



Report to: Development Services Committee

Meeting Date: July 12, 2021

SUBJECT: City of Markham Comments on York Region’s Proposed Growth Forecast to 2051
PREPARED BY: Marg Wouters, MCIP, RPP, Senior Manager, Policy & Research (x. 2909)

RECOMMENDATION:

- 1) That the staff report entitled “City of Markham Comments on York Region’s Proposed Growth Forecast to 2051” dated July 12, 2021 be received;
- 2) That Council support the development of a forecast scenario by York Region based on higher Region-wide and Markham intensification rates which:
 - a) Result in a reduction in the amount of urban expansion (whitebelt) lands in Markham needed to accommodate growth;
 - b) Reflect achievable volumes of high density development in Markham’s intensification areas over the 35 year planning horizon; and
 - c) Consider loss of prime agricultural lands and impacts on greenhouse gas emissions.
- 3) That the proposed employment area expansion lands be reconfigured to exclude the Almira hamlet as shown in Figure 1a to this report;
- 4) That the Region’s Transportation Master Plan Update consider the option of maintaining the current 2-lane cross-section for 19th Avenue through the Almira hamlet;
- 5) That the Region’s Transportation Master Plan Update explore the opportunity for higher order transit and expansion of the Frequent Transit Network to service the proposed expansion lands in north Markham;
- 6) And that Staff be authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to this resolution.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

York Region has released a proposed forecast and land needs assessment for growth to 2051 as part of their ongoing municipal comprehensive review (MCR). The forecast distributes the population and employment growth to 2051 identified in the Provincial Growth Plan to the nine local municipalities in the Region. Input on the proposed forecasts is being sought from local municipalities and the public prior to the forecasts being finalized and incorporated in a draft Regional Official Plan. This report provides an overview of consultation undertaken by the City and recommendations regarding comments to be forwarded to the Region.

The key elements of the forecast and land needs assessment are as follows:

- The Region is required to plan for a population of 2.02 million and 990,000 jobs by 2051 and Markham is proposed to accommodate almost one-third of the Region's population and employment by 2051 (619,000 residents and 309,000 jobs).
- The Region's distribution of population growth is based on the Growth Plan minimum intensification rate of 50%. The proposed forecast assumes a 52% intensification rate for Markham.
- For lands outside the Built Boundary the Region is assuming a Region-wide designated greenfield area (DGA) minimum density of 60 residents + jobs per hectare, and a Markham DGA target of 70 residents + jobs per hectare.
- 80 percent of the Region's remaining whitebelt lands are required to accommodate population and employment growth to 2051, including 100 percent of Markham's whitebelt lands (1,490 ha).

As directed by Development Services Committee in April 2021, public consultation on the forecast was undertaken during the months of May and June through Your Voice Markham, a Special Development Services Committee meeting, a virtual community meeting and individual meetings with landowners and residents. The main concerns related to:

- the amount of agricultural and non-urbanized lands being identified for development, impact on climate change and achieving net zero greenhouse gas emissions, all related to the relatively low intensification target assumed for Markham;
- Concern of Almira residents with impacts of urban development, particularly employment, on the Almira hamlet; and
- Landowner requests to designate urban expansion lands east of Warden Avenue as community area (for residential development) rather than employment.

In response to these and other staff concerns, staff's recommendations include the following:

- That Council support the development of a forecast scenario by York Region based on higher Region-wide and Markham intensification rates which:
 - Result in a reduction in the amount of urban expansion (whitebelt) lands in Markham needed to accommodate growth;
 - Reflect achievable volumes of high density development in Markham's intensification areas over the 35 year planning horizon; and
 - Consider loss of prime agricultural lands and impacts on greenhouse gas emissions.
- That the proposed employment area lands be reconfigured to exclude the Almira hamlet as shown in Figure 1a;

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- That the Region's Transportation Master Plan Update consider the option of maintaining the current 2-lane cross-section for 19th Avenue through the Almira hamlet; and
 - That the Region's Transportation Master Plan Update explore the opportunity for higher order transit and expansion of the Frequent Transit Network to service the proposed expansion lands in north Markham.

