

**Proposed Amendment
43
to the
Official Plan
for The
Regional Municipality
of York**

AMENDMENT 43
TO THE OFFICIAL PLAN
FOR
THE REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF YORK

PART A - THE PREAMBLE

1. Purpose of the Amendment:

The purpose of this amendment is to enhance the existing policies of Chapter 5 – Regional Structure and Growth Management, and Chapter 6 – Regional Infrastructure. This amendment will better articulate and more fully implement the Region’s planned urban structure of Regional Centres linked by Regional Corridors, served by rapid transit, and the role of Local Centres and Local Corridors in this structure.

2. Location:

This amendment has a Region-wide impact. It concerns lands comprising the four Regional Centres of Markham, Newmarket, Richmond Hill and Vaughan, and lands in and adjacent to the Regional Corridors connecting them, being Yonge Street from Steeles Avenue to Green Lane, Highway 7 within the Region, and the two north-south corridors connecting the Vaughan and Markham Regional Centres with Toronto, located in the general vicinity of Jane Street and Warden Avenue, respectively. It also affects Local Centres and Local Corridors in each of the nine area municipalities.

3. Basis:

The Regional Official Plan, since its adoption in 1994, has stood the test of time by promoting sound growth management principles, based on the concept of concentrating development in a system of centres and corridors. Although successful to date in building strong communities, enhancements to Regional planning policies are required. This will ensure that the Region remains responsive to the challenges of growth in a way that enhances the sustainability of the natural environment, the vitality of the economy, and the quality-of-life for residents in the long-term.

In the decade since the Regional Official Plan was adopted, York Region has experienced dramatic population and employment growth and wide-ranging challenges associated with that growth. These challenges range from traffic congestion to providing adequate human services to enhancing the natural environment. No longer just an extension of the outward growth from Toronto, York Region has evolved into a place with an identity of its own. The Region offers a range of opportunities to live, work, play and learn that are unique in the Greater Toronto Area. York Region is evolving into a city.

York Region has initiated policies and programs in response to the growth and change that has been occurring, in keeping with the Regional Official Plan themes of Sustainable Natural Environment, Economic Vitality and Healthy Communities. These include Vision 2026, the Transportation Master

Plan, Human Services Strategy, Greening Strategy, Housing Supply Strategy, York Region Centres + Corridors Strategy: Making it Happen!, and a public-private partnership to implement the York Region Rapid Transit Plan. These initiatives have reaffirmed the need for and benefits of more compact and concentrated development patterns as a means of supporting infrastructure investment and improving the overall quality of our communities.

A comprehensive and inclusive consultation process involving a broad cross-section of stakeholders was instrumental in the planning process for this amendment and resulted in better policy. Beginning in mid-2002, the consultation process has comprised:

- Workshops with Regional and local staff in May 2002, and February, April and December 2003;
- Information displays at public consultation centres held as part of the York Region Rapid Transit Plan Environmental Assessment study process in the Spring and Fall of 2003;
- An urban design charrette in February 2004 attended by 40 people, including municipal staff, the development industry and professional consultants;
- Presentations to six area municipal councils between January and April 2004;
- Six public consultation sessions held in five municipalities attended by 170 people in March and April 2004;
- Presentations to Grade 9 and 12 students in May and June 2004; and,
- Statutory Public Meetings on June 24, 2004 in Richmond Hill and September 8, 2004 in Newmarket.

This amendment advances the implementation of key Regional policies and programs through an enhanced planning framework for the Region's urban structure. This work will also assist the local municipalities implement their city-building initiatives, including local planning for Regional Centres and segments of Regional Corridors. Further, these Regional and local municipal efforts are advancing a new planning framework across the GTA, which is being reinforced by recent Provincial actions to advance city-building, including "Places to Grow – A Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe" and proposed changes to the Provincial Policy Statement to strengthen municipal planning for compact and transit-supportive development. This will ensure that York Region's communities continue to be responsive to the changing environment and the evolving needs of its residents and businesses.

PART B - THE AMENDMENT

All of the Amendment entitled PART B - THE AMENDMENT, consisting of the attached Policy and Map changes, constitutes Amendment 43 to the Official Plan for the Region of York.

The Official Plan for the Region of York is hereby amended by the following:

1. Section 5.2 – COMMUNITY BUILDING is amended as follows:
 - a) The introductory text immediately following the title "5.2 COMMUNITY BUILDING" is deleted and replaced with the following text:

"Communities are a fundamental building block of this Plan. Communities are much more than the architecture of buildings and the design of neighbourhoods. Communities are places where people interact, learn, work, play and reside. Excellence in community design is essential to creating a physical place where people have the opportunities and choices required to lead rewarding lives.

York has a tradition of tightly knit villages with mainstreets, community activities and places to work, live and play. The challenge in many ways is to include some of these proven elements in creating new communities. The creation of new communities also needs to complement an urban structure that provides a series of strong Regional Centres linked by Regional Corridors serving the Region as a whole.

Complete communities are healthy communities that incorporate principles of safety, accessibility, high quality urban design, adequate human services and choice for all citizens. Growth will require investment in infrastructure including human services. Communities are places that protect and enhance the natural environment and foster economic vitality. The policies of this Plan are intended to promote communities that are diverse and self-contained with opportunities to work, enjoy recreation and be housed. They are designed so that cost-effective and efficient transit systems can be operated and so that people have the choice of walking and bicycling throughout the community and beyond. Policies are also included to encourage well designed streets and building locations that create vibrant, pedestrian-friendly and transit-oriented streetscapes.

