

***Enhancing York Region's
Urban Structure:
A Guide to Developing
Area Municipal
Intensification Strategies***

**Preliminary Draft
April, 2008**

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1. Introduction

1.1. Purpose

Since 2001, York Region has embarked on a “city-building” process that promotes the development of a planned urban structure of centres and corridors and strengthens the relationship between land-use, transportation and transit. A major component of this “city-building” process is directing higher density development to key strategic areas served by public and/or rapid transit with a focus on regional centres and corridors.

The purpose of *Enhancing York Region’s Urban Structure: A Guide to Developing Area Municipal Intensification Strategies* (“Intensification Guide”) is to provide a high level framework for collaboration with area municipalities to guide the completion of their local intensification strategies. In this way, the Region and the area municipalities can approach long-term intensification within the planned urban structure in a consistent manner and meet the Provincial *Places to Grow* targets. The crux of the intensification strategies is not only to demonstrate conformity with the *Places to Grow Plan*, but also to construct a long-term framework to create a new generation of sustainable and quality compact development focused on the centres and corridors.

The area municipal strategies involve five objectives:

1. Demonstrate how the Region’s area municipal intensification assignment will be met in terms of unit potential, density and design. Identify the locations and amount of intensification that will be planned for within the area municipality’s built boundary by 2031.
2. Identify the key attributes in creating high quality, sustainable compact communities.
3. Promote communication to engage and raise awareness of intensification among stakeholders and the public.
4. Identify next steps to implement area municipal intensification strategies including reviewing current regional and municipal policy and conducting further detailed analysis on the identified intensification areas.
5. Develop a monitoring system that tracks progress towards the intensification vision, key attributes and unit targets.

1.2. Why an Intensification Strategy?

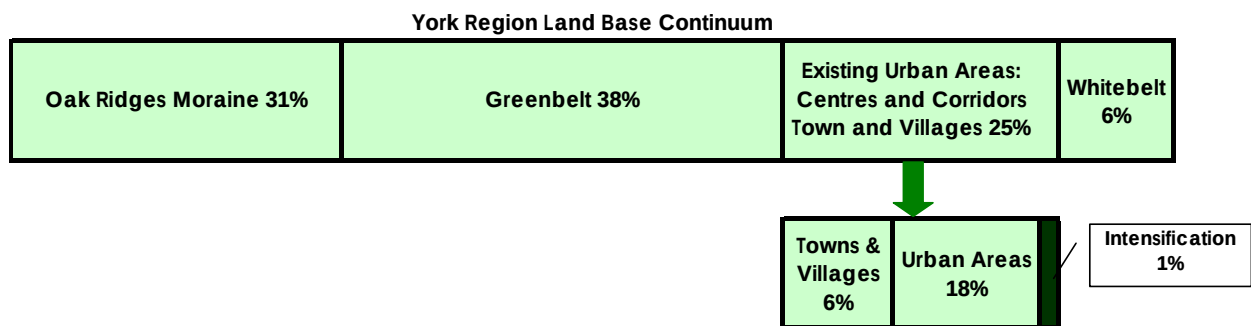
York Region Context

The Regional Official Plan (ROP) outlines a regional structure that includes a system of regional centres and corridors that act as a focus for residential, office and commercial development. The Region has a number of initiatives that promote intensification, as well as, a series of preliminary analyses to measure progress. These initiatives and findings are summarized as follows:

- In June 2004, Council adopted the Region's *Centres and Corridors Strategy* that aims to strengthen the relationship between a compact urban structure in the centres and corridors, and transportation and transit.
- *Regional Official Plan Amendment (ROPA 43)*, July 2005, increases the plan's intensification target from 20% to 30% in existing built-up areas, and towns and villages and strengthens policies in the ROP regarding development in the Centres and Corridors.
- In September 2006, Regional Council adopted the *Transit-Oriented Development Guidelines* that emphasize the need for an urban form that supports transit users and the transit service itself.
- Between January 2001 and December 2005, the Region achieved a rate of 18.4% intensification compared to a 16.7% rate between 1990 and 2003. Both analyses used the estimated 1990 built boundary.
- In March 2007, Regional staff presented the preliminary draft intensification matrix to the area municipalities (*Appendix 2*). The draft matrix contains a listing of potential intensification areas and estimated units by area municipality. The draft matrix will be used to complete the local intensification strategies.
- *Regional Official Plan Amendment (ROPA 60)*, approved February 2008, enables the Region to adopt Regional Community Improvement Plans and to participate in local community improvement plans as part of the Provincial *Bill 51* amendment to *The Planning Act*. These plans can be applied to regional infrastructure, affordable housing, and planned transit corridors that have the potential to provide a focus for higher density mixed-use development and redevelopment.
- In March 2008, Regional Council adopted a plan to implement a policy to provide a 20-35% increase in servicing allocation for development proposals that meet specific criteria that include, among others:
 - o Minimum LEED™ silver standard (Gold standard developments are eligible for a 40% increase in servicing allocation)
 - o Location within a Regional Centre or Corridor, or Local Centre and Corridor
 - o Meet the Regional *Transit-Oriented Development Guidelines*