It is recommended that Council endorse this report as Markham's comments on York Region's Proposed 2051 Forecast and Land Needs Assessment.

PURPOSE:

This report provides City of Markham's comments on York Region's proposed growth forecast and land needs assessment to 2051.

BACKGROUND:

York Region is preparing a new Regional Official Plan (ROP) and undertaking a municipal comprehensive review (MCR) as part of its conformity exercise to the Growth Plan 2019. The new ROP is also required to reflect the policy direction of other provincial policies and plans, including the Provincial Policy Statement 2020, Greenbelt Plan 2017 and Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan 2017.

A key component of the Region's MCR is the preparation of a population and employment growth forecast for the Region to 2051. The Region's forecast distributes the Province's 2051 forecast, as identified in Schedule 3 of the Growth Plan, to its local municipalities. A component of the forecast is a land needs assessment which identifies the quantum and location of additional lands needed to achieve the forecasts.

The Region's draft forecast and land needs assessment was released in a [March 18, 2021 report](#) to Regional Council, with a recommendation for Regional staff to consult on the proposed forecast and land needs assessment and report back on phasing policies necessary to manage growth over the 2051 planning horizon.

A staff report providing preliminary comments on the forecast was considered by Development Services Committee on [April 19, 2021](#). At that meeting, Committee directed staff to undertake public consultation on the forecast before reporting back to Council with final comments.

This report provides:

1. A summary of the Region's proposed forecast for Markham and Markham staff's preliminary comments which formed the basis for consultation;
2. A summary of public consultation undertaken and input received; and
3. Comments and recommendations to the Region regarding the forecast.

OPTIONS/ DISCUSSION:**1.0 Overview of Region's Proposed Forecast for Markham and April 19, 2021 Preliminary Staff Comments**

The following provides an overview of the draft forecast and land needs assessment for both York Region and Markham, including total population and employment, intensification rates, designated greenfield area density targets and identified urban expansion lands.

1. The Region is required to plan for a population of 2.02 million and 990,000 jobs by 2051. Markham is proposed to accommodate almost one-third of the Region's population and employment by 2051.
2. The Region's distribution of population growth is based on the Growth Plan minimum intensification rate of 50%. The proposed forecast assumes a 52% intensification rate for Markham.
3. For lands outside the Built Boundary the Region is assuming a designated greenfield area (DGA) minimum density of 60 residents + jobs per hectare. For Markham, the minimum DGA target is proposed to be 70 residents + jobs per hectare.
4. 80 percent of the Region's remaining whitebelt lands are required to accommodate population and employment growth to 2051. This includes 100 percent of Markham's whitebelt lands (1,490 ha).

Table 1 provides a summary of the population, employment, intensification and DGA assumptions for Markham.

	2016	2051	2016-2051 (35 yrs)		2006-2019 (13 yrs)
			Total Growth	Average Annual	Average Annual
Population	339,100	619,200	280,100	8,000	5,700*
Employment	182,000	309,200	127,200	4,200	4,100*
Jobs/Population	54%	50%			
					2010-2019
Total Units**			97,000	2,760	2,480
Intensification Units			50,300	1,440	1,400
Intensification Rate		52%			58%
Proposed Expansion Lands	Total	Community	Employment		
Hectares (acres)	1,490 (3,680)	1,270 (3,140)	220 (540)		
DGA Target (residents + jobs/ha)	70				

Source: York Region March 18, 2021 report, various tables.
 * Correction of estimates in April 19, 2021 staff report.
 ** Markham Policy & Research calculation.

The Region's report noted that factors considered in the forecast and lands needs assessment include the Province's land needs assessment methodology and the need to plan for growth in a fiscally responsible manner. The southeast area of the Region, including Markham and Whitchurch-Stouffville were identified as having the lowest infrastructure cost per capita in all of York Region. The report also noted that phasing of infrastructure and development will be important in properly managing the considerable amount of growth that needs to be planned for to 2051.