The municipalities in York Region are at different stages in preparing detailed community plans for their settlement areas. Consequently, the urban areas defined on Map 5 are not extensive enough to accommodate the 2026 forecasts in Table 1. Further community planning in accordance with the Plan may result in amendments to Map 5.

The primary focus of growth in the Region, however, needs to shift towards a growth management model that encourages development within the existing urban areas. The Regional Centres and Regional Corridors will be the prime locations for infill and intensification; the most intensive of which being directed to locally defined Key Development Areas. Local Centres and Local Corridors are also prime locations for infill and intensification, but at a smaller scale.

The concentration of residents and jobs at specific locations is important to provide opportunities to live and work in the same area, efficient and effective transit services, a variety of housing opportunities, specialized human services, and economic vitality. A balance of residential and employment growth within the Regional and Local Centres and Corridors, and managed growth in new development areas is important in achieving sustainable urban growth over the long term.

The characteristics of well designed and managed development are detailed in the community development criteria that follow. The policies of this section also identify clear boundaries for urban areas, require new communities to be planned for large contiguous areas, encourage carefully planned intensification and require comprehensive study before any urban expansion by amendment to this Plan.”

- b) The Objective of Section 5.2 Community Building is modified by deleting the word “accessible” in its second occurrence prior to the word “communities” such that it reads as follows:

“Objective

To develop diverse, self-sufficient, accessible, safe, green, economically vibrant, pedestrian-oriented communities through excellence in planning and urban design.”

- c) Policy 5.2.2.b) is amended by adding the following text at the end of the clause:

“that shows consideration for the existing built-form and surrounding land uses of the community through appropriate building design and massing”.

- d) Policy 5.2.2.c) is amended by adding the words “mixed-use” after the phrase “provision for efficient”.
- e) Policy 5.2.2.e) is amended by adding the phrase “with an emphasis on public transit” after the words “transportation facilities”.
- f) Policy 5.2.3 is amended by adding the following clause after clause “g,” renumbering the existing clause “h” to clause “i,” and deleting the “and” after clause “g.”
 - “h) the role of the development lands is supportive of an urban structure of centres and corridors with transit-supportive densities, and;”
- g) Policy 5.2.4 is amended by deleting “20%” and replacing it with “30%”. Policy 5.2.4 is further amended by adding the following sentence to the end of the policy: “Increasing this target should be considered when reviewing the policies of this Plan.”
- h) Policy 5.2.6 is amended by adding the phrase “in locations with accessible public transit services” after the words “To promote civic centres”.
- i) Policy 5.2.7 is amended by deleting the word “and” at the end of clause “o” and renumbering clause “p” to clause “r”.
- j) Policy 5.2.7 is further amended by adding the following two clauses after clause “o”:
 - “p) the completion of a transit plan, working with York Region Transit, for the planning area which includes how the area can and will be serviced by public transit and how transit service can and will be integrated with the Regional rapid transit system, the planned Provincial Highway 407 Transitway, and GO Transit services
 - q) urban design criteria that promotes, but is not limited to, the following:
 - i) pedestrian scale, safety, comfort and mobility;
 - ii) the enrichment of existing areas;
 - iii) attractive buildings, landscaping and public streetscapes;
 - iv) compatibility with and transition to surrounding land uses; and,
 - v) appropriate building placement and orientation”
- k) Policy 5.2.8(d) is amended by changing the reference to clause “p)” to clause “r)”.
- l) Policy 5.2.8 is amended by adding the following additional clause after “d),” deleting the word “and” at the end of clause “c),” and adding the word “and” to clause “d):”
 - “e) that when public transit services are introduced, the plan meets criteria e) and p) in Policy 5.2.7.”
- m) Policy 5.2.11 is amended by adding the following sentence at the end of the policy:
 - “The Region will support the area municipalities in their efforts to ensure access to buildings and public spaces for persons with disabilities.”

- n) Policy 5.2.16 is amended by deleting the words “identified 20 year” and replacing them with the word “current”.

2. Section 5.3 – CENTRES is deleted in its entirety and replaced with the following new Section:

“5.3 REGIONAL CENTRES

The four Regional Centres identified on Map 5 of this Plan are the Region’s “downtowns.” Strategically located in Newmarket, Vaughan, Richmond Hill and Markham, Regional Centres are planned to become hubs of business, cultural, government, and social activity.

Regional Centres will mature throughout and beyond the period of this Plan to contain the highest concentration and greatest mix of uses in the Region, including a range of employment and housing opportunities. Development will be in a compact, well-designed form that contributes to an urban fabric that is vibrant, safe, attractive, pedestrian-friendly and transit-supportive.

Strategic investments in rapid and conventional public transit, and other infrastructure by the public and private sectors will ensure the long-term vitality of Regional Centres, making them desirable and efficient places to live, work, play and learn.

Objective

To create a well-designed system of Regional Centres to focus residential, institutional and business activities and recognize the long term vision of achieving thriving Regional Centres, served by rapid transit.

