedule D – Summary of Investments - Reg. 74/97 Section 8 of the Municipal Act  
Schedule E – Credit Obligation Summary  
Schedule F – Statement of Change in Year-end Balances



**DEVELOPMENT CHARGES RESERVE**  
**Summary Statement Including Accounts Receivable**  
Balances by Category as at December 31, 2020

**SCHEDULE A**

	<b>CASH</b>	<b>LETTERS OF CREDIT</b>	<b>RECEIVABLE AT PERMIT STAGE</b>	<b>RESERVE BALANCE</b>	<b>COMMITMENTS TO APPROVED CAPITAL PROJECTS</b>	<b>ADJUSTED RESERVE BALANCE</b>
ADMINISTRATION	(\$12,482,889)	-	\$676,388	(\$11,806,501)	-	(\$11,806,501)
FIRE	\$3,130,407	-	\$937,460	\$4,067,867	-	\$4,067,867
LIBRARY	\$1,509,956	-	\$2,538,886	\$4,048,842	-	\$4,048,842
PARKLAND	\$36,360,941	-	\$6,199,081	\$42,560,022	(\$16,634,131)	\$25,925,891
RECREATION	(\$59,874,289)	-	\$9,255,764	(\$50,618,525)	-	(\$50,618,525)
PUBLIC WORKS	\$5,027,269	-	\$802,887	\$5,830,156	(\$8,206,567)	(\$2,376,411)
PARKING	\$218,528	-	\$41,200	\$259,728	-	\$259,728
WASTE MANAGEMENT	\$231,737	-	\$251,963	\$483,700	-	\$483,700
<b>TOTAL CITY WIDE SOFT SERVICES</b>	<b>(\$25,878,340)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$20,703,629</b>	<b>(\$5,174,711)</b>	<b>(\$24,840,698)</b>	<b>(\$30,015,409)</b>
<b>CITY WIDE HARD SERVICES</b>	<b>\$65,180,385</b>	<b>\$10,079,052</b>	<b>\$1,111,935</b>	<b>\$76,371,372</b>	<b>(\$32,276,484)</b>	<b>\$44,094,888</b>
<b>AREA SPECIFIC CHARGES</b>	<b>\$7,457,766</b>	<b>\$8,292</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$7,466,058</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$7,466,058</b>
<b>TOTAL DEVELOPMENT CHARGE RESERVE</b>	<b>\$46,759,811</b>	<b>\$10,087,344</b>	<b>\$21,815,564</b>	<b>\$78,662,719</b>	<b>(\$57,117,182)</b>	<b>\$21,545,537</b>

**DEVELOPMENT CHARGES RESERVE**  
**Continuity Statement Including Accounts Receivable**  
Balances by Category as at December 31, 2020

**SCHEDULE B**

	BALANCE AT JANUARY 1 2020	DEVELOPMENT CHARGES EARNED	INTEREST	SUB TOTAL	TRANSFER TO CAPITAL PROJECTS	TRANSFER FROM CAPITAL PROJECTS <sup>1</sup>	BALANCE AT DECEMBER 31 2020	COMMITMENTS TO APPROVED CAPITAL PROJECTS	ADJUSTED BALANCE AT DECEMBER 31 2020
ADMINISTRATION	(\$12,064,685)	\$704,272	(\$399,617)	(\$11,760,030)	(\$252,180)	\$205,709	(\$11,806,501)	-	(\$11,806,501)
FIRE	\$3,055,595	\$955,122	\$57,150	\$4,067,867	-	-	\$4,067,867	-	\$4,067,867
LIBRARY	\$1,738,983	\$2,418,054	(\$44,115)	\$4,112,922	(\$64,080)	-	\$4,048,842	-	\$4,048,842
PARKLAND	\$38,239,021	\$5,904,044	\$816,523	\$44,959,588	(\$7,072,275)	\$4,672,709	\$42,560,022	(\$16,634,131)	\$25,925,891
RECREATION	(\$57,764,102)	\$8,815,253	(\$1,739,502)	(\$50,688,351)	-	\$69,826	(\$50,618,525)	-	(\$50,618,525)
PUBLIC WORKS	\$3,294,675	\$801,050	\$88,441	\$4,184,166	(\$7,939,087)	\$9,585,077	\$5,830,156	(\$8,206,567)	(\$2,376,411)
PARKING	\$213,082	\$41,902	\$4,744	\$259,728	-	-	\$259,728	-	\$259,728
WASTE MANAGEMENT	\$341,645	\$239,970	\$2,085	\$583,700	(\$100,000)	-	\$483,700	-	\$483,700
<b>TOTAL CITY WIDE SOFT SERVICES</b>	<b>(\$22,945,786)</b>	<b>\$19,879,667</b>	<b>(\$1,214,291)</b>	<b>(\$4,280,410)</b>	<b>(\$15,427,622)</b>	<b>\$14,533,321</b>	<b>(\$5,174,711)</b>	<b>(\$24,840,698)</b>	<b>(\$30,015,409)</b>
<b>CTIY WIDE HARD SERVICES</b>	<b>\$60,034,173</b>	<b>\$18,158,159</b>	<b>\$1,207,262</b>	<b>\$79,399,594</b>	<b>(\$10,319,727)</b>	<b>\$7,291,505</b>	<b>\$76,371,372</b>	<b>(\$32,276,484)</b>	<b>\$44,094,888</b>
<b>AREA SPECIFIC CHARGES</b>	<b>\$6,474,098</b>	<b>\$862,895</b>	<b>\$129,065</b>	<b>\$7,466,058</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$7,466,058</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$7,466,058</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$43,562,485</b>	<b>\$38,900,721</b>	<b>\$122,036</b>	<b>\$82,585,242</b>	<b>(\$25,747,349)</b>	<b>\$21,824,826</b>	<b>\$78,662,719</b>	<b>(\$57,117,182)</b>	<b>\$21,545,537</b>

Note:

1) Relates mainly to funds being returned from closed capital projects

## DEVELOPMENT CHARGES RESERVE

## SCHEDULE C

## Capital Fund Transfers Addendum - Total Project Funding

Balances by Category as at December 31, 2020

PROJECT	PROJECT DESCRIPTION	CITY WIDE SOFT DC FUNDING	NON-DC GROWTH FUNDING <sup>1</sup>	OTHER PROJECT FUNDING <sup>2</sup>	2020 PROJECT FUNDING
7352	Design Capital Contingency	\$37,344	-	-	\$37,344
13011	Kirkham Drive Park Phase 2 Construction	\$309,434	-	-	\$309,434
16170	Growth Related Park Improvements	\$25,000	-	(\$58)	\$24,942
17017	Cornell Community Park - Phase 1 of 3 Construction	\$6,694	-	-	\$6,694
19288	Design and Construction of Workyard	\$7,000,000	\$189,401	-	\$7,189,401
20016	Consultant Studies	\$82,800	-	\$9,200	\$92,000
20019	Housing Summit	\$18,000	-	\$2,000	\$20,000
20022	York Region Employment Survey	\$35,100	-	\$3,900	\$39,000
20024	Box Grove Community Park - Construction	\$1,900,000	-	\$679,990	\$2,579,990
20025	Cornell Community Park - Construction	\$800,000	-	\$984,010	\$1,784,010
20026	Cornell Parkette - Design & Construction	\$361,260	-	\$40,140	\$401,400
20027	Leitchcroft Building - Construction	\$642,060	-	\$71,340	\$713,400
20028	Leitchcroft Townhouse Park - Design & Construction	\$411,995	-	\$45,777	\$457,772
20029	Wismer McCowan Woodlot Park - Design & Construction	\$100,000	-	\$96,228	\$196,228
20030	York Downs Park - Design & Construction	\$593,421	-	\$65,936	\$659,357
20062	Bill 108 - Community Benefits Charge By-law	\$116,280	\$12,920	-	\$129,200
20063	Internal Project Management	\$162,000	-	\$766,800	\$928,800
20178	Markham Centre Library - Phase 1 of 2	\$64,080	\$7,120	-	\$71,200
20187	Incremental Growth Related Winter Maintenance Vehicles	\$450,000	-	-	\$450,000
20219	Corporate Fleet Growth - Non-Fleet	\$10,200	-	-	\$10,200
20225	New Fleet - Parks	\$98,900	-	-	\$98,900
20226	New Fleet - Roads	\$289,887	-	-	\$289,887
20231	Growth Related Parks Improvements	\$394,920	\$43,880	-	\$438,800
20253	Incremental Growth Related Waste Management Vehicles	\$100,000	-	-	\$100,000
20291	Construction of Reesor Park Tennis Bubbles	\$240,300	\$26,700	-	\$267,000
20294	Seasonal Tennis Bubble - Site Servicing	\$45,000	\$5,000	-	\$50,000
20295	Seasonal Tennis Bubble - Clubhouse Winterization and Fire Proofing	\$243,000	\$27,000	-	\$270,000
20296	Seasonal Tennis Bubble - Fire Access Route	\$166,500	\$18,500	-	\$185,000
20297	Seasonal Tennis Bubble - Consultant Costs	\$110,700	\$12,300	-	\$123,000
20298	Seasonal Tennis Bubble - Tree Removal, Stumping and Replanting	\$37,170	\$4,130	-	\$41,300
20305	Blodwen Davies Park Soil and Grading Works	\$427,707	-	\$47,523	\$475,230
21019	Berczy Beckett Park (Cherna Ave.) - Design & Construction	\$53,820	-	-	\$53,820
21022	Green Lane Park - Design and Construction	\$43,200	-	-	\$43,200
21023	Yonge and Grandview Park - Design and Construction	\$50,850	-	-	\$50,850
<b>TOTAL FUNDED CITY-WIDE SOFT</b>		<b>\$15,427,622</b>	<b>\$346,951</b>	<b>\$2,812,786</b>	<b>\$18,587,359</b>

