

Population Forecast Monitoring

Development Services Committee
April 21, 2015

Background

Dec 9/14 DSC – information requested on applications and build-out population associated with Langstaff, Buttonville, and Markham Centre

Jan 13/15 DSC – in reporting, have regard for build-out areas throughout Markham, relevance of build-out areas to approved OP and the city-wide forecast, and growth requirements of the Regional Official Plan

Mar 24/15 DSC – staff response, building on May 6/14 staff response to Unionville Ratepayers Association presentation re: the rate of build-out in Markham Centre potentially exceeding forecasts.

- Memo deferred with request for presentation

Context for Growth Projections

Markham	2006	2031	Growth
Population	273,000	421,600	148,600
Employment	144,800	240,400	95,600

- Provincial Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2006) provided population and employment growth projections for Regional municipalities to 2031
- Regions distribute growth targets to local municipalities
- Regions and local municipalities engage in ‘land budget’ exercises to establish population distribution by unit type, and employment by type, as well as the urban area required to accommodate the projections – these projections are reflected in Official Plans (20 year horizon)
- Actual per annum growth rates will vary over the 20 year horizon based on market cycles; the OP is subject to review every 5 years

City Population Forecasts

May 6/14 memo:

- Concluded City's estimated population has been tracking 1-2% higher than suggested prorated York Region forecasts for 2011-2016
- Considered a minor variation from the forecast

Since May 6/14:

- Region's estimated mid-2014 population estimate (based on housing completions) indicate actual mid-year population in Markham approximately 3.5% higher than the prorated 2014 estimate based on the original forecasts

City Population Forecasts (cont'd)

- Premature to conclude that this 3.5% represents an overall higher City-wide growth rate that is expected to continue throughout the forecast period to 2031 – could be a short term spike in housing completions that will average out
- 2014 Markham Official Plan is based on a 2031 population of 421,600 as assigned by the Region
- Region is currently undertaking a regional municipal comprehensive review (ROP Review) which will update population and employment forecasts to 2041 (responding to Amendment 2 to Provincial Growth Plan)
- Draft growth scenarios to 2041 were presented to Regional Committee of the Whole in early April; Markham staff will report to DSC in May on these draft scenarios

Markham Centre, Langstaff Gateway Urban Growth Centres (UGCs)

- Region's intensification target for Markham = 31,590 units (52% of 2006-2031 growth)
- Markham's intensification target = approx 37,000 units (60% of 2006-2031 growth)
- Markham's Growth Strategy – assumed approximately half of the intensification units would be accommodated in the two UGCs
- Remainder to be primarily accommodated in identified key development areas (KDAs) and local centres and corridors

Markham Centre & Langstaff Gateway

May 6/14 memo:

- Growth Strategy - approx 14,800 units (28,650 pop) projected in Markham Centre by 2031
- Certain sites have been zoned at higher densities than originally forecast (about 1,800 units more)
- Caution - actual market take-up and translation into construction not guaranteed – dependent on market demand and business decisions by development industry (e.g., just under 6,500 units have proceeded to construction or site plan endorsement; recent interest in lower rather than higher density development)

March 24/15 memo:

- Updated MC population based on 2014 estimate is approx 5% lower than the anticipated prorated 2014 population based forecasts to 2031
- Forecasts for MC to be updated through secondary plan
- Langstaff – of total 11,000 population projected for 2031, no new development was forecast for 2014, and none has occurred

Other Areas

Table 2 in March 24/15 memo:

- provides comparison of major development approvals (zoning approvals for apartment buildings) and construction over past several years for selected areas having highest potential for intensification
- not an exhaustive list of intensification applications – some intensification expected in the form of grade-related housing (e.g., townhouses)
- Findings – just over one-third of the 8,800 apartment units with approved zoning have proceeded to site plan approval and construction

Other Areas (cont'd)

- Buttonville
 - no residential development was anticipated in the current model forecasts to 2031
 - secondary plan for Buttonville is currently under appeal to the OMB
- Updates to population and employment forecasts for areas identified for intensification will be undertaken as part of secondary plan updates and as input to Region's (and ultimately City's) draft growth scenarios for 2041

Conclusion

- Estimated 2014 population values City-wide and for Markham Centre approximate the anticipated population in current forecasting models.
- Development in other areas identified for intensification also aligns with 2031 forecasts.
- Population and employment growth is monitored on an ongoing basis through secondary plan updates and City-wide forecasting exercises (e.g., regional municipal comprehensive review).
- Markham staff will be reporting on recently released Regional draft growth scenarios for 2041 in May.

Discussion