It is the policy of Council:

1. To support a well-defined urban structure of Regional Centres and Regional Corridors. This will be achieved through implementation of the York Region Centres + Corridors Strategy: Making it Happen! This Strategy includes a range of policies, programs, infrastructure and financial tools to implement the Region’s planned urban structure.
2. To recognize that the influence of Regional Centres extends beyond the urban area, having a Region-wide impact. Focusing the most intensive and highest-order land uses in these areas helps preserve agricultural land, protect and enhance the natural environment, optimize the use of infrastructure, create transportation choices, improve economic competitiveness and increase opportunity for investment and development.
3. To recognize that the Regional Centres identified on Map 5 are the major focal points for urban development in the Region, and are intended to support a concentration of employment, residential, live-work, cultural and government functions in a well designed and intensive land use form.
4. That development densities should be highest within the Regional Centres and should support an overall, long-term density target of 2.5 Floor Space Index.
5. To recognize that infill and intensification may occur incrementally over time as land uses and evolve and mature. For this reason it is important that initial phases of development not preclude the fuller achievement in the future of a compact, pedestrian-friendly and transit-supportive urban form consistent with the policies of this Plan.

6. That development in the Regional Centres will balance employment and residential growth and be supported by parks, open space, and community facilities that are appropriate for a vibrant, safe and attractive urban setting.
7. That a variety of compact, higher density housing types will be directed to Regional Centres to service all housing needs, including affordable and assisted housing.
8. That Regional Centres should be the primary and priority locations for public investment including public buildings, and community facilities and services. Major Regional buildings and facilities will be located in the Regional Centres. The area municipalities will also be encouraged to locate major public buildings and facilities in the Regional Centres.
9. Area municipalities will regularly undertake the review of their Official Plans as required by the *Planning Act*. Secondary plans for Regional Centres shall be established or reviewed to:
 - a) Ensure that appropriate planning policies are in place as follows:
 - i) built form and land use shall promote public transit ridership through sensitive design, scale, densities, land use mix and location;
 - ii) development sites are connected by a fine grain grid of streets, internal driveway connections, and sidewalks to provide direct and safe access to major streets and public transit services;
 - iii) development forms should be compact, consistent with Policy 5.3.4 of this Plan;
 - iv) residential designations should favour more compact residential forms over single and semi-detached dwellings;
 - v) new development shall be integrated with surrounding land uses and built-form through appropriate scale, design and use;
 - vi) Regional Centres shall be designed to be serviced by rapid transit;
 - vii) Regional Centres should create focal points for community activity and civic pride;
 - viii) provision should be made for public gathering places, streetscaping and planting to enhance the pedestrian environment;
 - ix) connections with the local and Regional Greenland Systems including parks, bicycle and pedestrian systems and natural features shall be provided;
 - x) phasing plans shall be developed to ensure that Regional Centres evolve and intensify beyond the period of this Plan;
 - xi) employment targets that contribute to an overall, long-term target resident-to-employee ratio of 1:1;
 - xii) ground-floor uses of buildings should be provided in a manner that creates convenient, direct access for pedestrians, and contributes to the vibrancy of the public realm;
 - xiii) locations for human services that meet Region-wide needs will be pursued; and,
 - xiv) cultural heritage resources will be recognized and protected.
 - b) Create and review urban design guidelines, working with the Region, to achieve attractive, pedestrian-friendly and transit-oriented places through the following, in addition to the criteria identified in Policy 5.2.7.q) of this Plan:
 - i) a fine grain grid network of streets;
 - ii) sidewalk connections directly to streets and transit routes;
 - iii) appropriate building massing and articulation, and;
 - iv) appropriate parking design and standards including provision for above- and below-grade parking structures.
 - c) Coordinate infrastructure investment, in consultation with the Region, to coincide with the build-out of the Regional Centres, including:
 - i) rapid transit and conventional transit network;

- ii) road network, including streetscaping in the rights-of-way; and,
 - iii) sewer and water systems.
 - 10. To support the Town of Newmarket in the preparation of a secondary plan for the Regional Centre, consistent with Policy 5.3.9 of this Plan. The area municipality shall have the primary responsibility for the preparation of this plan.
 - 11. To support development in the Regional Centres by the early implementation of rapid transit services in the Yonge Street and Highway 7 corridors, in the Vaughan North-South Corridor (connecting the Vaughan Corporate Centre with York University), and in the Markham North-South Corridor (connecting Markham Centre with the Toronto Transit Commission Subway).
 - 12. That the area municipalities, working with the Region, are encouraged to develop implementation strategies for secondary plans, which may include:
 - a) encouraging public investment from all levels of government;
 - b) using a wide range of innovative financial tools to encourage development consistent with this Plan, including the implementation of Tax Increment Financing and area-specific Development Charges;
 - c) providing opportunities for joint development between the transit agency and land developers to encourage and facilitate transit-supportive development and/or the transit infrastructure;
 - d) promoting transit ridership through controlled parking standards within the Regional Centres including the implementation of maximum parking standards, parking authorities and cash-in-lieu of parking under the *Planning Act*;
 - e) developing Transportation Demand Management measures, including the further establishment of Transportation Management Associations;
 - f) designating Regional Centres as Community Improvement Project areas under *Section 28* of the *Planning Act*;
 - g) establishing a development permit framework or as-of-right zoning;
 - h) establishing phasing plans for the build-out of the Regional Centres, recognizing that the build-out may occur beyond the period of this Plan;
 - i) the use of *Section 37* of the *Planning Act* to achieve net community benefits which are supportive of a compact community form; and,
 - j) innovative policies and programs to provide schools, parks and open space to serve the Regional Centres, including the implementation of alternative parkland provisions.
 - 13. Development should be monitored by the Region and the local municipalities to determine the effectiveness and appropriateness of existing policies and practices for the planning and implementation of Regional Centres.
 - 14. The delivery of public transit services shall support the development objectives of this Plan.
 - 15. Priority shall be given to capital infrastructure improvements in Regional Centres and Regional Corridors.”
2. Section 5.4 – CORRIDORS is deleted in its entirety and replaced with the following new Section:

“5.4 LOCAL CENTRES

Local Centres are concentrations of residential, human service, commercial and office activities that serve the adjacent community. These centres are designed to function much like Regional Centres, but on a smaller scale. Rather than serving the entire Region, a Local Centre usually serves the community located immediately around it.