## Notes:

<sup>1</sup> Non-DC Growth Funding may not equal 10% of total funding for the year due to timing of project funding. Negative amounts reflect returns.<sup>2</sup> Other Project Funding includes sources such as grants, life cycle, developer funding and taxes

## SCHEDULE C (Cont'd)

PROJECT	PROJECT DESCRIPTION	CITY WIDE HARD DC FUNDING	NON-DC GROWTH FUNDING	OTHER PROJECT FUNDING	2020 PROJECT FUNDING
13881	Engineering Capital Contingency	\$1,590	-	-	\$1,590
14056	Rodick Extension - Phase 2 of 3 - Miller to 14th	\$529,026	-	-	\$529,026
14477	Class EA Study-Pumping Station Improvements	\$378,335	-	-	\$378,335
15062	Multi-Use Pathways 2015 - Phase 2 of 4	\$18,491	-	\$58,604	\$77,095
17037	404 North Collector Roads (EA)	\$13,315	-	-	\$13,315
18049	Rouge Valley Trail Multi-Use Pathway (Phase 4 of 5)	\$117,113	\$63,061	-	\$180,173
19023	Secondary Plans	\$446,389	-	-	\$446,389
19033	Elgin Mills Road Environmental Conditions Study	\$95,820	-	-	\$95,820
19035	Hwy 404 Midblock Crossing, N of 16th Ave & Cachet Woods	\$200,000	-	-	\$200,000
19037	John Street Multi-Use Pathway (MUP) (Construction)	\$100,000	-	-	\$100,000
19047	Stormwater Thermal Cooling Pilot Project	\$15,548	-	\$32,741	\$48,289
19262	Markham Centre Trails – Design (Phase 1 of 4)	\$17,752	-	\$9,559	\$27,311
20021	Planning & Design Growth Related Recovery	\$669,300	-	-	\$669,300
20031	404 North District Water Supply (PD7) - EA	\$467,800	-	-	\$467,800
20032	Active Transportation Awareness Program	\$61,880	\$33,320	-	\$95,200
20033	Denison Street Extension Environmental Assessment	\$560,700	-	-	\$560,700
20034	Downstream Improvements Program (Construction)	\$875,420	-	\$471,380	\$1,346,800
20035	Downstream Improvements Program (Design)	\$225,615	-	\$121,485	\$347,100
20038	Markham Centre Trails - Phase 1 (Construction)	\$665,723	-	\$358,466	\$1,024,189
20039	Markham Centre Trails - Phase 2 (Design)	\$163,085	-	\$87,815	\$250,900
20041	Pedestrian Accessibility Improvements Program-Phase 6 of 7	\$288,815	\$155,516	-	\$444,331
20042	Rouge Valley Trail (Kennedy Road North) – Design	\$72,505	\$48,987	-	\$121,492
20043	Servicing & Environmental Study- Markville Secondary Plan	\$483,700	-	-	\$483,700
20045	Sidewalk Program (Design)	\$485,500	-	-	\$485,500
20046	Smart Commute Markham-Richmond Hill	\$76,300	-	-	\$76,300
20047	Growth Related Recovery	\$713,400	-	-	\$713,400
20048	Streetlight Program (Construction)	\$833,200	-	-	\$833,200
20049	Streetlighting Program (Design)	\$190,365	-	-	\$190,365
20051	Traffic Operational Improvements	\$4,940	-	\$91,560	\$96,500
20052	Transportation Study – Markville Secondary Plan	\$250,900	-	-	\$250,900
20063	Internal Project Management	\$766,800	-	\$162,000	\$928,800
21029	Markham Centre Trail Phase 1B Construction	\$530,400	-	-	\$530,400
<b>TOTAL FUNDED CITY-WIDE HARD</b>		<b>\$10,319,727</b>	<b>\$300,883</b>	<b>\$1,393,610</b>	<b>\$12,014,220</b>

**DEVELOPMENT CHARGES RESERVE****SCHEDULE D****Summary of Investments**

Balances by Category as at December 31, 2020

<b>ISSUER</b>	<b>YIELD</b>	<b>DATE BOUGHT</b>	<b>MATURITY DATE</b>	<b>COST</b>	<b>MATURITY VALUE</b>	<b>INTEREST</b>
Internal Borrowing Interest						(\$195,589)
Bank Interest/Other						\$317,625
<b>TOTAL DCA INTEREST</b>						<b>\$122,036</b>

**DEVELOPMENT CHARGES RESERVE****SCHEDULE E****Credit Obligation Summary**

Balances by Category as at December 31, 2020

	BALANCE AT JANUARY 1 2020	NEW AGREEMENTS	REDUCTIONS IN CREDITS	BALANCE AT DECEMBER 31 2020
<b>AREA-SPECIFIC RESERVES</b>				
AREA 5 - ARMADALE				
Armadale Developers' Group	\$171,719	-	-	\$171,719
AREAS 9, 42B.6, 42B.8				
Markham Avenue 7 Developers Group	\$2,339,148	-	-	\$2,339,148
AREAS 9, 42B.6, 42B.8				
North Markham Avenue 7 Developers Group	\$3,434,788	-	-	\$3,434,788
AREA 9 - PD 1-7				
1820266 Ontario Inc & UDC Corp.	\$651,212	-	-	\$651,212
AREA 23 - Mount Joy				
Wismer Commons Developers Group Inc.	\$816,354	-	-	\$816,354
AREA 42A-1 HELEN AVENUE				
Abidien Inc.	\$343,373	-	-	\$343,373
AREA 42B.6 - MARKHAM CENTRE S. HWY 7				
1826918 Ontario Ltd.	\$526,893	-	-	\$526,893
AREA 43 -				
Cornell CSA Group Limited		\$3,629,890	\$3,379,890	\$250,000
AREA 45A - WISMER				
Wismer Commons Developers Group Inc.	-	-	-	-
AREA 46 - CATHEDRAL				
Woodbine Cachet West Inc.	\$109,150	-	-	\$109,150
<b>CITY WIDE HARD RESERVES</b>				
Angus Glen Village Limited	\$149,307	-	-	\$149,307
Forest Bay Homes Ltd.	1,294,393			\$1,294,393
Angus Glen Development (2003) Ltd.		\$1,490,004	\$1,490,004	-
Forest Bay Homes Ltd.	-	\$2,278,117	\$2,134,367	\$143,750
<b>TOTAL CREDIT OBLIGATIONS</b>	<b>\$9,836,337</b>	<b>\$7,398,011</b>	<b>\$7,004,261</b>	<b>\$10,230,087</b>

**DEVELOPMENT CHARGES RESERVE**  
**Statement of Change in Year-End Balances**  
Balances by Category as at December 31, 2020

