

April 20, 2018

Ms. Kimberley Kitteringham  
City Clerk  
City of Markham  
101 Town Centre Boulevard  
Markham, ON L3R 9W3

Dear Ms. Kitteringham:

**Re: Development Activity Summary 2017**

Regional Council, at its meeting held on April 19, 2018, adopted the following recommendation of Committee of the Whole regarding "Development Activity Summary 2017":

1. The Regional Clerk forward this report to the local municipalities for information.

A copy of Clause 3 of Committee of the Whole Report No. 7 is enclosed for your information. The 2017 Development Activity Summary (Attachment 1) can be found on [york.ca](http://york.ca).

Please contact Justin Wong, Planner at 1-877-464-9675 ext. 71577 if you have any questions with respect to this matter.

Sincerely,



Christopher Raynor  
Regional Clerk

/S. Dumont  
Attachments

Clause 3 in Report No. 7 of Committee of the Whole was adopted, without amendment, by the Council of The Regional Municipality of York at its meeting held on April 19, 2018.

### **3**

#### **Development Activity Summary 2017**

Committee of the Whole recommends adoption of the following recommendation contained in the report dated March 29, 2018 from the Commissioner of Corporate Services and Chief Planner:

1. The Regional Clerk forward this report to the local municipalities for information.

Report dated March 29, 2018 from the Commissioner of Corporate Services and Chief Planner now follows:

#### **1. Recommendation**

It is recommended that:

1. The Regional Clerk forward this report to the local municipalities for information.

#### **2. Purpose**

This report provides information to Council on planning and development application activity in 2017 and trends over the past five years.

#### **3. Background**

**The authority to approve a variety of routine development applications is delegated to the Director of Community Planning and Development Services**

Council has delegated approval authority to the Director of Community Planning and Development Services to issue approvals for development applications subject to such approvals being reported to Council semi-annually. This report

## **Development Activity Summary 2017**

outlines development review and approval activities, including delegated approvals for 2017 and a comparison to the previous five years. It includes a summary of the following delegated approvals:

- Approved local 'routine' Official Plan Amendments (OPA)
- Minor local OPAs that are exempt from Regional approval
- Issuance of conditions for approval for plans of subdivision and condominium
- Clearance of Regional conditions of plans of subdivision and condominium to permit registration

The Commissioner of Transportation Services has delegated authority to enter into Site Plan Agreements. Staff has delegated authority to issue engineering approvals associated with the site plan and subdivision process. Attachment 1 outlines the approval authority Regional Council has delegated to Regional staff. In addition to reporting on the delegated authority, this report provides an indicator of the Region's economic condition.

### **4. Analysis and Implications**

#### **Development activity remained strong in 2017 with the Region responding to 283 development applications**

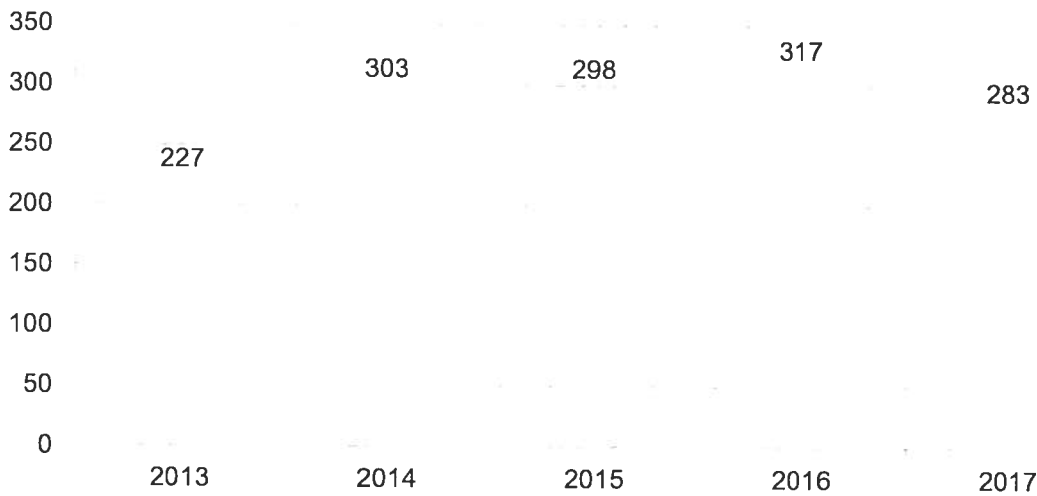
In 2017, Regional staff reviewed and responded to 283 development applications, which included:

- 40 Official Plan Amendment (OPA) application approvals
- 67 plans of subdivision and condominium applications – conditions of approval
- 60 plans of subdivision and condominium applications – clearance of residential units for registration
- 70 site plan application approvals
- 46 engineering approvals

As shown in Figure 1 and Table 1, development application approvals have remained consistent over the past four years. OPA approvals have steadily increased over the past five years from 27 approvals in 2013 to 40 approvals in 2017, which is a 48% increase. Site plan approvals have also increased from 44 approvals in 2016 to 70 approvals in 2017, which is a 59% increase. The increase of OPA and site plan approvals, and number of residential units receiving clearance for registration, as shown in Figure 2, is a key indicator of strong development activity.

## Development Activity Summary 2017

**Figure 1**  
**Number of Regional Approvals Issued Per Year**

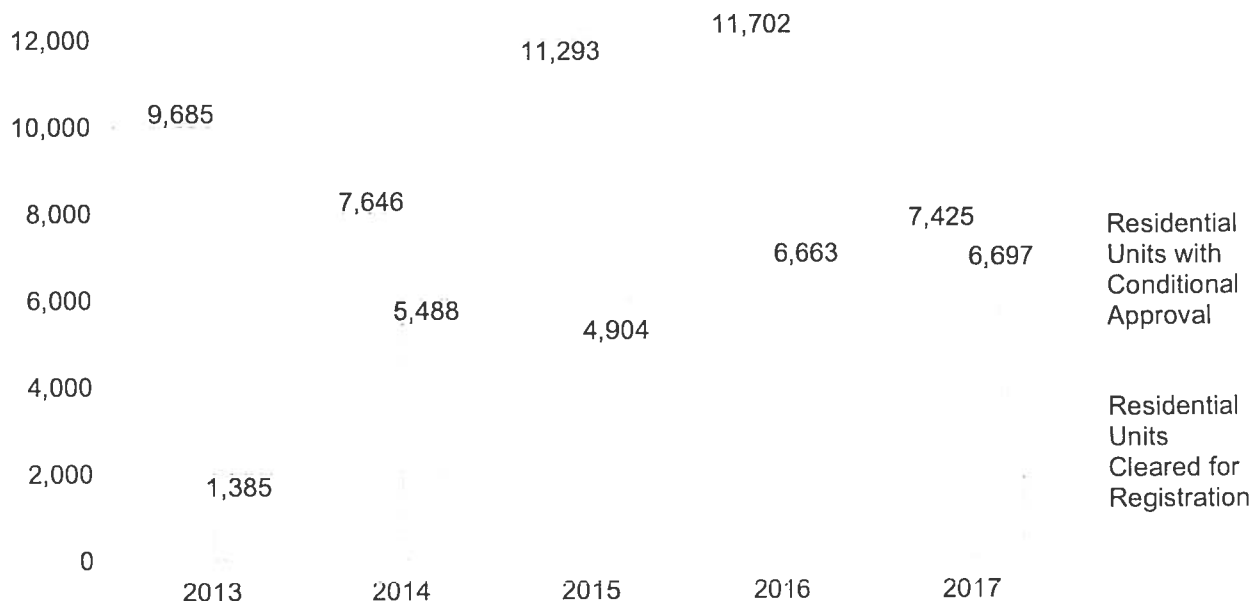


**Table 1**  
**Number of Regional Approvals Issued Per Year by Application Type**  
**2013 to 2017**

Application Type	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Official Plan Amendment Applications Approved	27	28	32	35	40
Subdivision/Condominium Applications – Conditional Approval	49	89	91	101	67
Subdivision/Condominium Applications – Clearance for Registration	26	43	49	70	60
Regional Approvals for Site Plan Applications	64	95	66	44	70
Regional Engineering Approvals	61	48	60	67	46
<b>Total</b>	<b>227</b>	<b>303</b>	<b>298</b>	<b>317</b>	<b>283</b>