The smaller scale and scope of Local Centres do not diminish their importance to the Region's urban structure. Local Centres play a supporting role to Regional Centres, and contribute to the vitality of their surrounding communities.

Local Centres can vary from areas adjacent to old mainstreets to intensive clusters of buildings in new communities. Local Centres may naturally evolve as settlement areas mature. Many centres exist in the Region already, and these centres often have historic streetscapes that should be retained and enhanced. Centres have existed on the mainstreets of Newmarket and Thornhill for over 100 years. The mainstreets of Stouffville and Sutton have long served the needs of the surrounding settlements and agricultural communities.

Local Centres may accommodate more growth and a broader mix of land uses, particularly if they are to be served by efficient public transit services. New Local Centres may be created as part of the community development process outlined in Section 5.2.

Objective

To create a series of Local Centres that provide a concentration of residential, business, institutional and human service activities for the surrounding community.

It is the policy of Council:

1. To require municipal official plans to identify the locations of Local Centres within the Urban Areas of the communities of Newmarket, Aurora, Richmond Hill, Thornhill, Unionville, Markham Village, Cornell, Cathedral, Langstaff, Milliken, Woodbridge, Carrville, Vellore Village, Maple and Keswick and other local centres as determined by the respective area municipality.
2. That area municipalities be supported in their planning for the Local Centres located within Towns and Villages, as shown on Map 5 of this Plan. These include the communities of Sutton, Pefferlaw, Mount Albert, Holland Landing, Sharon, Stouffville, Nobleton, Schomberg, Kleinburg, Ballantrae/Musselman Lake and King City.
3. That Local Centres located on rapid transit corridors may also be subject to the Regional Corridor policies of Section 5.5 of this Plan.
4. That area municipalities prepare secondary plans or other appropriate studies for Local Centres that address the following criteria:
 - a) a range and mix of uses is provided, including residential, commercial, institutional, retail, office and human services;
 - b) transit facilities should be easily accessible to pedestrians;
 - c) create focal points for community activity and civic pride;
 - d) integration with bicycle and pedestrian systems, and local greenlands systems, including local parks and natural features;
 - e) provide for pedestrian plazas, streets and parks to promote a pedestrian-friendly environment;
 - f) the surrounding areas should relate to, be efficiently connected with, and contribute to the vitality of the Local Centre;
 - g) the specific location and boundaries of the Local Centres should be identified using approximately 30 hectares as the focus of the Local Centre;
 - h) the size and the context for development should be in relation to the surrounding community and corridors;
 - i) permitted uses should be similar to those permitted in Regional Centres with greater emphasis on residential and local employment uses;
 - j) with the exception of Regional Centres, Local Centres should comprise the greatest mix of uses when within urban areas;

- k) specific employment targets should be identified that contribute to a balanced choice of live/work opportunities, consistent with Policy 5.3.9a)xi) of this Plan;
 - l) varying in size, scope, role and function to reflect a hierarchy of Centres within the Region;
 - m) the location should be in the immediate vicinity of the highest-capacity transportation facilities, including public transit, and centrally-located to serve the community around it;
 - n) development shall be promoted as focal points for current and/or future public transit services and infrastructure;
 - o) intensification targets for development, consistent with Policy 5.2.4 of this Plan;
 - p) methods to reduce or slow down traffic, as well as improvements to parking in support of local business, including on-street parking. It should be recognized that compact development, over time, will generate opportunities to provide below-grade parking in urban areas; and;
 - q) where cultural heritage resources exist, they should be conserved and enhanced, where possible.
5. That plans for Local Centres located within Towns and Villages, as described in Policy 5.4.2 of this Plan, should meet the following criteria in addition to the applicable criteria in Policy 5.4.4 of this Plan:
- a) identify the area of the commercial core;
 - b) protect the significant natural features of the community such as rivers, lakes, etc.;
 - c) recognize the potential for commercial and tourist activity;
 - d) recognize the servicing capacity of the community;
 - e) encourage efficient land use patterns, including the identification of areas for infill development; and,
 - f) provide human services for surrounding rural and agricultural areas.
6. That all Local Centres be served by public transit within the period of this Plan, and connected to the planned rapid transit services in the Yonge Street and Highway 7 corridors.
7. To support the development of Local Centres by giving priority to transit and infrastructure improvements in those areas.
8. To encourage area municipalities, as part of planning Local Centres, to revitalize and preserve traditional mainstreet areas by conserving cultural heritage resources and reinforcing the character of the mainstreet.”
3. Section 5.5 - HAMLETS is amended by renumbering the Section to 5.7.
4. Section 5.6 - AGRICULTURE POLICY AREA is amended by renumbering the Section to 5.8.
5. Section 5.7 - RURAL POLICY AREA is amended by renumbering the Section to 5.9.
6. Section 5.8 - MINERAL AGGREGATE RESOURCE AREAS is amended by renumbering the Section to 5.10
7. Section 5.9 - ESTATE RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT is amended by renumbering the Section to 5.11.
8. Section 5.10 - CONSENTS is amended by renumbering the Section to 5.12.
9. Section 5.11 - RESORT/RECREATIONAL DEVELOPMENT is amended by renumbering the Section to 5.13.
10. Section 5.7 – HAMLETS, as renumbered, is further amended as follows:

- a) Policy 5.7.3 is amended by:
 - i) deleting reference to “Policy 5.5.2” and replacing it with “Policy 5.7.2”;
 - ii) deleting reference to “Section 5.6” and replacing it with “Section 5.8”: and
 - iii) deleting reference to “Section 5.7” and replacing it with “Section 5.9”.
 - b) Policy 5.7.4a) is amended by deleting the reference to Clause 5.2.3 (h) and replacing it with 5.2.3(i) such that the phrase reads “Policy 5.2.3(a) through (f) and (i); and”.
11. Section 5.8 – AGRICULTURAL POLICY AREA, as renumbered, is further amended as follows:
 - a) Policy 5.8.9 is amended by deleting reference to “Section 5.10” and replacing it with “Section 5.12”.
 12. Section 5.9 – RURAL POLICY AREA, as renumbered, is further amended as follows:
 - a) Policy 5.9.3 is amended by deleting reference to “Policy 5.7.2” and replacing it with “Policy 5.9.2”.
 - b) Policy 5.9.6 is amended by deleting reference to “Section 5.10” and replacing it with “Section 5.12”.
 - c) Policy 5.9.7 is amended by deleting reference to “Section 5.9” and replacing it with “Section 5.11”.
 - d) Policy 5.9.11 is amended by deleting reference to “Policies 5.11.4 and 5.11.5 (b) and (c)” and replacing it with “Policies 5.13.4 and 5.13.5 (b) and (c)”.
 13. Section 5.11- ESTATE RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT, as renumbered, is further amended as follows:
 - a) Policy 5.11.8 is amended by deleting reference to “Policy 5.9.7” and replacing it with “Policy 5.11.7”.
 14. Section 5.12-CONSENTS, as renumbered, is further amended as follows:
 - a) Policy 5.12.4 is amended by deleting reference to “Section 5.6 and Section 5.7” and replacing it with “Section 5.8 and Section 5.10”.
 15. Section 5.13-RESORT/RECREATIONAL DEVELOPMENT, as renumbered, is further amended as follows:
 - a) Policy 5.13.2 is amended by deleting reference to “Policy 5.7.2” and replacing it with “Policy 5.9.2”.
 16. Chapter 5 – REGIONAL STRUCTURE AND GROWTH MANAGEMENT is further amended by adding the following two new sections: Section 5.5 - REGIONAL CORRIDORS; and, Section 5.6 – LOCAL CORRIDORS, as follows:

“5.5 Regional Corridors

Yonge Street and Highway 7 extend to the limits of the Region, linking the Regional Centres and connecting them to the rest of the Greater Toronto Area and beyond. These corridors also have great potential for more intensive and mixed-use forms of development, served by rapid transit.

The Regional Corridors form the key connections between the Regional Centres. These corridors are considered the main arteries of the Region’s urban structure. They provide for the movement of people and of goods between the Regional and Local Centres to support their vitality. Major road and public transit

networks also intersect along these corridors to create opportunities for “sub-centres” or “inter-modal nodes” between the Local and Regional Centres. These areas may be identified as Key Development Areas in local official plans, consistent with the policies of this Plan.

This Plan promotes a comprehensive overall view of the corridors identified on Map 5, as a linking and unifying element in the Region that provides a public transit system connecting to the larger Greater Toronto Area. In addition to Yonge Street and Highway 7, a Vaughan North-South Corridor and Markham North-South Corridor form part of the broader Regional Corridor system. The Vaughan North-South Corridor will provide a rapid transit connection between the Vaughan Corporate Centre, York University and the Toronto Transit Commission subway (Downsview Station on the Spadina Line). The Markham North-South Corridor will provide a rapid transit connection between Markham Centre and the Toronto Transit Commission subway (Don Mills station on the Sheppard Line).

Yonge Street is unique as a Regional Corridor, serving as the historical spine for over 200 years of development history north of Toronto, and traversing the Oak Ridges Moraine. Originally with its stagecoach service and then radial rail, Yonge Street linked the many historical villages and towns northward to Newmarket and beyond. Existing policies and programs pertaining to Yonge Street should be reviewed to ensure that the historical character and natural heritage unique to this corridor will be enhanced throughout the land development lifecycle and the implementation of planned rapid transit services.

Highway 7 has a different history than Yonge Street – beginning at a time when its primary purpose was the movement of automobile and truck traffic as a former Provincial Highway. The vision for Highway 7 is the evolution of this once auto-dominated highway to a human-scale “mainstreet” with compact and pedestrian-friendly development served by rapid transit. The identification of Key Development Areas along the various segments of this corridor by the local municipalities is the first step in moving toward the vision for Highway 7.