The April 19, 2021 Markham staff report provided preliminary comments on the forecast as the basis for public consultation as follows:

- The population and employment forecasts for Markham appear optimistic;
- The intensification target of 52% for Markham appears to be achievable from a market absorption perspective (i.e., intensification units per year);
- The DGA minimum density of 70 residents and jobs per hectare for Markham requires further review given the lack of planned higher-order transit for the proposed expansion lands north of Elgin Mills Rd;
- Markham will need to ensure appropriate opportunities are available for office development in centres and corridors, particularly Markham Centre, Langstaff Gateway and the Yonge Corridor, to accommodate the amount of Major Office growth assigned to Markham;
- The viability of additional employment lands east of Warden Ave and the interface with the Almira hamlet needs to be confirmed; and
- Agreement that controlled phasing will be critical for development of the expanded designated greenfield area (whitebelt lands).

2.0 Summary of Feedback Received through Public Consultation

At the April 19, 2021 meeting, Committee directed staff to consult with the public and stakeholders prior to reporting back to Committee with final comments. Staff have since undertaken consultation through the following means:

- Your Voice Markham presence (ongoing)
- Special Development Services Committee meeting on May 11, 2021
- Virtual Community Information Meeting on May 27, 2021
- Meetings with individual property owners, ratepayer associations, agencies and development industry (May/June)
- Consultation with City departments

Through May and early June staff met with a number of individual property owners, TRCA staff and members of the development community. Approximately 20 people attended the virtual May 27 Community Information Meeting and another 20 people viewed the meeting through YouTube. Four written submissions and a petition were received.

A summary of the feedback received is provided in Appendix 'A', and written submissions are documented in Appendix 'B'. Comments for the most part related to the issues summarized below.

Concern about the amount of agricultural and non-urbanized lands being identified for development, impact on climate change and achieving net zero greenhouse gas emissions, all related to the relatively low intensification target assumed for Markham

The 52% intensification target identified for Markham and the corresponding amount of agricultural lands being identified for development (100%) were the main concerns expressed by both residents and members of Committee. It was felt that given the increasing densities being planned in Markham's centres and corridors (e.g., Markham Centre, Markham Road-Mount Joy, etc) the City should be able to maintain or exceed the current 60% intensification target in the 2014 Official Plan. It was also suggested that more than one growth scenario needed to be developed in order to provide informed feedback on how growth to 2051 should be distributed.

The need to maintain agricultural lands in Markham was also expressed, recognizing that Markham's prime agricultural lands are among the best agricultural lands in the Region and that food security could increasingly be an issue due to climate change. It was suggested that the cost of losing prime agricultural lands should also be a consideration in decisions about the appropriate location in the Region for urban development rather than basing decisions primarily on the cost of infrastructure. It was also suggested that greenhouse gas emission impacts and other ecological implications of urbanizing agricultural lands should be considered as factors in determining the optimal distribution of population and employment in the Region.

Concern of Almira residents with impacts of urban development, particularly employment, on the Almira hamlet

A number of Almira residents expressed concern with the impacts of proposed urban development surrounding the hamlet, as noted in Appendix 'A' and Appendix 'B'. Specific concerns included the expected change in character of the area from rural to urban, and particularly the impact of proposed employment uses surrounding the hamlet as well as the impact of anticipated 19th Avenue improvements.

Landowner requests to designate urban expansion lands east of Warden Avenue as community area rather than employment

Representatives for landowners in the easterly portion of the concession block bounded by Warden Ave, Elgin Mills Rd, Kennedy Rd and 19th Ave provided deputations and written submissions supporting the inclusion of their lands in the urban area, but opposing the proposed employment designation (see Appendix 'B'). The basis for opposition to the employment designation included distance from Highway 404 and compatibility concerns with existing development. The submissions also suggested that lands east of Highway 48 would be better suited for employment uses given potential Pickering Airport noise restrictions.