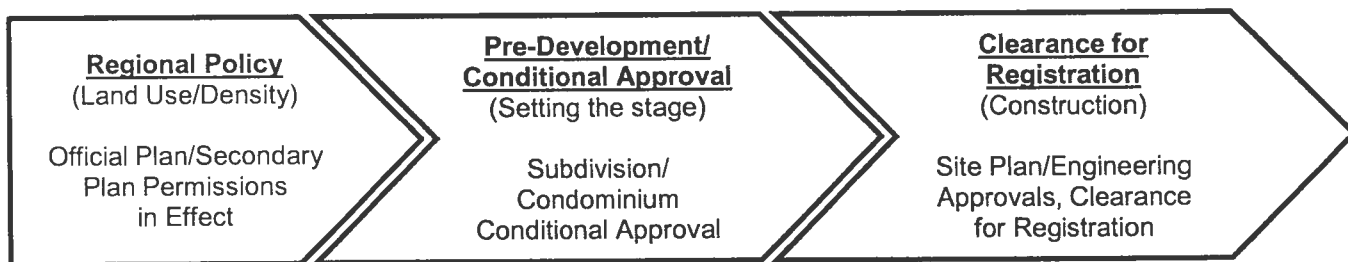
## Development Activity Summary 2017

**Figure 2**  
**Residential Units with Conditional Approval and Clearance for Registration**  
**from 2013 to 2017**



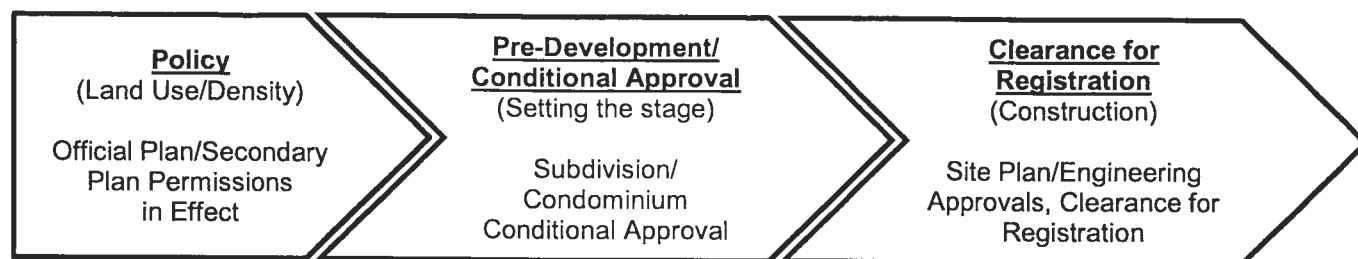
### **It is anticipated that development will continue to remain strong in 2018**

Key stages in the planning process identified below allow staff to recognize development trends. Regional policy implementation, conditional approval and construction are three stages that provide an outlook for development within the Region. Comparing the number of development applications from 2013 to 2017 that fall within these three stages provides an indicator of development trends.

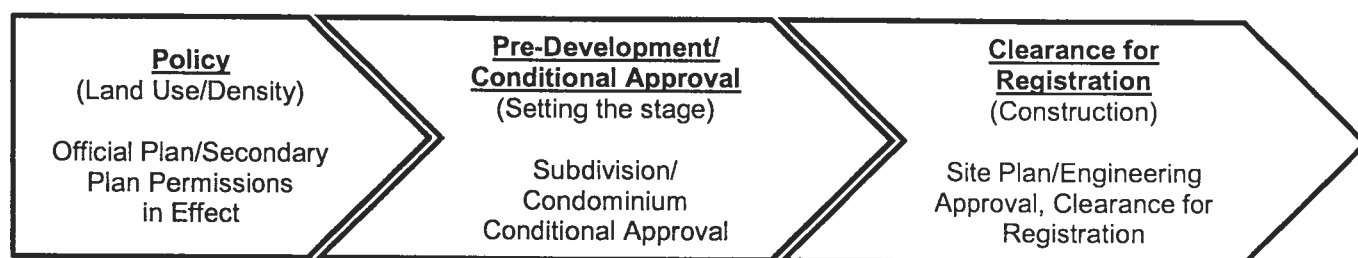


Official Plan and Secondary Plan approvals ensure the planning policy framework is in place for continued implementation through development approvals with the goal of implementing city building objectives. In the 2017, the Region approved 40 Official Plan Amendment (OPA) applications. The majority of these approvals relate to changes in height, density and urban design. The steady increase from 2013 indicates that development continues to remain strong.

## Development Activity Summary 2017



Conditional approval enables development applications to proceed to the next stage of development subject to a number of technical requirements that protect Regional interests. In 2017, Regional staff provided conditional approval to 67 subdivision and condominium applications that include a total of 7,425 residential units. As shown in Figure 2 above, the number of residential units receiving conditional approval decreased in 2017. This was a result of the industry's focus to register existing draft approved applications prior to a Regional Development Charges increase in June 2017. In order for development applications to proceed from conditional approval to clearance for construction, site plan and engineering approvals are a lengthy and complex process.