**SCHEDULE F**

	2018	2019	2020	% CHANGE 2018 - 2020
<b>CITY-WIDE SOFT SERVICES</b>				
ADMINISTRATION	(\$11,032,652)	(\$12,064,685)	(\$11,806,501)	
FIRE	\$2,064,279	\$3,055,595	\$4,067,867	
LIBRARY	(\$385,372)	\$1,738,982	\$4,048,842	
PARKLAND	\$39,628,611	\$38,239,022	\$42,560,022	
RECREATION	(\$59,213,788)	(\$57,764,104)	(\$50,618,525)	
PUBLIC WORKS	\$15,333,890	\$3,294,676	\$5,830,156	
PARKING	\$163,273	\$213,083	\$259,728	
WASTE MANAGEMENT	221,401	\$341,645	\$483,700	
<b>CITY-WIDE SOFT SERVICES</b>	<b>(\$13,220,358)</b>	<b>(\$22,945,786)</b>	<b>(\$5,174,711)</b>	<b>61%</b>
<b>CTIY WIDE HARD SERVICES</b>	<b>\$53,416,339</b>	<b>\$60,034,173</b>	<b>\$76,371,372</b>	<b>43%</b>
<b>AREA SPECIFIC CHARGES</b>	<b>\$6,982,936</b>	<b>\$6,474,098</b>	<b>\$7,466,058</b>	<b>7%</b>
<b>TOTAL DEVELOPMENT CHARGE RESERVE</b>	<b>\$47,178,917</b>	<b>\$43,562,485</b>	<b>\$78,662,719</b>	<b>67%</b>

# **DEVELOPMENT CHARGES BACKGROUND STUDY UPDATE**

**General Committee  
April 6, 2021**



## Agenda

1. Current Development Charges By-laws
2. Bill 197, COVID-19 Economic Recovery Act, 2020
3. DC Background Study Objectives
4. DC Background Study Update
5. Growth-Related Capital
6. Policy Review
7. Public Consultation
8. Timeline for Background Study Update
9. Council Sub-Committee

# 1. Current Development Charge (DC) By-laws

- The City of Markham passed its City Wide Hard (CWH), City Wide Soft (CWS) and Area Specific Development Charge (ASDC) By-laws in December 2017
- DCs are governed by the *Development Charges Act, 1997* (*DCA*) which stipulates that the maximum life of a DC By-law is 5 years from date of enactment – may be repealed/replaced earlier
- The City is required to pass new CWH, CWS and ASDC By-laws by December 13, 2022

## 2. Bill 197, COVID-19 Economic Recovery Act, 2020

- Proclaimed September 18<sup>th</sup> 2020 and municipalities have two years to transition to new regime (i.e. September 18<sup>th</sup> 2022)
- Includes amendments to the *DCA* and the *Planning Act*
- Changes introduced to be reflected in the new DC bylaws:
  - Soft services under the amended *DCA* will no longer be subject to a mandatory 10% discount → Municipalities can update DC by-laws any time to recover 100% of eligible costs of services
  - Option to use DCs interchangeably with Community Benefits Charges to fund growth-related capital projects
  - The City is no longer able to collect for municipal parking

## 2. Bill 197, COVID-19 Economic Recovery Act, 2020

- Introduction of a Community Benefits Charge (CBC)
  - Essentially a replacement for current Section 37 (density bonusing)
  - Applies to only single and lower-tier municipalities
  - Can only be imposed on apartment buildings with at least 10 units and at least 5 storeys
  - Charge is capped based on 4% of the value of land to be developed
  - Can be used to fund growth-related eligible services not fully funded through DCs
  - As CBCs will likely be applied to the non-DC portion of projects identified in the Background Study, the CBC project will be undertaken concurrently

## 3. DC Background Study Objectives

- a) Recover Maximum Amount for Growth-Related Costs (e.g. to recover 10% of soft services)
- b) Promote/Incentivize Specific Development Types (e.g. affordable housing)
- c) Streamline Administration and Alignment with the Region

## 4. DC Background Study Update

- In doing DC Background Study updates, the City uses growth forecasts that are prepared by the Region as it identifies where growth is projected to occur and where the resulting service requirements should be built
- Draft Regional forecasts anticipated to receive Council approval later in 2021
- A Regional Transportation Master Plan (TMP) will then be developed → estimated to be approved Q2 2022
- With the estimated timelines above, there is not sufficient time for the City to determine its infrastructure requirements to support the new forecasts in order to meet a December 2022 timeline

## 4. DC Background Study Update

- As a result, staff will move forward with updating the DC Background Study using the 2031 forecast horizon, with an anticipated date of completion by April 2022
- This will allow the City to recover the additional 10% of soft services allowed under Bill 197 at an earlier date, as opposed to December 2022 (i.e. when the current by-laws expire)
- Note that DC by-laws can be repealed *within* the 5 year timeline. Therefore, once Regional projections/master plans have been finalized, the goal would be to not wait the full five years until the next Background Study is undertaken

## 5. Growth-Related Capital

- Only growth-related costs can be included in the development charge
- Portions of projects related to prior growth or replacement must be financed from other sources – e.g. taxes, grants
- Increases in service levels cannot be funded through DCs, but can be funded through CBCs
- Projects oversized for future growth may be recovered from future development if not financed from development charges
- Maintenance and replacement of new and existing facilities and infrastructure are funded through tax dollars, not DCs



## 6. Policy Review

- Reassess various by-law provisions and policies, e.g. review treatment of non-profit daycare facilities
- Explore possible alignment with York Region policies, as far as possible
  - Treatment of stacked townhouses to be reviewed
  - Continue with alignment of apartment sizes for consistency
  - Explore other policy initiatives as they become known

## 7. Public Consultation

- The *Development Charges Act* requires a minimum of one Public Meeting to be held prior to the adoption of the by-laws
  - A minimum of three weeks' notice must be given
  - The Background Study and proposed By-law(s) must be made available a minimum of two weeks prior to the meeting
- The Background Study must be available to the public 60 days prior to Council approval
- Staff will engage the development community throughout the process as per past practice

## 8. Timeline for Background Study Update

**April 2021 – June  
2021**

**July - September  
2021**

**September –  
December 2021**

**January 2022**

**February -  
March 2022**

**Review Growth  
Forecast, Growth-  
Related Capital  
Requirements.  
Policy Review with  
Sub-Committee**

**Determine  
Historic Service  
Levels,  
Preliminary  
Calculations**

**Meetings with  
Sub-Committee &  
Public Consultations**

**Finalize  
Background Study  
& Council  
Endorsement**

**Statutory Public  
Meeting, Finalize  
Study & By-laws**

**April 2022  
Approval of  
DC  
Background  
Study and By-  
laws**

## 9. Council Sub-Committee

- To align with past practice, staff will convene a Council Development Charge Sub Committee to:
  - Discuss the various policy updates
  - Review the preliminary data and charges
- Staff recommend the following participants:
  - Mayor
  - Chair of the Budget Sub Committee
  - Vice Chair of the Budget Sub Committee

# QUESTIONS



# **Celebrate Markham Grant Program**

## **2021-2022 Funding Cycle Status Update & Alternative Program Options & Implications**

### **Presentation to General Committee April 6, 2021**

Prepared by:  
Christina Kakaflikas, Acting Director, Economic Growth,  
Culture & Entrepreneurship

Don De Los Santos, Manager,  
Markham Small Business Centre



## Recommendations

Status Quo	Recommendations	Funding Implications
<p>4 Funding Categories (and caps per <b>applicant</b>):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Cultural Events &amp; Programs (up to \$5k)</li><li>• Major Community Festivals (up to \$10k – minimum 10,000 attendees and over multiple days)</li><li>• Seniors Clubs (up to \$3k)</li><li>• Sports Events (up to \$10k or \$20k)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 2021-22 Funding Cycle – require applicants in the Major Community Festivals category to <b>switch to virtual</b> (or submit a smaller scale in-person) which would effectively reduce the funding cap per applicant for the Major Community Festivals category from \$10k down to \$5k</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 2021-22 Funding Cycle – for the Major Community Festivals category, the funding cap per <b>applicant</b> would be reduced from \$10k down to \$5k<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ For all other categories maintain funding caps per applicant, per category as per status quo</li></ul></li></ul>
<p>Total Funding envelope for Community events is \$256k (and caps per <b>category</b>):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Cultural Events &amp; Programs - \$76k</li><li>• Major Community Festivals - \$100k</li><li>• Seniors Clubs - \$40k</li><li>• Sports Events - \$40k</li></ul> <p>And for other categories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• City-led Events - \$84k</li><li>• Markham Arts Council - \$30k</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 2021-22 Funding Cycle – maintain funding caps per <b>category</b> as per status quo</li><li>• 2022-23 Funding Cycle – THAT any unused community events funding envelope (up to \$256k) from 2021-22 Funding Cycle be carried forward in order to expand the total 2022-23 community events funding envelope, allowing for increased flexibility in providing support to a broader set of applicants</li><li>• Maintain funding envelopes for both City-led events and the Markham Arts Council as per status quo</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 2021-22 Funding Cycle unused community events funding envelope (up to \$256k) would be <b>carried forward</b> into the subsequent cycle</li><li>• 2022-23 Funding Cycle overall community events funding envelope would be <b>expanded</b> by an amount equal to the 2021-22 unused community events funding envelope and distributed proportionately to each funding category</li></ul>