The completion of the area municipal intensification strategies using a consistent methodology will reinforce the linkage between higher density, mixed-use development and centres and corridors served by rapid transit. This strategy, based on the Intensification Guide, will further enhance the planned urban structure and advance the Region's city building process

Overall, considering the proportion of lands designated as Greenbelt, Oak Ridges Moraine and existing urban areas, approximately 7% of the Region's land base remains for future intensification and 'whitebelt' development. Of this remaining 7%, only an estimated 1% will likely be available for intensification. It is this proportion of the Region's land base that provides the opportunity to showcase high quality, sustainable and transit-supportive intensification in key strategic areas within the planned urban structure.



1.3. Provincial Context

In June 2006, the Ontario Government released the *Final Growth Plan, "Places to Grow" for the Greater Golden Horseshoe Area*. With respect to intensification, the *Places to Grow Plan* stipulates:

- "By the year 2015 and for each year thereafter, a minimum of 40 percent of all residential development occurring annually within each upper- and single-tier municipality will be within the built-up area."
- A density target of 200 people and jobs per hectare by 2031 or earlier applies to urban growth centres, specifically the Regional Centres of Markham, Newmarket and Richmond Hill and Vaughan.

In the Fall 2007, the Ministry of Public Infrastructure Renewal (MPIR) released *the Final Proposed Built Boundary for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2006* (Appendix 1). This version of the provincial built boundary will act as the basis for identifying areas suitable for intensification. The Ministry intends to finalize the built boundary in the spring of 2008.

1.4. Benefits of Intensification

In addition to provincial regulation, intensifying the Region's built-up area results in a number of environmental, economic and community benefits as listed below:

- Communities can be designed so that cost-effective and efficient transit, infrastructure, and human services systems can be operated and easily accessed. Well-designed streets and building locations give people the choice of walking and bicycling as opposed to reliance on automobiles.
- Higher density, mixed-use and transit-supportive development reduces greenhouse gas emissions and increases long-term resiliency to the impacts of climate change by utilizing land and infrastructure resources efficiently and reducing automobile dependency.
- Higher densities result in a greater proportion of row and apartment style housing. These types of housing structures provide a broader range of housing choices and affordability.

- A sense of place and vibrancy takes shape in the community as street activity increases, people have more personal contact with each other, and social cohesion is strengthened.

1.5. Structure of the Intensification Guide

This Intensification Guide is divided into two sections. *Section 2* outlines the Regional Intensification Framework that acts as the basis for the area municipal strategies. This framework includes a definition of intensification, high level principles, area municipal assignments, and a description of the Intensification Matrix Framework.

Section 3 contains the actual Intensification Guide to developing area municipal strategies. Within the context of the regional framework, the guide discusses the strategies' components which consist of an urban capacity study, attributes of sustainable compact communities, engagement and awareness, next steps to implementing the area municipal strategies and developing a Regional intensification monitoring system.

2. Regional Intensification Framework

2.1. Definition of Intensification

According to the Provincial Growth Plan, “Places to Grow”, intensification is defined as the development of a property, site or area at a higher density than currently exists through:

- redevelopment, including the reuse of brownfield sites;
- the development of vacant and/or underutilized lots within previously developed areas;
- infill development; or,
- the expansion or conversion of buildings.

2.2. Regional Intensification Principles

The scope of the area municipal strategies extends beyond the mechanics of measuring unit capacity to determining the components of a sustainable compact community. What does successful intensification look like? How is it achieved? In this sense, employing higher densities is only one of the key tools used to create more compact and vibrant communities. This concept is enshrined in the following Regional Intensification Principles:

- 1. Connect the Regional Centres and Regional Corridors with rapid transit systems to stimulate compact and efficient growth.**
- 2. Connect transit, land-uses and pedestrians by following the Region’s Transit-Oriented Development Guidelines.**
- 3. Ensure that buildings and streets are well-proportioned to one another to ensure walkability and efficient investment in infrastructure and land.**
- 4. Provide access to the community through open space, trails, parks and other public spaces that are carefully placed, inter-connected and proportioned.**
- 5. Improve the live/work relationship through a mix of intensified land uses.**
- 6. Ensure a range of housing options and affordability.**
- 7. Create a sense of place through cultural amenities, and architectural and design standards.**
- 8. Connect quality and accessible human services to rapid transit and alternative modes of transportation.**
- 9. Protect and restore natural heritage and trails within the built-up area.**
- 10. Integrate sustainable design and construction of buildings such as community energy systems and sustainable waste management.**

There are also certain characteristics of a compact community that appeal to residents and workers which may not have been captured in the intensification principles. Consumers will typically invest in a compact community if they are assured that their lifestyle choices are being met. These preferences include:

- Proximity to work and leisure
- Alternative modes of transportation are accessible such as transit, walking and bicycling.