3.0 Response to Comments and Recommendations to the Region

Staff support development of growth scenarios based on a higher Region-wide intensification rate and a lower requirement for development of whitebelt lands

In response to comments heard from consultation in Markham and elsewhere in York Region, Regional staff have indicated that they plan to undertake a high level analysis of alternative forecast scenarios based on higher Region-wide intensification rates. The analysis is expected to be presented to Regional Council in early Fall.

Markham staff support the development of scenarios based on higher intensification rates that would reduce the quantity of urban expansion lands needed. The principle of accommodating growth primarily through intensification is consistent with Markham Council's direction during the 2009/2010 growth management exercise, which was endorsed followed extensive debate by Council and the public, and which is reflected in the 2014 Official Plan.

However, consistent with comments at that time, Markham staff continue to maintain that in arriving at an appropriate intensification rate, the corresponding assumptions about the volume of high density development (mainly apartment units) that are likely to occur over the planning horizon need to be realistic from a market delivery standpoint. Staff indicated in the April 19, 2021 report that the levels of intensification proposed in the 2051 forecast (1,400 units/years) appear to be achievable from a 'units/year' perspective as they were only slightly higher than levels of development already being delivered in intensification areas. The alternative scenarios being developed by the Region should also consider how realistic higher intensification assumptions would be in terms of ability of the market to deliver intensification units, which will increasingly be apartment units.

In response to comments about the need to consider the loss of prime farmland as well as greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and other ecological impacts, staff suggest that Regional staff include these considerations in their alternative scenarios analysis.

Recommendation:

- 1) That Council support the development of a forecast scenario by York Region based on higher Region-wide and Markham intensification rates which:
 - a) Result in a reduction in the amount of urban expansion (whitebelt) lands in Markham needed to accommodate growth;
 - b) Reflect achievable volumes of high density development in Markham's intensification areas over the 35 year planning horizon; and
 - c) Consider loss of prime agricultural lands and impacts on greenhouse gas emissions.

Staff support reconfiguration of proposed additional employment area lands to provide a better interface with the Almira hamlet

As stated in the April 19, 2021 report, staff support the identification of additional employment lands east of Warden Ave and north of Elgin Mills Rd. The concession block bounded by Warden Ave, Elgin Mills Rd, Kennedy Rd and 19th Ave represents the last significant opportunity for additional employment lands in Markham. The lands are adjacent to the currently designated Future Urban Area employment lands west of Warden Ave and are still in relatively close proximity to a 400-series highway (Highway 404), which is a critical requirement for employment area users.

This general area in north Markham was identified as meeting the requirements for a successful employment area in studies undertaken for the City in 2005 and 2009. Recent market advice, based on stakeholder interviews, confirms that this concession block is not too far from Highway 404 to be viable for prospective employment land users for whom visibility from the highway is not a requirement. Employment lands in this concession block should be planned comprehensively with the Future Urban Area employment lands west of Warden Avenue and beyond to Highway 404, which have been identified as a unique opportunity to be developed as an employment innovation district (see Figure 1b).

Staff however agree with concerns raised by Almira residents about the implications of employment uses surrounding the residential hamlet. Although there are many examples in the City of successful employment areas locating adjacent to residential neighbourhoods (in most cases separated by a collector road), the employment designation as proposed completely surrounds the residential properties in the western half of the hamlet, and also applies to approximately two-thirds of the depth of many of the 20 hamlet properties affected. In addition to consideration of impact and compatibility of future employment uses on residential development, residential uses surrounded by employment uses could also generate sensitive use concerns, i.e., requiring additional measures for employment uses to mitigate impacts on residential uses, which may reduce the attractiveness of the employment area for users.