## Purpose

- To seek Council direction on proposed changes to Celebrate Markham's intake, approval and pre-allocation/funding processes for the 2021-22 Funding Cycle
- Certain event/program organizers have contacted the City for information about the City's position with respect to Celebrate Markham, specifically regarding:
  - Direction on allowable in-person gatherings
  - Considerations for switch to virtual format
  - Considerations for postponement to the following year
- Internal staff departments that support certain event organizers in the execution of their events have identified the need to take a consistent and aligned approach to funding pre-allocations/commitments made under the Celebrate Markham grant program, with the limitations imposed by anticipated public health restrictions and reduced staff capacity to actually support execution of these event proposals





## Update on Celebrate Markham Program

### Background

- For last year's 2020-21 funding cycle, Council approved funding recommendations to 53 Celebrate Markham applicants, totaling \$184,500 out of \$256,000 available, as well as \$30,000 to Markham Arts Council
- Council approved certain special provisions allowing for:
  - Events unexpectedly forced to cancel: consideration of financial relief of up to 50% of approved grant amount
  - Events that switch to virtual have the opportunity to be considered but that the allocation be limited to up to 25% of the revised budget
  - Events may postpone to the following year without having to fill out a new application form



## Update on Celebrate Markham Program

### Background

- During last year's 2020-21 funding cycle, out of the 53 applicant funding recommendations approved:
  - 18 grants released so far
    - 4 fully virtual
    - 14 mix of virtual and in-person
  - 12 decided to postpone to the following year (2021-22)
  - 5 cancelled
  - 18 pending decisions
- For the upcoming 2021-22 funding cycle, 64 applications are under consideration (including 12 postponements and 18 pending decisions from last year's 2020-21 funding cycle)
  - 44 proposing in-person activity (tentatively)
  - 14 proposing in-person but built-in plan to switch to virtual
  - 4 mix of virtual and in-person
  - 2 fully virtual



## Recommendations For 2021-22 Funding Cycle

Status Quo	Recommendations	Funding Implications
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>City-led Events (\$84k) typically include:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Senior's Hall of Fame</li><li>Canada Day Celebrations</li><li>Doors Open Markham</li><li>Markham Milliken Children's Festival</li><li>Earth Hour</li><li>Markham Santa Claus Parade</li><li>Black History Month celebrations</li></ul></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>As per Corporate Communications and Community Engagement, any <b>in-person</b> activation of these events is temporarily suspended until further notice. Virtual events may be pursued.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Unused funding from City-led events in the 2021-22 Funding Cycle will <b>not</b> be carried forward into next year's funding cycle</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Markham Arts Council is separately considered and allocated funding of \$30,000 annually</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Maintain allocation as per status quo</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>No change</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><b>Sports Events</b> typically involve two groups of in-person participants:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) Athletes/coaches/judges/referees/organizers</li><li>b) Spectators</li></ul></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>In compliance with Public Health restrictions and Return-to-Play guidelines from relevant PSO/NSO, allow in-person participation from group (a) BUT not for group (b) – <b>only virtual/livestream</b> options will be considered for spectators</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>n/a</li></ul>



## Recommendations For 2021-22 Funding Cycle

Status Quo	Recommendations	Funding Implications
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Special provisions</b> were introduced in 2020-21 Funding Cycle for:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Cancellations (relief of up to 50% of grant allocation);</li><li>○ Postponements (no need to reapply the following year); and,</li><li>○ Alterations/switch to virtual (approve up to 25% of revised budgeted costs)</li></ul></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Maintain special provisions for Cancellations and Postponements<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ BUT for organizers who opt to alter plans and <b>switch to a virtual</b> format – allow support for up to 50% of budgeted costs instead of 25% as currently stated as per status quo (note: a limit does not and would not apply to Seniors Clubs applicants who switch to virtual)</li></ul></li><li>• Event and program organizers have expressed concern that private/corporate sponsorships and donations are scarcer than ever – a switch to a virtual format further exacerbates that scarcity, with sponsors less willing to participate; as well as this provision further limiting the amount that Celebrate Markham is able to support (down to 25%); forcing the organization to have to cover a greater proportion of the overall costs</li><li>• Increasing the Celebrate Markham allowable funding support from 25% to 50% provides additional assistance to offset these revenue shortfalls</li><li>• Such a change would help encourage organizers to at least pursue some continuing level of community engagement through virtual alternative programming thereby contributing to enhancing social cohesion, mental health and resilience in the community.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Funding caps and envelope are not affected, only the amount made available for a <b>virtual</b> program would be expanded (from 25% to up to 50%)</li></ul>



## Recommendations For 2021-22 Funding Cycle

### Example A: Impact on a Major Community Festival Applicant

- ABC Festival Group originally applied, hoping to qualify for the full \$10k available in the category, for an event they intended to spend \$50,000 on. They now decide to switch to virtual with a revised budget of \$10k.
- The switch to virtual already reduces the funding cap down to \$5k for Major Festival applicants, exacerbating lost sponsorships
- In addition at a 25% cap (on a \$10k revised budget), they would only qualify for up to \$2,500, rather than the full \$5k available.
- By making up to 50% available to the organization, their revised total budget need only be \$10,000 to qualify for the full \$5k available in this category; assuming of course, that the merits of the revised proposal meet the conditions necessary to recommend the full \$5k.

### Example B: Impact on a Smaller scale Cultural Programs Applicant

- XYZ Cultural Group originally applied, hoping to qualify for the full \$5k available in the category, for an event they intended to spend \$10,000 on. They now decide to switch to virtual with a revised budget of \$6k.
- The switch to virtual already exacerbates lost sponsorships
- In addition at a 25% cap (on an \$6k revised budget), they would only qualify for up to \$1,500, rather than the full \$5k available.
- By making up to 50% available to the organization, even on their revised budget of \$6k, they can at least qualify to receive \$3k instead of \$1,500; assuming of course, that the merits of the revised proposal meet the conditions necessary to recommend the \$3k amount.



## Recommendations For 2021-22 Funding Cycle

Status Quo	Recommendations	Funding Implications
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Events and Programs that require special events permits can typically apply and have funding <b>pre-allocated</b> to their proposal even if they have <b>not</b> actually secured confirmation of the location (note: funding would not be released until proof of venue permission is provided)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Event proposals planned to occur in-person at locations such as:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Use of Civic Centre (indoor and/or outdoor);</li><li>Require road closures;</li><li>Occur in public parks; or,</li><li>Any other outdoor private property but that requires municipal approval (e.g., noise exemption, building permit, traffic management);</li></ul></li><li>Would only be given consideration towards a <b>virtual event only</b> (i.e., no pre-allocation will be considered for in-person proposals planned to occur at these locations)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Such virtual events would be subject to the above consideration of allowing for up to 50% of budgeted costs.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Indoor and Outdoor gatherings have no limits (other than as per physical capacity of space)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Regardless of category, any in-person proposal shall be limited to less than 50 for indoors, and less than 100 outdoors (or for unstaffed venues – indoor not permitted and for outdoors less than 25 permitted).</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>n/a</li><li>Based on advice received from special events experts, during 2021, Ontario will likely continue to remain in the Provincial Framework</li><li>The suggested limits represent the best-case scenario of Markham being in Green-Prevent under the Provincial framework</li></ul>



## Recommendations For 2021-22 Funding Cycle

Status Quo	Recommendations	Funding Implications
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Proof/approval of venue and insurance is required from <b>all</b> event organizers as a condition before funds will be released</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Maintain requirement as per status quo</li><li>• Add additional requirement that organizers must sign addendum/attestation acknowledging that organizers take full responsibility for ensuring adherence to Public Health restrictions and suggest a checklist of requirements (e.g., safety plan, contact tracing plan, etc.)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• n/a</li><li>• But time/capacity required for Legal Dept. to draft addendum/attestation</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Release of grant funds <b>can</b> occur up to 60 days prior to the scheduled event</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Shorten release to up to 30 days prior to increase certainty of event proceeding as expected</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• n/a</li></ul>



## Next Steps

- Upon Council approval of these recommendations, communicate updates to applicants
- Allow 4 weeks for applicants who had originally proposed in-person activity to re-consider their position and either postpone for the year, or alter their plans to switch to virtual.
- Subsequently allow 6 more weeks to draft, review and present a final recommendation report to Council by June 2021.