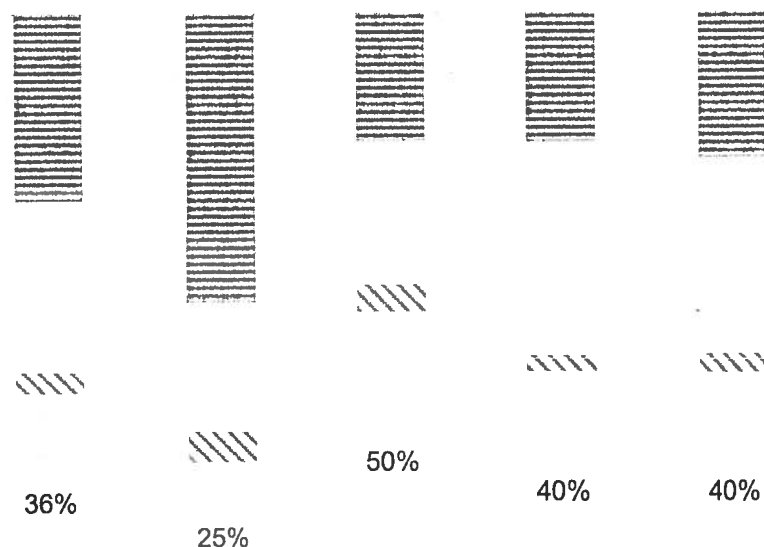


Site plan/engineering approvals and clearance of subdivision and condominium applications for registration enables development applications to proceed with construction. Regional site plan and engineering approvals have remained consistent over the past five years. In 2017, 6,697 residential units were registered compared with 6,663 residential units registered in 2016, which were higher than 2013 to 2015. Given the number of conditional approvals for residential units over the last five years is generally twice the number of units cleared for construction, the higher clearance trend may continue in 2018 with a high number of residential units proceeding to registration.

### **Residential housing mix is shifting towards higher densities**

As shown in Figure 3 below, the Region's housing mix is shifting towards higher densities of built form. In 2015, single detached units represented 50% of the total number of units that received conditional approval. Single detached units dropped to 40% of the total in 2016. This trend has remained consistent in 2017 with 60% of the housing mix being semi-detached, townhouse and apartment units. Intensification in the Regional Centres and Corridors has contributed to the increase of apartment units.

**Figure 3**  
**Percentage of Total Residential Units with Conditional Approval**  
**from 2013 to 2017**



### **Development review moved to an enhanced electronic tracking system in November 2017 with the launch of YorkTrax**

YorkTrax is a new Regional development tracking system that streamlines the application review process and facilitates coordination of comments within the organization. YorkTrax is intended to capture the full lifecycle of an application from pre-consultation meetings to approval, payment of fees and development charges, and build-out which includes registration and building permits. YorkTrax went live in November 2017 and will provide a basis for improving application review and information exchange with local municipalities. The long-term vision of the Region is to link with local municipal development tracking and related systems with a single, web-based, integrated development tracking solution. YorkTrax incorporates workflow capabilities for process streamlining and will improve customer and client service. It also provides for collaborative electronic document sharing across the corporation.

The Version 1 release of YorkTrax focuses on application data capture, application mapping, comment circulation, basic reports and data exports. Currently, YorkTrax tracks applications from pre-consultation to plan registration. Future versions will enhance the capability of the system through added features and modules.

### **Regional staff actively participate in Local Municipal Technical Advisory Committees and Project Working Groups to provide early input regarding planning and development**

Planning and Economic Development staff actively participate in a number of Regional and Local Technical Advisory Committees and Working Groups. Input into these committees and working groups is important to ensure Regional interests are identified and protected early, and throughout the planning process. In addition to building solid working relationships with our local municipal partners, Regional staff involvement also helps to facilitate timely and effective co-ordination of future planning approvals. The quick facts section of each respective municipality in Attachment 1 provides a list of committees and working groups staff were engaged in 2017.

### **Regional staff continue to defend Regional interests at the Ontario Municipal Board**

Regional staff have been extensively involved in Ontario Municipal Board (OMB) hearings associated with local Official Plan conformity and related appeals of site-specific development applications. Staff are also involved in hearings associated with Official Plan Amendments and development applications for subdivisions, condominiums and site plans.