Regional Corridors are not uniform across their entire length. The character and pace of change varies dramatically. From historical mainstreets to vacant land to modern higher-density buildings, there are a variety of conditions that make-up the character of each Regional Corridor. These conditions can be classified three ways: 1) “greenfield,” representing vacant, development-ready lands; 2) “second generation,” comprising developed sites ideal for new and intensified development; and, 3) areas unlikely to change, like historical areas and environmentally sensitive features like the Oak Ridges Moraine.

Lands adjacent to these corridors are at different stages in the land development lifecycle and should be subject to specialized policies and programs that recognize this. These should provide incentives for redevelopment in appropriate areas, while maintaining the character and integrity of areas where little change is expected.

Objective

To achieve attractive and vibrant Regional Corridors that support public transit and link Regional Centres.

It is a policy of Council:

1. To require official plans for Aurora, East Gwillimbury, Newmarket, Vaughan, Richmond Hill and Markham to identify and designate Regional Corridors in accordance with the locations identified on Map 5.
2. That the Region, as requested by and in association with the area municipalities, consider extensions to the existing Regional Corridors, as shown on Map 5 of this Plan.

3. To require the official plans for the area municipalities to identify and designate the major transit spines: Yonge Street from Steeles Avenue to Green Lane; Highway 7; the Vaughan North-South Corridor; and, the Markham North-South Corridor.
4. That the Region work with the area municipalities in identifying the different conditions of each Regional Corridor on a segment-by-segment basis. This shall occur in a comprehensive manner that identifies Key Development Areas within these segments, representing one or more of the following:
 - a) areas with the greatest opportunity for compact and mixed-use development;
 - b) areas assigned early priority for rapid transit services and infrastructure;
 - c) areas abutting or adjacent to rapid transit stations; and,
 - d) areas of the Corridor that intersect with other major transportation routes or facilities, including passenger rail and other surface transit services.
5. That the Key Development Areas identified according to Policy 5.5.4 of this Plan serve as places where compact and mixed-use development is focused. This approach will provide clarity as to where highest concentrations of infill and intensification will occur.
6. That Key Development Areas should support an overall, long-term density target of 2.5 Floor Space Index for Regional Corridors.
7. That the implementation of rapid transit services should be initiated as early as possible in the Regional Corridors to encourage development and redevelopment consistent with the policies of this Plan.
8. To assist and encourage the area municipalities to develop urban design guidelines for the various segments of the Regional Corridors, consistent with Policy 5.3.9.b) of this Plan.
9. That employment areas are planned comprehensively and that applications be reviewed in a manner that ensures the planned function of the employment area is maintained. Consideration of altering the primary function of the area should only be done through comprehensive study.
10. To explore opportunities with the area municipalities, and public and private utility providers to establish, maintain and/or upgrade communication and transmission facilities in a manner that supports and enhances the planned vision for Regional Corridors, in keeping with the policies of Sections 5.5 and 6.5 of this Plan.
11. To explore opportunities with area municipalities to provide sidewalks and lighting in the street right-of-way to enhance the visual appearance of the streetscape.
12. Area municipalities will undertake the regular review of their official plans as required under the *Planning Act* and establish or review secondary plans that include segments of the Regional Corridors, consistent with the following:
 - a) identify the role and function of the secondary plan area;
 - b) promote public transit ridership through high quality urban design, human scale, land use mix, and compact development;
 - c) integrate new forms of development and existing development to maintain and enhance historical mainstreets;
 - d) recognize and protect the cultural heritage resources;
 - e) buildings are oriented to the street to create a consistent setback and building form adjacent to the street right-of-way;
 - f) building design should set a high standard of urban design;
 - g) buildings and sites are designed to provide convenient access for public transit users, pedestrians, cyclists and persons with disabilities;

- h) achieve a mix of commercial, housing, employment and institutional uses in the Regional Corridor;
 - i) Regional Streetscape Policies;
 - j) identify Key Development Areas consistent with Policy 5.5.4 of this Plan;
 - k) identify existing areas that may not re-develop in the near future but have re-development potential in the longer term;
 - l) recognize that infill and intensification may occur incrementally over time as land uses evolve and mature, consistent with Policy 5.3.5 of this Plan;
 - m) provide for public gathering places, streetscaping and greening to create a pedestrian-friendly environment, integrated with the local and Regional Greenland Systems including parks, bicycle and pedestrian systems and natural features;
 - n) appropriately integrate with and transition to surrounding land uses and built form through scale, land use and design; and,
 - o) other policies of this Plan.
12. That development should be monitored to determine the effectiveness and appropriateness of existing policies and practices for the planning and implementation of Regional Corridors.
 13. That the delivery of public transit services shall support the development objectives of this Plan.
 14. To assign priority to Regional capital infrastructure improvements in Regional Corridors.
 15. That the area municipalities, working with the Region, be encouraged to develop implementation strategies for secondary plans, consistent with Policy 5.3.12 of this Plan.
 16. Residential designations should favour more compact residential forms over those that are exclusively ground-related, like single and semi-detached dwelling types.
 17. That all new development shall either front or flank the Regional Corridor roadway or other routes for public transit services. New reverse lotting along the corridor will not be permitted.

5.6 LOCAL CORRIDORS

A system of arterial roads and Provincial highways cross the Region linking communities together. In the urban areas of the Region certain arterials roads or corridors have the potential to link Regional and Local Centres by efficient public transit services. These corridors also have great potential for more compact and mixed-use land development, which would be supported by public transit services.