Report to: General Committee

Meeting Date: April 6, 2020

**SUBJECT:** Award of Construction Tender 003-T-21 West Thornhill – Phase 3B Storm Sewer and Watermain Replacement

**PREPARED BY:** Rob Grech, Acting Senior Manager, Infrastructure, Ext. 2357  
Flora Chan, Senior Buyer, Ext. 3189

**RECOMMENDATION:**

- 1) That the report entitled “Award of Construction Tender 003-T-21 West Thornhill – Phase 3B Storm Sewer and Watermain Replacement” be received; and,
- 2) That the contract for Tender 003-T-21 West Thornhill – Phase 3B Storm Sewer and Watermain Replacement be awarded to the lowest priced Bidder, Direct Underground Inc. in the amount of \$4,263,945.97, inclusive of HST impact; and,
- 3) That a 10% contingency in the amount of \$426,394.60 inclusive of HST, be established to cover any additional construction costs and that authorization to approve expending of this contingency amount up to the specified limit be in accordance with the Expenditure Control Policy; and,
- 4) That the construction award in the amount of \$4,690,340.57 (\$4,263,945.97 + \$426,394.60) be funded from the following capital projects:
  - (a) 058-6150-21164-005 “West Thornhill Flood Control Implementation - Phase 3B Construction”; and,
  - (b) 053-6150-21170-005 “Cast Iron Watermain Replacement – West Thornhill Phase 3B” as outlined under the financial considerations section in this report; and,
- 5) That the remaining funds in project #21164 “West Thornhill Flood Control Implementation - Phase 3B Construction” in the amount \$1,816,921.34 from the Stormwater Fee Reserve and the budget remaining in project #21170 “Cast Iron Watermain Replacement – West Thornhill Phase 3B” from the Waterworks Reserve in the amount of \$1,065,105.09 will be returned to the original funding source; and,
- 6) That a 5-year moratorium be placed on any major servicing and utility installation along restored areas including Johnston Street, Dove Lane, Ida Street, Wiarton Court, St. Andrews Court; and further,
- 7) That Staff be authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to this resolution.

**PURPOSE:**

The purpose of this report is to obtain Council approval to award the contract for the West Thornhill – Phase 3B Storm Sewer and Watermain Replacement.

**BACKGROUND:**

The stormwater flood control implementation strategy was approved by Council on November 8, 2011 for the West Thornhill area in accordance with the City's November 2010 Class EA Study. The City-wide Flood Control Program is a 30-year program with an estimated cost of \$367M - \$382M (2018 dollars). The first phase (1A, 1B & 1C) of the remediation included storm sewer capacity upgrades in the Bayview Glen neighbourhood, second phase (2A, 2B, 2C & 2D) includes the Grandview area and Phase 3 includes Clark Ave./ Henderson area. Implementation schedule is outlined in the table below:

Area	Proposed Implementation Schedule	Status
Phase 1A: Bayview Glen Area	2014 - 2015	Substantially completed as of Nov 2015; Maintenance completion Nov 2017
Phase 1B: Bayview Glen Area	2015 - 2016	Substantially completed as of Aug 2016; Maintenance completion Aug 2018
Phase 1C: Canadiana Road	2016	Substantially completed as of Dec 2016; Maintenance completion Dec 2018;
Phase 2A: Grandview Area	2016 - 2017	Substantially completed as of Dec 2016; Maintenance completion Dec 2018
Phase 2B: Grandview Area (Park & Proctor Ave)	2017 - 2018	Substantially completed as of Dec 2017; Maintenance completion Dec 2019
Phase 2C: Grandview Area	2018 - 2019	Substantially completed as of Nov 2019; Maintenance completion Nov 2021
Phase 2D: Grandview Area	2019 - 2020	Substantially completed as of Nov 2019; Maintenance completion Nov 2021
Phase 3A: Clark Ave./ Henderson Area	2020 - 2021	Scheduled Substantially completed Oct 2021 Scheduled Maintenance completion Oct 2023
Phase 3B: <b>Johnson Street Area (This Award)</b>	2021	<b>Construction Commencement April 2021</b>
Phase 3C: Clark Ave./ Henderson Area	2022 - 2023	
Phase 4A: Royal Orchard/Kirk Drive	2021 – 2022	Construction Commencement May 2021
Phase 4B: Romfeld Circuit	2023 - 2024	
Phase 4C: Royal Orchard/Silver Aspen	2024 – 2025	
Phase 4D: Baythorn/Inverlochy	2025 - 2026	

To support the program, on June 24, 2014, Council approved the structure of the stormwater fee rates in order to meet the annual revenue target for the first 5-year cycle of

the Program. The new stormwater fee supports the 30-year initiative, to improve storm drainage capacity and limit flooding risks in urban areas.

On April 16, 2019, Council approved a \$50 annual fee per residential property for 2020 and further increase of \$1 per year up to 2024 and an increase of 2% per \$100,000 of current value assessment (CVA) and 2% annual increase thereafter for non-residential properties. Stormwater fees will be re-assessed in 2025.

### **Construction Tender for Phase 3B**

Due to the scope of the project, contractors were prequalified to ensure that they had the necessary qualifications, experience and resources to complete the work in accordance with the City's requirements and within the specified timelines. Prequalification 196-P-20 was issued in accordance with the Purchasing By-law 2017-8.

### **Pre-Qualification Information (196-P-20)**

Prequalification closed on	October 5, 2020
Number of Contractors picking up the Pre-qualification document	40
Number of Contractors responding to the Pre-qualification	31
Number of Contractors Pre-qualified	15

### **Construction Tender Information (003-T-21)**

Bids closed on	February 26, 2021
Number picking up the Bid document	14
Number responding to the Bid	11

### **Price Summary**

<b>Bidder</b>	<b>Bid Price (Inclusive of HST Impact)</b>
<b>Direct Underground Inc.</b>	<b>\$4,263,945.97</b>

### **OPTIONS/ DISCUSSION:**

#### Watermain Replacement

The existing cast iron watermain on Johnson Street, Dove Lane, Wiarton Crt, Ida St and St. Andrews Crt. are close to the end of their life cycle. Combined replacement of services will minimize disruption to the local community by avoiding replacement of watermain and repair of the roadway at a later date.

The replacement of cast iron watermain is consistent with the City's strategy to upgrade aged and deficient watermain to improve supply capacity and reliability. Replacement of these old cast iron watermain will also offer improved reliability (less risk of breaks) as well as improve water quality and flows for domestic and fire demand. Based on experience, cast iron watermain are susceptible to internal and external corrosion as they age which leads to poor water quality and increased watermain breaks. The new watermain replacement material will be PVC pipe, which has a service life of 90 years and is superior as it is heat resistant, chemical resistant and non-corrosive.

The Tender award includes the replacement of the existing watermain at a cost of \$2,773,794.91 inclusive of 10% contingency and HST impact.

#### Public Input

A Public Information Committee (PIC) meeting will be scheduled in April 2021, prior to construction, to provide an update to the area residents and businesses, as well as to address any potential issues or concerns that the public may have on the proposed construction.

#### Traffic Management Plan

The objective of the traffic management plan is to limit the traffic within the construction zone (only local traffic will be allowed) and divert through traffic onto adjacent roadways.

#### Communications Plan

Staff will provide regular updates to the affected stakeholders as well as early notification for any disruptions to driveway access or municipal services. The City's website will provide up-to-date information, as required, on the status of the project.