Regional interests in these local hearings include the planned urban structure, transportation capacity and required infrastructure improvements, as well as road-related policy matters in development applications. The shift toward more complex policy matters and development projects associated with intensification in the urban area (i.e. Secondary Plans and Key Development Areas) continues.

Over the past few years, the OMB has increasingly encouraged parties to participate in mediation to resolve issues rather than by way of a contested hearing with unpredictable outcomes. The outcome of successful mediation is a settlement, but the process is often long and requires significant staff resources.

In 2017, the Province outlined proposed changes to the *Planning Act* and the OMB. On December 12, 2017, Bill 139 received Royal Assent and come into force as the *Better Building Communities and Conserving Watersheds Act, 2017*. The changes came into effect on April 3, 2018 and the new Local Planning Appeals Tribunal (LPAT) will replace the OMB. Due to the uncertainty of the new rules governing LPAT, there has been a significant increase in the number of appeals to the OMB prior to the new system coming into effect. This will increase demands on staff resources in the coming years.



**5. Financial Considerations****Revenue from planning and engineering application fees increased**

Fees are collected in accordance with Regional Bylaw No. 2010-15, as amended for land use planning approvals and the plan review function. As shown in Table 2 below, Regional planning and engineering application fees collected increased slightly in 2017. Revenue from combined planning and engineering application fees have been trending upwards over the past four years. The increased fee revenue is a result of the greater number of complex site plan and engineering submissions being reviewed by Development Engineering staff.

**Table 2**  
**Fee Revenue for Development Planning and Engineering**  
**2013 to 2017**

Section	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Development Planning	\$352,540	\$371,915	\$310,611	\$730,910	\$607,623
Development Engineering	\$1,317,032	\$978,272	\$1,306,330	\$2,039,194	\$3,425,846
Total	\$1,669,572	\$1,350,187	\$1,618,941	\$2,770,104	\$4,033,469

**Renewal of Development Charges by-law resulted in revenue of \$376,736,640**

Development Charges (DCs), are collected through the approval of development. In 2017, \$376,736,640 in development charges were collected. This is an increase of 11% compared to the \$338,547,685 collected in 2016. The increase is attributed to units registered prior to the residential development charges increase in June 2017. Figure 3 below outlines Development Charges collected from 2013 to 2017.

**Table 3**  
**Development Charges Collected from 2013 to 2017**

2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
\$186,439,583	\$264,197,066	\$258,274,065	\$338,547,685	\$376,736,640

Development Charge collections have been tracking below expectations. From mid-2012 to mid-2017, the Region collected approximately 57 per cent of the revenues projected by the 2012 development charge background study.

## **6. Local Municipal Impact**

Regional and local Official Plans establish the over-arching policy directions that support further development approvals at the local level. Conditional approval and clearances for registration provided by the Region on local plans of subdivision, condominiums and site plans, facilitate related approvals to be issued by lower-tier municipalities. Engineering submissions reviewed and approved by Regional staff also support further development at the local level. Regional staff continues to work closely with local municipal partners on development applications and appeals to ensure Regional and local policy objectives are met.

## **7. Conclusion**

This report provides a summary of planning and engineering development approvals that Regional staff were involved in 2017 and highlight trends over the past five years. Applications include local Official Plan Amendments, plans of subdivision and condominium, including clearances of Regional conditions, and site plan and engineering approvals. The complexity of local planning matters is increasing, given the shift towards infill development and intensification projects within the urban area.

The Region continued to experience strong growth in 2017 and development has remained consistent over the past four years. Residential housing mix is shifting towards higher densities which assist in achieving a greater diversification of households within the Region.

With the launch of YorkTrax in November 2017, the development review process has been streamlined. The new electronic development tracking system is intended to capture the full lifecycle of a development application from pre-

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consultation meetings to full build-out. YorkTrax incorporates workflow capabilities for process streamlining and will improve customer and client service. The Version 1 release focuses on application data capture, application mapping, comment circulation, basic reports and basic data exports. Currently, YorkTrax tracks applications from pre-consultation to plan registration. Future versions will enhance the capability of this system through added features and new modules.

Regional staff will continue to work closely with local municipal partners to achieve Regional and local policy objectives.

For more information on this report, please contact Justin Wong, Planner at 1-877-464-9675 ext. 71577.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.

March 29, 2018

Attachment (1)

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Accessible formats or communication supports are available upon request

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