- Ample and public open space.
- Broad mix of uses such as employment, retail, schools, community services and cultural amenities which are all in close proximity.
- Affordable standard of living.
- Visually aesthetic in terms of street-scaping, urban design and architecture.
- Clean, safe and comfortable

2.3. Area Municipal Intensification Assignments

The Region completed a preliminary intensification forecast which indicates that approximately 85,000 new units within the provincial final proposed built-boundary would be required to meet the 40% intensification target as specified in *Places to Grow*.

Each area municipality will have a role to play in meeting the Regional 40% intensification target. Figure 1 shows the Region's preliminary assigned intensification targets for each area municipality in terms of residential units. The Region will work with the area municipalities to demonstrate how their intensification assignment will be achieved given the parameters outlined in this Intensification Guide.

The preliminary intensification assignments in Figure 1 will be revised based on the release of the Final Provincial Built Boundary, expected sometime in the Spring 2008.

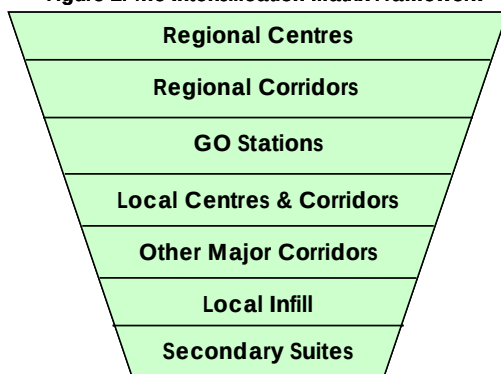
Figure 1: York Region Preliminary Intensification Assignments Required to Reach 40% Intensification (2006-2031)

	Intensification Units
Aurora	2,800
East Gwillimbury	1,030
Georgina	2,690
King	920
Markham	29,790
Newmarket	4,360
Richmond Hill	11,530
Vaughan	30,210
Whitchurch-Stouffville	2,010
York Region	85,340

SOURCE: York Region Planning Department, April 2007.

2.4. Regional Intensification Matrix Framework

Figure 2: The Intensification Matrix Framework



The Intensification Matrix Framework has been formulated to help identify potential intensification areas shown in Figure 2. The Matrix Framework identifies key strategic areas where intensification can be best accommodated with respect to efficient and cost-effective infrastructure, transit and human services provisions. In this way, the Region can avoid unplanned and dispersed intensification by organizing the estimated 85,000 required new intensification units into the matrix levels.

The triangular shape of the Matrix Framework in Figure 2 signifies that densities and built form types will vary. For example, higher densities and building heights will occur in the Regional Centres and Corridors relative to the other key strategic areas.

In March 2007, Regional staff presented the preliminary draft intensification matrix to the area municipalities (*Appendix 2*). The draft matrix contains a listing of potential intensification areas and estimated unit yields by area municipality. The matrix is

intended to illustrate the comprehensive nature of an area municipal intensification strategy. The draft matrix will be used to help complete the urban capacity study which is explained further in *Section 3.1*.

3. Guide to Area Municipal Intensification Strategies

The purpose of this section is to highlight the components of an intensification strategy and to provide guidance to complete the area municipal intensification strategies within the context of the Regional framework described in Section 2. The objectives of the Area Municipal Intensification Strategy are:

- ***To refine and complete the draft intensification matrix presented to area municipalities in March 2007 based on this Intensification Guide.***
- ***To demonstrate how the Region's intensification assignment will be achieved in terms of absolute numbers.***
- ***To emphasize the importance of creating high quality communities that contain mixed-use, transit supportive development, excellent urban design, human services, housing options and sustainable design and construction.***
- ***To create a GIS-based map identifying the locations where intensification will occur.***
- ***To help communicate, engage and raise awareness among stakeholders and the public.***
- ***To identify next steps to complete and implement the area municipal intensification strategy including policy review, further detailed analysis and monitoring techniques.***

The area municipal intensification strategies include five components:

- Urban Capacity Study
- Building the Next Generation of Compact Communities
- Engagement and Awareness
- Implementing Intensification Strategies
- Monitoring Intensification

These five components reflect the values contained in the Region's Sustainability Strategy which also act as the overarching framework for the Region's Growth Management and Infrastructure Master Plan Updates. The Sustainability Strategy can be accessed at www.york.ca under "Planning for Tomorrow".