#### Construction Moratorium

Environmental Services staff is requesting that Council approve a 5-year moratorium on major construction work within the following roadway, which is to be enforced immediately after construction is complete. Minor and emergency repairs would be permitted. The moratorium would not affect any utility projects within the boulevard area.

- Johnson Street
- Dove Lane
- Ida Street
- Wiarton Court
- St Andrews Court

#### Project Schedule for Phase 3B:

- April 2021 - Issue of Purchase Order
- May 2021 - Commencement of work
- September, 2021 – Substantial completion of work
- October, 2021 – Final Restoration

### **FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

The following table summarizes the financial considerations for Phase 3B:

	<b>Storm Sewer Project #21164</b>	<b>Watermain Project #21170</b>	
Budget Available for Construction component of this Project (A)	\$3,733,467.00	\$3,838,900.00	058-6150-21164-005 053-6150-21170-005
Less: Construction Cost (B)	\$1,742,314.23	\$2,521,631.74	} Awarded to Direct Underground Inc. (003-T-21)
Less: Construction Contingency (10%) (C)	\$ 174,231.42	\$ 252,163.17	
<b>Total Cost (D) = (B) + (C)</b>	<b>\$1,916,545.66</b>	<b>\$2,773,794.91</b>	

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Budget Remaining (E) = (A) – (D)	\$1,816,921.34	\$1,065,105.09	*
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\*The remaining funds in project #21164 “West Thornhill Flood Control Implementation - Phase 3B Construction” in the amount \$1,816,921.34 will be returned to the original funding source (Stormwater Fee Reserve). The remaining funds in project #21170 “Cast Iron Watermain Replacement – West Thornhill Phase 3B” in the amount of \$1,065,105.09 will be returned to the original funding source (Waterworks Reserve).

#### **HUMAN RESOURCES CONSIDERATIONS**

None

#### **ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:**

The proposed flood remediation program is aligned with City’s goal to provide better quality services to the public and is consistent with the Building Markham’s Future Together strategic priority on the “Growth Management” and “Environment” as it considers sustainability on the built environment.

#### **BUSINESS UNITS CONSULTED AND AFFECTED:**

The Finance department has been consulted and their comments have been incorporated.

#### **RECOMMENDED BY:**

Eddy Wu  
Acting Director, Environmental Services

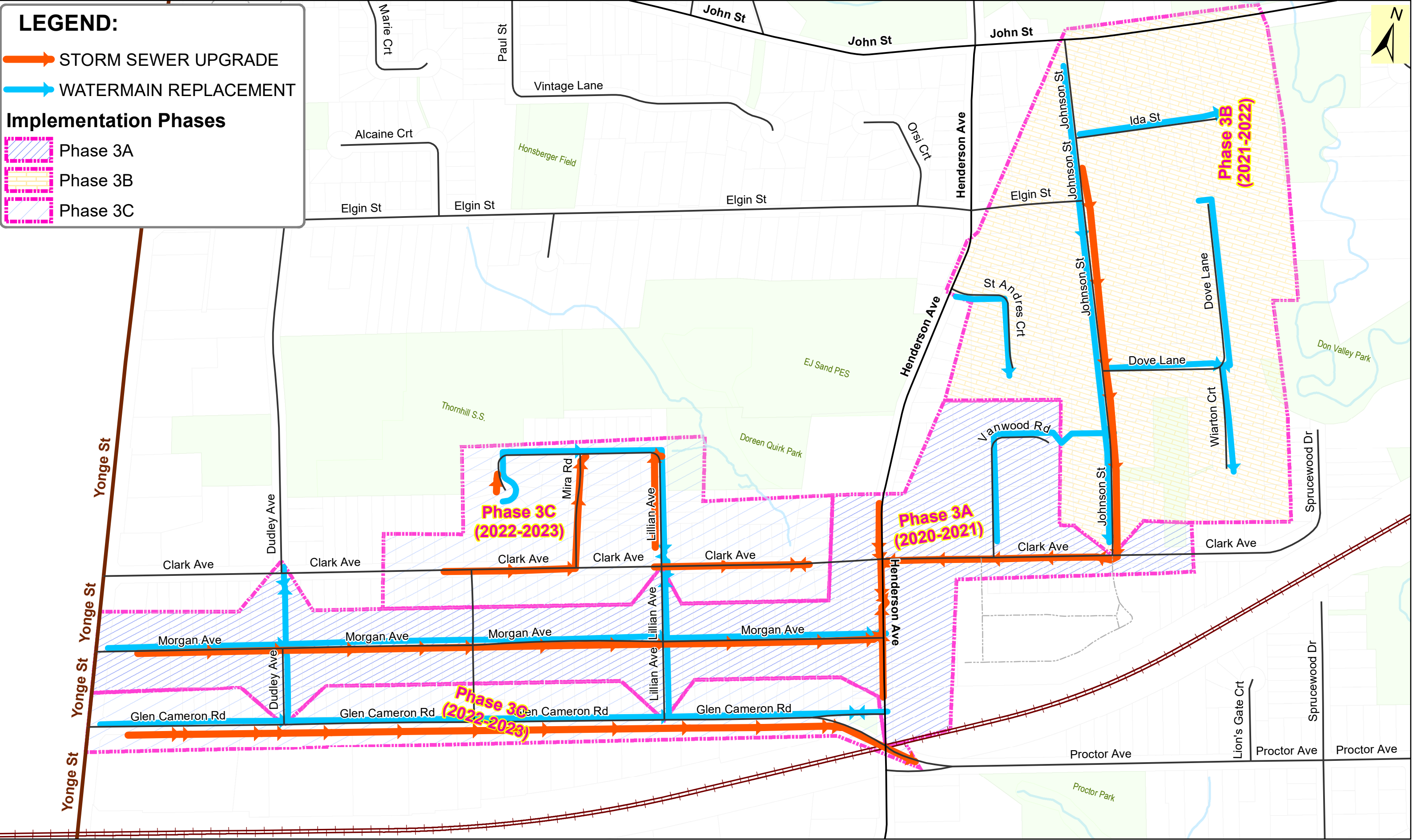
Andy Taylor  
CAO

#### **ATTACHMENTS:**

Attachment A – Location Map

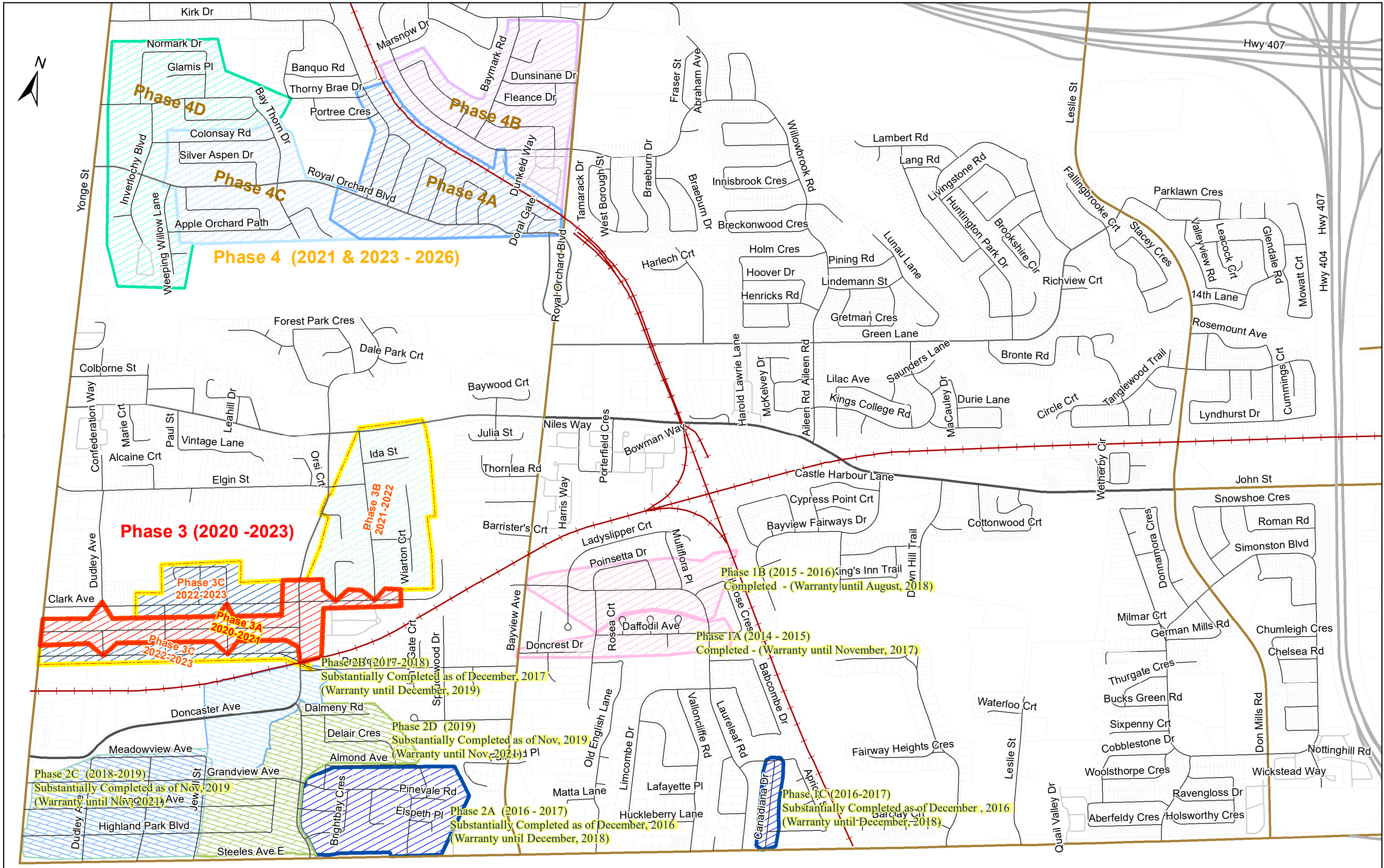
Attachment B – West Thornhill Flood Control Implementation Phases