Some of these corridors may be identified as routes for rapid transit services and facilities. In such cases, the Regional Corridor policies in Section 5.5 of this Plan shall apply to those segments.

Local Corridors located in existing and proposed urban areas have potential for new residential and employment growth at development densities that would make frequent public transit service possible. The appropriate level of development density will depend on site-specific circumstances and the nature of development along and adjacent to the Corridors.

Objective

Promote opportunities for residential and employment growth and intensification along Local Corridors serving the local communities.

It is the policy of Council:

1. That development and redevelopment in the Local Corridors address the following criteria:
 - a) identify the function of each section of the corridor;
 - b) establish a range of residential and commercial land uses, including retail, offices, mixed-uses and services;
 - c) establish density and performance standards to encourage mixed-use residential and commercial building forms, in addition to single-use buildings, with particular attention to creating public spaces at-grade;
 - d) consistent setback provisions to encourage a continuous building form adjacent to the street right-of-way;
 - e) establish site-specific parking requirements that recognize the level of planned public transit service and the need for residential and commercial activities, and to encourage the provision of alternatives to on-street parking along the street frontage (for example, underground parking or parking at the rear of buildings with appropriate screening);
 - f) encourage pedestrian activity through the arrangement and design of land development sites and related streetscaping treatments; and,
 - g) Regional Streetscaping Policies.
 2. That major new development or redevelopment proposals on Local Corridors be evaluated in terms of the policies of this section of the Plan.
 3. That area municipal policies concentrate new employment opportunities within 200 metres of transit stops.
 4. To encourage area municipalities, as part of Local Corridor planning, to revitalize and preserve traditional mainstreet areas.
 5. To require that secondary plans contain policies which indicate the function of Regional Corridors, considering the historic function and provide land use policies along the Local Corridors.
 6. That those segments of Local Corridors identified through the environmental assessment process as locations for rapid transit services and facilities may be subject to and consistent with the Regional Corridors policies under Section 5.5 of this Plan.”
17. Chapter 6 – REGIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE is amended by adding the following paragraph to the end of the introductory text prior to “Section 6.1 – THE ROAD NETWORK”:
- “In terms of the transportation aspect of Regional Infrastructure, the Region has completed a Transportation Master Plan (TMP) with the purpose of defining a long-term transportation vision and integrated road and transit network plan that will support growth in York Region to 2031. The TMP integrates transportation and land use planning and is founded upon the Official Plan goals of sustainable natural environment, economic vitality, and healthy communities. The TMP supports the Region’s planned urban structure of Regional Centres, linked by Regional Corridors served by rapid transit, and complements the Region’s strategic plan – Vision 2026.”
18. Section 6.1 – THE ROAD NETWORK is amended as follows:

- a) In the introductory text immediately following the title “Section 6.1 – THE ROAD NETWORK”, the second sentence in the fourth paragraph is amended by deleting the word “undertaken” and replacing it with the word “completed”.

19. Section 6.2 – THE TRANSIT NETWORK is amended as follows:

- a) The introductory text immediately following the title Section 6.2 – THE TRANSIT NETWORK is amended by deleting the second paragraph and replacing it with the following:

“The integration of the separate local public transit services in January 2001 into York Region Transit was an important step towards a more efficient and effective transit service to meet the needs of current and future residents and businesses. The nature of travel within York Region is such that a majority of all work trips cross at least one municipal boundary. Transit services need to cross municipal boundaries in order to serve these travel demands. The unified public transit service helps address this need and will assist in co-ordinating public transit with the adjacent Regions and the City of Toronto.

The Transportation Master Plan sets the framework for future transportation decisions to support growth to 2031. The TMP sets both immediate and long-term public transit goals and is the basis of the Region’s rapid transit plan. The establishment of four rapid transit corridors is the cornerstone of York Region’s rapid transit plan, connecting the Regional Centres along Yonge Street and Highway 7.

The implementation of the rapid transit plan is intended to occur in phases. The first phase, referred to as “Quick Start,” establishes frequent service routes using state-of-the-art buses on existing roads with public transit enhancements such as transit priority traffic signals and queue-jumping lanes. This allows for the early implementation of rapid transit and establishes transit use patterns that can be built upon with the second phase of implementation. The second phase will be determined through the Environmental Assessment process, which involves the determination of route alignments, station locations, and rapid transit technologies to serve the four corridors.

All major communities within the Region should be linked together by public transit. An integrated and coordinated public transit system should be able to serve most of the travel needs of potential riders at a reasonable cost. Rapid transit provided by the public-private partnership will be seamlessly integrated with the York Region Transit system.

A comprehensive employer-based Travel Demand Management Strategy is supported by the Region as an effective tool to reduce traffic congestion and increase public transit ridership. Travel Demand Management initiatives should be promoted to encourage travelers to carpool, make fewer and shorter vehicles trips, walk, cycle, and travel outside weekday peak periods. This will help optimize the efficiency and capacity of the transportation infrastructure already in place, including Provincial Highways. Implementation of reserved bus lanes or high occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes will also assist in changing the way people travel. These combined changes will result in a more efficient, accessible and convenient transportation system.”

- b) The Objective of Section 6.2 is amended by adding a second objective as follows and adding an “s” to the word “Objective”:

“To provide rapid transit services as early as possible linking the Regional Centres with adjacent urban areas.”