In order to reduce these potential impacts staff recommend limiting the employment lands in proximity to the hamlet to the Warden Ave frontage as shown in Figure 1a and redesignating the remainder as community lands. The effect of the redesignation would be to retain all hamlet properties fronting 19th Ave as community lands. Staff propose the same principle be applied in the Whitchurch-Stouffville expansion lands immediately to the north subject to concurrence by Whitchurch-Stouffville.

South of the hamlet, staff propose that the employment lands extend at minimum to the natural heritage system lands associated with the north-south watercourse west of the Bruce Creek Greenbelt corridor as shown in Figure 1a. This would result in a relatively self-contained employment area with direct access to Warden Avenue.

The proposed reconfiguration would reduce the amount of additional employment lands by about half (approximately 110 ha) which could impact the 1 job per 2 residents activity rate target for Markham assumed in the forecast and supported by Markham staff.

The gain in new community lands identified in this block should also reduce the need for an equivalent amount of whitebelt lands to accommodate community lands in concession blocks to the east.

Although staff also agree that the remaining lands in the eastern portion of the concession block (to the Greenbelt corridor) are viable for employment uses, limiting employment uses to the western portion of the block would reduce the likelihood of employment truck traffic in the northern portion of the block needing to travel through Almira along 19th Ave to gain access to Hwy 404. Staff also note that approximately 8 ha in the southeastern portion of the concession block fronting Kennedy Rd are occupied by cemetery lands which would not be available for employment uses.

Almira resident concerns with future improvements to 19th Avenue

Markham has strived to protect historical hamlets within surrounding urban development through lot size restrictions and road alignments (e.g., Victoria Square and Box Grove). Staff agree that a widening of 19th Avenue to urban arterial standards could negatively affect the current character of the Almira hamlet. The need for future improvements to 19th Avenue along its entire length, and in particular through Almira should be considered as part of the Region's Transportation Master Plan (TMP) Update currently underway. Staff recommend that the TMP consider the option of leaving 19th Avenue through the Hamlet in its current 2-lane cross-section to reduce the impact of surrounding development on individual properties as well as on the overall character of the hamlet.

Whitebelt lands east of Highway 48 do not have comparable advantage as employment lands

Staff do not agree with the suggestion in two of the written submissions that lands in the vicinity of Highway 48 would be better suited to employment uses because of possible future Pickering Airport noise limitations on residential uses. The 1986 Airport noise contours shown in the submissions are based on the original plans for the Airport which have been scaled back in recent years. Draft updated noise contours from 2005, released prior to the transfer of a large portion of the original airport lands to Parks Canada for the Rouge National Urban Park, show only limited noise impact on potential residential uses west of 9th Line. It is not unreasonable to assume that the smaller airport site approved in 2015 will have even less noise impact in Markham, although the future impact cannot be determined conclusively until the nature of the airport and the extent of the associated contours are confirmed.

Similarly, in response to the suggestion in the written submissions that employment lands near Highway 48 are appropriate because of the designation of Highway 48 as a Strategic Goods Movement Corridor in the Region's 2016 Transportation Master Plan Update, staff suggest that Highway 48 through Markham does not provide the same level of functionality as a goods movement corridor that Highway 404 and Highway 407 provide.

Recommendation:

- 2) That the proposed employment area lands be reconfigured to exclude the Almira hamlet as shown in Figure 1a; and
- 3) That the Region's Transportation Master Plan Update consider the option of maintaining the current 2-lane cross-section for 19th Avenue through the Almira hamlet.

4.0 Additional comments raised in April 19, 2021 Markham staff report

In addition to the concerns raised through public consultation, staff identified a number of other considerations in the initial staff report which are addressed below.