# LOCATION MAP - WEST THORNHILL - PHASES 3A, 3B & 3C





# WEST THORNHILL FLOOD CONTROL IMPLEMENTATION PHASES





Report to: General Committee

Meeting Date: April 6, 2020

**SUBJECT:** Award of Construction Tender 004-T-21 West Thornhill – Phase 4A Storm Sewer and Sanitary Sewer Upgrades  
**PREPARED BY:** Rob Grech, Acting Senior Manager, Infrastructure, Ext. 2357  
 Flora Chan, Senior Buyer, Ext. 3189

### RECOMMENDATION:

- 1) That the report entitled “Award of Construction Tender 004-T-21 West Thornhill – Phase 4A Storm Sewer and Sanitary Sewer Upgrades” be received; and,
- 2) That the contract for Tender 004-T-21 West Thornhill – Phase 4A Storm Sewer and Sanitary Sewer Upgrades be awarded to the lowest priced Bidder, GFL Infrastructure Group, in the amount of \$12,477,267.18, inclusive of HST; and,
- 3) That a 10% contingency in the amount of \$1,247,726.72 inclusive of HST, be established to cover any additional construction costs and that authorization to approve expending of this contingency amount up to the specified limit be in accordance with the Expenditure Control Policy; and,
- 4) That the construction award in the amount of \$13,724,993.90 (\$12,477,268.18 + \$1,247,726.72) be funded from the following capital projects:
  - (a) 058-6150-21165-005 “West Thornhill Flood Control Implementation - Phase 4A Construction”; and,
  - (b) 053-5350-21172-005 “Royal Orchard Sanitary Sewer Upgrades (West Thornhill Phase 4A)” as outlined under the financial considerations section in this report; and,
- 5) That the remaining funds in project #21165 “West Thornhill Flood Control Implementation - Phase 4A Construction” in the amount of \$4,091,337.96 will not be required from the Stormwater Fee Reserve and the budget remaining in project #21172 “Royal Orchard Sanitary Sewer Upgrades – West Thornhill Phase 4A Construction” in the amount of \$7,186.76 will be returned to the waterworks reserve; and,
- 6) That a 5-year moratorium be placed on any major servicing and utility installation along restored areas including Royal Orchard Blvd (from Pomona Creek to Bayview), Kirk Drive, Knotty Pine Trail, Augusta Court, Doral Gate and Blue Spruce Lane; and further,
- 7) That Staff be authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to this resolution.



**PURPOSE:**

The purpose of this report is to obtain Council approval to award the contract for the West Thornhill – Phase 4A Storm Sewer and Sanitary Sewer Upgrades.

**BACKGROUND:**

The stormwater flood control implementation strategy was approved by Council on November 8, 2011 for the West Thornhill area in accordance with the City's November 2010 Class EA Study. The City-wide Flood Control Program is a 30-year program with an estimated cost of \$367M - \$382M (2018 dollars). The first phase (1A, 1B & 1C) of the remediation included storm sewer capacity upgrades in the Bayview Glen neighbourhood, second phase (2A, 2B, 2C & 2D) includes the Grandview area and Phase 3 includes Clark Ave./ Henderson area. Phase 4 includes Royal Orchard / Romfield / Silver Aspen / Baythorn / Inverlochy. The implementation schedule is outlined in the table below:

Area	Proposed Implementation Schedule	Status
Phase 1A: Bayview Glen Area	2014 - 2015	Substantially completed as of Nov 2015; Maintenance completion Nov 2017
Phase 1B: Bayview Glen Area	2015 - 2016	Substantially completed as of Aug 2016; Maintenance completion Aug 2018
Phase 1C: Canadiana Road	2016	Substantially completed as of Dec 2016; Maintenance completion Dec 2018;
Phase 2A: Grandview Area	2016 - 2017	Substantially completed as of Dec 2016; Maintenance completion Dec 2018
Phase 2B: Grandview Area (Park & Proctor Ave)	2017 - 2018	Substantially completed as of Dec 2017; Maintenance completion Dec 2019
Phase 2C: Grandview Area	2018 - 2019	Substantially completed as of Nov 2019; Maintenance completion Nov 2021
Phase 2D: Grandview Area	2019 - 2020	Substantially completed as of Nov 2019; Maintenance completion Nov 2021
Phase 3A: Clark Ave./ Henderson Area	2020 - 2021	Anticipated substantial completion Sep 2021
Phase 3B: Johnson Street Area	2021	Construction Commencement May 2021
Phase 3C: Clark Ave./ Henderson Area	2022 - 2023	
<b>Phase 4A: Royal Orchard/Kirk Drive (This Award)</b>	<b>2021 – 2022</b>	<b>Construction Commencement May 2021</b>
Phase 4B: Romfeld Circuit	2023 - 2024	
Phase 4C: Royal Orchard/Silver Aspen	2024 – 2025	
Phase 4D: Baythorn/Inverlochy	2025 - 2026	

To support the program, on June 24, 2014, Council approved the structure of the stormwater fee rates in order to meet the annual revenue target for the first 5-year cycle of the Program. The new stormwater fee supports the 30-year initiative, to improve storm drainage capacity and limit flooding risks in urban areas.

On April 16, 2019 Council approved a \$50 annual fee per residential property for 2020 and further increase of \$1 per year up to 2024 and an increase of 2% per \$100,000 of current value assessment (CVA) and 2% annual increase thereafter for non-residential properties. Stormwater fees will be re-assessed in 2025.

#### **Construction Tender for Phase 4A**

Due to the scope of the project, contractors were prequalified to ensure that they had the necessary qualifications, experience and resources to complete the work in accordance with the City's requirements and within the specified timelines. Prequalification 196-P-20 was issued in accordance with the Purchasing By-law 2017-8.

#### **Pre-Qualification Information (196-P-20)**

Prequalification closed on	October 5, 2020
Number of Contractors picking up the Pre-qualification document	40
Number of Contractors responding to the Pre-qualification	31
Number of Contractors Pre-qualified	15

#### **Construction Tender Information (004-T-21)**

Bids closed on	March 8, 2021
Number picking up the Bid document	14
Number responding to the Bid	8

#### **Price Summary**

<b>Bidder</b>	<b>Bid Price (Inclusive of HST)</b>
<b>GFL Infrastructure Group.</b>	<b>\$12,477,267.18</b>

#### **OPTIONS/ DISCUSSION:**

##### Royal Orchard Sanitary Sewer Upgrades:

The existing sanitary sewer on Royal Orchard was constructed in and around the mid-1960s, and had been identified in previous city-initiated studies as operating beyond design capacity under existing conditions.

In March 2018, Tridel Group (Tridel) submitted an application to amend the existing Official Plan and Zoning By-Law to permit a residential hi-rise development on the eastern portion of the Ladies Golf Course. With the submission of their application, Tridel requested the existing sanitary sewer to be upgraded on Royal Orchard to service their proposed development.