- c) Adding the following three new policies following Policy 6.2.1 and renumber the subsequent policies accordingly:

- “6.2.2 To develop, at an early date, four Regional Rapid Transit Corridors as shown on Map 10 linking the Regional Centres, and linking the Region with the City of Toronto and neighbouring regions. The initial phases of rapid transit services will be directed to the following corridor segments:
- Yonge Street Corridor – Richmond Hill Centre at Highway 7 southward to connect with Toronto Transit Commission facilities
 - Vaughan North-South Corridor – Vaughan Corporate Centre at Highway 7 southward to connect with Toronto Transit Commission facilities
 - Markham North-South Corridor – Markham Centre at Highway 7 southward to connect with Toronto Transit Commission facilities
 - Highway 7 Corridor – Jane Street to Highway 27 and Yonge Street to Kennedy Road
- The first phase of implementation will include transit priority measures on existing or planned rights-of-way including but not limited to queue-jumping lanes, traffic signal priority measures and state-of-the-art buses.
- 6.2.3 To develop, upon completion of the appropriate Environmental Assessments, a rapid transit network in the four Regional Rapid Transit Corridors as shown on Map 10, linking the Regional Centres, City of Toronto and adjacent regions as follows:
- Yonge Corridor
 - Vaughan North-South Corridor
 - Highway 7 Corridor
 - Markham North-South Corridor
- 6.2.4 To work with the Area Municipalities to ensure Travel Demand Management strategies are formulated and implemented to encourage travellers to use non-auto modes, carpool, make fewer and shorter vehicles trips, and travel outside weekday peak periods.”

- d) The new renumbered Policy 6.2.6(d) (formerly 6.2.3(d)) is amended by adding the phrase “by developing and implementing Regional commuter parking and carpool parking plans” to the end of the policy.
- e) The new renumbered Policy 6.2.9 (formerly 6.2.6) is amended by adding the following new clause to the end of the policy and adding the word “and” to the end of clause (g) deleting the word “and” from the end of clause (f):

“h) the four Regional Rapid Transit Corridors specified in policies 6.2.2 and 6.2.3”

- f) The new renumbered Policy 6.2.11 (formerly 6.2.8) is amended by adding the phrase “as early as possible” after the words “To provide” and deleting the reference to “Policy 6.2.3” and replacing it with “Policy 6.2.6”.
- g) The following new policy is added to the end of Section 6.2 as follows:

“6.2.15 The area municipalities are encouraged to include policies in their official plans to assist in the implementation of the “Conceptual Transit Network” shown on Map 10,

consistent with Policy 5.3.12 of this Plan. This may include the use of *Section 37* of the *Planning Act* to acquire property and/or provide required transit facilities.”

20. Section 6.3 – CYCLING, WALKING AND TRAILS is amended as follows:

a) Policy 6.3.3 is amended by adding the following phrase to the end of the policy:

“, and well lighted sidewalks provided on both sides of all arterial roads in urban areas, and towns and villages to provide safer pedestrian routes.”

b) By adding the following new policy and renumbering the subsequent policies of this section accordingly:

“6.3.5 To work with area municipalities to ensure that sidewalks and streetlighting are provided on both sides of all arterial and collector roads with transit service.”

21. The Definitions Section is amended by adding the following new definitions:

FLOOR SPACE INDEX (FSI)

The ratio of gross floor area of a building to its respective lot area. For example, a building with a gross floor area of 25,000 sq.m. situated on a lot with an area of 10,000 sq.m. has an FSI of 2.5.

FINE GRAIN GRID NETWORK OF STREETS

Streets that frequently intersect with other streets to create shorter blocks. This type of street network provides greater accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists, and also helps to disperse the flow of vehicular traffic.

RAPID TRANSIT

A high performance mode of public transportation that usually comprises vehicles and stations in a designated lane or right-of-way to provide a public transit service that is faster and more frequent than conventional transit modes.

REVERSE LOTTING

Lots located adjacent to an arterial or collector road which front onto an internal street, with the rear yards facing the arterial or collector road.

URBAN DESIGN

The exterior design of buildings, the spaces surrounding buildings and the relationship between buildings and these spaces. Urban design shapes the form of the built environment in a manner that contributes to the overall visual identity, sense of place and function of communities.

22. That Map 5 – REGIONAL STRUCTURE is amended as follows:

- a) extending the “Regional Corridor” to Green Lane, northward from its current terminus at the Newmarket/East Gwillimbury municipal boundary shown on Figure 1 to this amendment;
- b) deleting “Urban Corridor” and replacing it with “Local Corridor,” shown on Figure 1 to this amendment; and,
- c) deleting “Regional Corridor” as shown on Steeles Avenue and replacing it with “Local Corridor” shown on Figure 1 to this amendment.

23. That Map 10 – CONCEPTUAL TRANSIT NETWORK is amended as follows:

- a) deleting “Subway,” shown in light blue, and “Transit Ways,” shown in dark blue, and replacing them with “Regional Rapid Transit Corridors,” shown in dark blue on Figure 2 to this amendment;
- b) deleting “Inter Regional Transit Way, ” shown in grey, and replacing it with “Highway 407 Transit Way,” shown in grey on Figure 2 to this amendment; and,
- c) deleting the grey, north-south link shown along Highway 48 in Markham, and replacing it with a dark blue “Regional Rapid Transit Corridors” north-south link shown on Warden Avenue between Steeles Avenue and Highway No. 7 in Markham, as shown of Figure 2 to this amendment.