Staff are satisfied that the Regional Official Plan policies will allow for flexibility in applying the DGA minimum density of 70 residents + jobs per hectare in Markham, but were concerned about the lack of higher-order transit for the proposed expansion lands north of Elgin Mills Rd

The Region is proposing a Region-wide DGA minimum density target of 60 residents + jobs per hectare but a 70 residents + jobs per hectare target for Markham. Although staff support the principle of developing compact communities to minimize the need for more land to accommodate growth, planning for the Future Urban Area lands north of Major Mackenzie Dr indicated that achievement of the 70 residents + jobs target in the FUA communities was dependent on delivering a certain percentage of high density units within the proposed Major Mackenzie Dr rapid transit corridor. As a large portion of the proposed expansion lands in Markham will not be in proximity to proposed higher order transit, staff expressed concern that achieving the 70 DGA target in some new communities north of Elgin Mills Rd may be challenging.

Regional staff have since clarified that the 70 residents + jobs/ha target for Markham is meant to be an average target for all of Markham's DGA lands (some of which is already built at higher densities), and it will not necessarily have to be applied to all of the expansion lands. This clarification addresses staff's original concern, and staff will work with Regional staff on appropriate policy in the Regional Official Plan to ensure the flexibility in applying the minimum target.

The transit challenge in north Markham will need to be reviewed closely through the York Region's Transportation Master Plan Update, including the possibility of extending a north-south rapid transit line from the south. However, the transit challenge can be mitigated by extending and expanding York Region's Frequent Transit Network (FTN) to the entire arterial road network in north Markham. The FTN is intended to provide frequent transit service for short to medium distance trips and fast transit connections to the nearest higher order transit line such as the future Major Mackenzie Drive bus rapid transit, Stouffville GO and Richmond Hill GO rail lines.

Recommendation:

- 4) That the Region's Transportation Master Plan Update explore the opportunity for higher order transit and expansion of the Frequent Transit Network to service the proposed expansion lands in north Markham.

Markham will need to ensure appropriate opportunities are available for office development in centres and corridors, particularly Markham Centre, Langstaff Gateway and the Yonge Corridor, to accommodate the amount of office growth assigned to Markham

The forecast assumes growth of about 45,000 major office jobs in Markham between 2016 and 2051. About 45% of these jobs (20,000) are assumed to be located in employment areas (business parks in the Highway 404 corridor) and the other 55% (25,000) are assumed to be located in centres and corridors such as Markham Centre, Langstaff Gateway and the Yonge Corridor. The 45,000 major office jobs are equivalent to approximately 1,300 major office jobs per year. This is in line with the assumptions underlying the employment forecast to 2031 in the Official Plan, and the number of major office jobs achieved from 2006-2016 (1,400 per year).

Staff continue to support major office jobs as an important source of employment growth in Markham. However, as 25,000 major office jobs are anticipated to be accommodated within centres and corridors, the current secondary plan updates for Markham Centre, and particularly Langstaff Gateway and the Yonge Corridor which will be served by subway, should carefully consider appropriate locations to accommodate major office development.

In addition, given the unknown impact on future demand for office space resulting from the shift to working from home during the pandemic, monitoring of trends in major office space and adjustments in future MCRs will be critical.

Markham staff agree that controlled phasing will be critical for development of the expanded designated greenfield area (whitebelt lands)

In a June 10, 2021 report to Regional Council, Regional staff identified a number of conditions that are being considered for managing and phasing development in the urban expansion areas, including:

- Regional water and wastewater infrastructure being available – preliminary timing for each urban expansion area would be identified through Infrastructure Master Plans and would be re-assessed each year through the Capital Plan and budget process in line with the principles of the Region's Fiscal Strategy and affordable growth;
- Region's fiscal sustainability – infrastructure delivery to support growth in urban expansion areas to be timed to manage debt
- Region achieving its average 50% intensification target on an annual basis
- Region on track to achieve a specific minimum population target (potentially 1.4 to 1.5 million people)

The Region is also considering policies for local municipalities to include in their official plans and secondary plans that build on Regional phasing criteria for logical phasing of community development, while ensuring that lands are brought on-stream in timely manner.