Under the cost sharing arrangement, Tridel will provide a one-time fixed payment to the City, in the amount of \$3,684,062.64 (\$3,274,490.67 for construction + \$409,571.97 for engineering and contract administration). to coordinate, manage and execute the sanitary

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sewer upgrade together with the flood control works planned for this area (West Thornhill – Phase 4 Flood Control Implementation), The arrangement is contingent on the sanitary sewer being constructed by the end of 2021, which has been incorporated into the project schedule.

The Tender award includes the replacement of the existing sanitary sewers at a cost of \$3,267,303.86 inclusive of 10% contingency and HST impact.

#### Public Input

An on line Public Information Committee (PIC) meeting will be scheduled in April 2021, prior to construction, to provide an update to the area residents and businesses, as well as to address any potential issues or concerns that the public may have on the proposed construction.

#### Traffic Management Plan

The objective of the traffic management plan is to limit the traffic within the construction zone (only local traffic will be allowed) and divert through traffic onto adjacent roadways.

#### Communications Plan

Staff will provide regular updates to the affected stakeholders as well as early notification for any disruptions to driveway access or municipal services. The City's website will provide up-to-date information, as required, on the status of the project.

#### Construction Moratorium

In August 2020, Environmental Services staff advised all utility companies (e.g. Alectra Utilities Enbridge, Rogers and Bell Canada) that all upgrades to their infrastructure be completed prior to permanent restoration of roads in 2022.

Environmental Services staff is requesting that Council approve a 5-year moratorium on major construction work within the following roadway, which is to be enforced immediately after construction is complete. Minor and emergency repairs would be permitted. The moratorium would not affect any utility projects within the boulevard area.

- Royal Orchard Boulevard (From Bayview Ave to Pomona Creek)
- Blue Spruce Lane
- Knotty Pine Trail
- Kirk Drive
- Doral Gate
- August Court

#### Project Schedule for Phase 4A:

- April 2021 - Issue of Purchase Order
- May 2021 - Commencement of work
- December 2021 – Completion of Sanitary Sewer
- August, 2022 – Substantial completion of work
- Summer, 2023 – Final Restoration

**FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

The following table summarizes the financial considerations for Phase 4A:

	<b>Storm</b>	<b>Sanitary</b>	
Budget Available for Construction component of this Project (A)	\$14,549,028.00	\$3,274,490.62	058-6150-21165-005 053-6150-21172-005
Less: Construction Cost (B)	\$ 9,506,990.95	\$3,267,303.86	} Awarded to GFL Infrastructure Group
Less: Construction Contingency (10%) (C)	\$ 950,699.09	\$ 297,027.62	
<b>Total Cost (D) = (B) + (C)</b>	<b>\$10,457,690.04</b>	<b>\$3,267,303.86</b>	
Budget Remaining (E) = (A) – (D)	\$ 4,091,337.96	\$ 7,186.76	*

\*The remaining funds in project #21165 “West Thornhill Flood Control Implementation - Phase 4A Construction” in the amount of \$4,091,337.96 will not be required from the Stormwater Fee Reserve. The remaining funds in project #21172 “Royal Orchard Sanitary Sewer Upgrades (West Thornhill Phase 4A)” in the amount of \$7,186.76 will be returned to the waterworks reserve to offset costs incurred by the City in the design of the project.

**OPERATING BUDGET AND LIFE CYCLE RESERVE IMPACT**

The constructed stormwater and sanitary sewers, and associated infrastructure is estimated to last 100 years. As such, there is no incremental impact to the Life Cycle Reserve Study over the next 25 years. There is no incremental operating budget impact.

**HUMAN RESOURCES CONSIDERATIONS**

None

**ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:**

The proposed flood remediation program is aligned with City’s goal to provide better quality services to the public and is consistent with the Building Markham’s Future Together strategic priority on the “Growth Management” and “Environment” as it considers sustainability on the built environment.

**BUSINESS UNITS CONSULTED AND AFFECTED:**

The Finance department has been consulted and their comments have been incorporated.

**RECOMMENDED BY:**

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Eddy Wu  
Acting, Director of Environmental  
Services

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Andy Taylor  
CAO

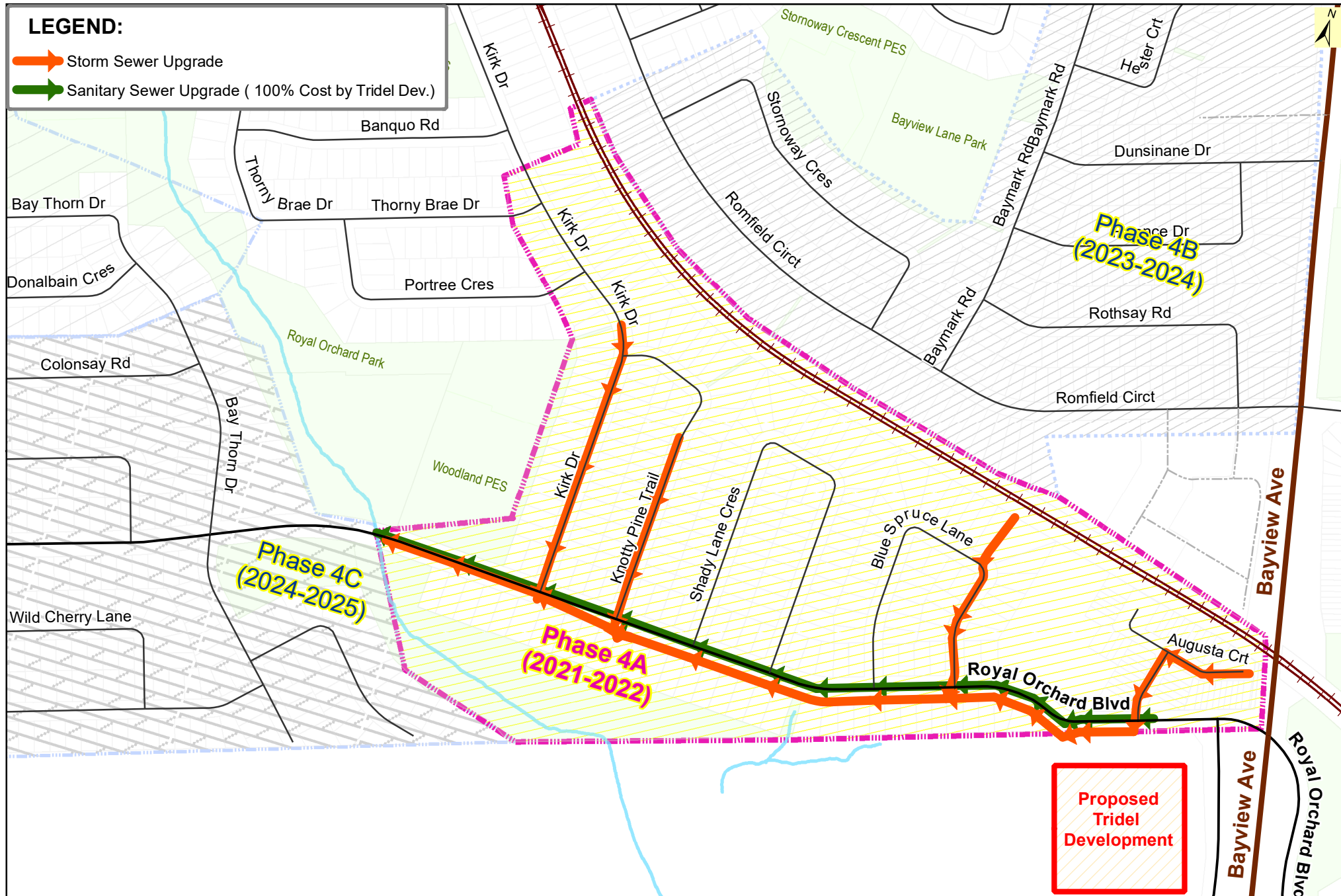
**ATTACHMENTS:**

Attachment A – Location Map

Attachment B – West Thornhill Flood Control Implementation Phases

# Location Map: West Thornhill Flood Control Implementation – Phase 4A Construction

ES-Infrastructure (2021)





# WEST THORNHILL FLOOD CONTROL IMPLEMENTATION PHASES