One of the suggestions is having municipalities undertake comprehensive high level conceptual planning similar to that undertaken by Markham for the Future Urban Area, which provided direction for subsequent secondary plans. Also being considered are criteria for secondary plan approval which may include:

- Logical progression of growth based on local infrastructure and local municipal services;
- Sufficient regional servicing capacity assigned to the municipality;
- A limit to the number of secondary plans/blocks being approved for development at any given time;
- A diverse range and mix of housing and community services; and
- A ratio of employment growth relative to population.

The most effective method of controlling and phasing growth over the next 30 years would be an incremental approach to expanding the urban area that would be based on ongoing monitoring of development and market trends and achievement of population and employment growth. As indicated in the Region's June 10, 2021 report, the Province recently provided written confirmation that an incremental approach to including lands within the urban area would not be permitted. (The letter from the Minister of Municipal Affairs also confirmed that extensions to the July 1, 2022 deadline for upper-tier municipalities to bring their official plans into conformity with the 2019 Growth Plan would not be considered.)

Another effective tool for phasing development is according to infrastructure being available, as the Region has suggested. However, as Markham is already relatively well-served by infrastructure that tool may not be impactful enough to make a difference in the sequence in which concession blocks can be developed.

Another consideration that may affect phasing is current ownership and land use patterns in the urban expansion lands. In addition to agricultural uses, a range of non-agricultural uses also co-exist in the whitebelt lands, including the Markham fairgrounds, day camps, golf courses, places of worship, equestrian centres, etc. While some of these uses may be temporary with the lands already owned by development interests, others may be longer term uses which may result in a patchwork of urban development-ready lands within any one concession block. This may increase the difficulty of identifying a logical sequence of concession block development that provides for delivery of complete communities in a timely manner.

Markham has historically adopted a logical sequence of expansion based on extension of services from the existing urban area (i.e., most recently northward from Major Mackenzie Dr and eastward from Woodbine Ave). Depending on availability of servicing, the recent approval of Minister's Zoning Orders (MZOs) in northeast east

Markham and southern Whitchurch-Stouffville may have established a priority for development in an area that is not contiguous with Markham's urban area. Whether to prioritize extension of development from the southwest or from the northeast, or both, will have to be considered.

Sequencing development in parallel with transit facilities should also be a primary consideration, although transit funding is heavily reliant on the provincial and federal government and therefore not within the Region's or Markham's control. This consideration could result in prioritizing development along the Major Mackenzie Dr rapid transit corridor instead of development in northeast Markham.

As specific phasing recommendations will require more discussion, and in particular more certainty about how much expansion land will be needed in Markham, staff defer comment pending further internal staff discussion and Regional Council direction on the forecast scenarios anticipated in the fall. Staff will also have an opportunity to comment further on phasing once the draft ROP is released in late Fall.

5.0 Recommendations and Next Steps

It is recommended that Council endorse this staff report as Markham's comments on York Region's Proposed 2051 Forecast and Land Needs Assessment. Staff will continue to report to Committee as appropriate on any future York Region reports regarding the MCR and new Regional Official Plan.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS:

Not applicable.

HUMAN RESOURCES CONSIDERATIONS:

Not applicable.

ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

Growth management is related to a number of strategic priorities including Goal 3 Safe, Sustainable and Complete Community of Building Markham's Future Together, 2020-2023.

BUSINESS UNITS CONSULTED AND AFFECTED:

All City departments have been consulted on the Region's Proposed 2051 Forecast and Land Needs Assessment.

RECOMMENDED BY:

Marg Wouters, M.C.I.P., R.P.P.
Senior Manager, Policy & Research

Biju Karumanchery, M.C.I.P., R.P.P.
Acting Commissioner of
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ATTACHMENTS:

- Figure 1a: Recommended Revision to Proposed Urban Expansion Employment Lands
- Figure 1b: Location of Recommended Urban Expansion Employment Lands Relative to
Current Employment Lands
- Appendix 'A': Summary of Comments Received
- Appendix 'B': Stakeholder Submissions