3.1. Urban Capacity Study

The purpose of the Urban Capacity Study is to further refine the Region's urban structure by identifying the key areas that can support intensification based on the matrix framework. This component also includes an intensification unit capacity calculation to connect the highest scale and density of development to the centres and corridors served by rapid transit. In completing the urban capacity study, area municipalities may recognize that not all identified intensification areas and/or parcels can be built-out by 2031, representing a capacity to exceed the specified 2031 assignment. This surplus in unit potential can, therefore, be classified as post-2031 potential.

The crux of the intensification strategy is not only to demonstrate conformity with the *Places to Grow Plan*, but also to construct a long-term framework to create a new

generation of sustainable and quality compact development focusing on the centres and corridors.

In summary, the urban capacity study will involve:

- Calculating a realistic unit capacity based on the intensification areas that either meets or exceeds the Region's local assignments.
- Creating a GIS-based map that shows the intensification areas.
- Calculating employment capacity in intensification areas.

Step 1: Identify Intensification Areas/Parcels

- Identify areas and parcels within the proposed final built boundary (Appendix 1) that would be suitable for additional intensification based on the Principles and matrix Framework contained in Section 2.
- Potential locations for intensification could vary from larger areas (i.e. Regional Centres) to site-specific parcels (i.e. an infill site).
- Refer to the following "Key Considerations" in identifying intensification areas/parcels:

Figure 3: Key Considerations in Identifying Intensification Areas/Parcels

	Description
Compatibility and Fit	The intensification area coexists in a manner that does not adversely impact or impair the surrounding properties and elements of the local character are integrated into the design of the area.
Transit	The intensification area is accessible by public and rapid transit, with pedestrian connections to and from transit stops and land uses.
Infrastructure	The intensification area is adequately serviced for the potential units and densities envisioned (i.e. water and wastewater).
Effective Street Network	An effective street network that promotes connectivity, eyes on the street and a sense of place.

SOURCE: York Region Planning Department, April 2008

- In identifying areas/parcels with intensification potential, consider all parcel types including:
 - o Vacant land not previously developed
 - o Entire parcel is underutilized, derelict land or vacant land previously developed
 - o Entire parcel is a parking lot
 - o Redevelopment of existing areas where a portion of the parcel can be redeveloped (i.e. parking lots, vacant areas etc...)
 - o Conversion of vacant or underutilized commercial/office buildings (i.e. strip malls)
 - o Partially built plans of subdivisions in which the existing housing potential can be reviewed for possible upgrades.
 - o Built-out plans of subdivisions in which certain parcels can be redeveloped
 - o Land dedicated for employment lands.
- Organize the areas/parcels into the Regional Intensification Matrix Framework as described in Figure 4 below. Consider every level of the matrix including infill and secondary suite categories.

Figure 4: Description of Regional Intensification Matrix

	Description
Regional Centres	Includes the Regional Centres of Newmarket, Vaughan, Markham and Richmond Hill
Regional Corridors	Includes the Regional Rapid Transit Routes located on Highway 7, Yonge Street, Centre Street, Warden Avenue
GO Stations	Areas can be defined based on a 200 to 400 metre walking distance from the transit hub.
Local Centres	Includes all towns, villages and hamlets in rural municipalities. In the 5 urban municipalities, could include areas identified in OPAs such as Woodbridge, Thornhill and Milliken.
Other Major Corridors	Includes other major arterials such as Bathurst Street, Rutherford Road.
Local Infill	Can be site-specific and dispersed throughout built-up area.
Secondary Suites	Can be site-specific and dispersed throughout built-up area.

SOURCE: York Region Planning Department, April 2008.

- Produce a GIS-based map that identifies intensification areas/parcels. This map will also serve to highlight where intensification will not be permitted.

Step 2: Determine Appropriate Density for Intensification Areas

- The approximate densities for the identified intensification area in step 1 using criteria outlined in Figure 5 below. The Region recognizes that the area municipalities are at varying stages in completing their intensification strategies. For some municipalities, more detailed design of the identified areas/parcels may be required that extends beyond the scope of the Intensification Guide. In responding to this Guide, a list of next steps where more investigation may be required.
- A high level scan is helpful in determining an appropriate range of densities for the identified area/parcels to ensure compatibility and fit with the surrounding area. Please refer to any completed detailed work that identifies more specific density targets for one or more of the areas. If not, this site-by-site investigation to narrow down a specific target from this density range can be undertaken at later time or when appropriate. This can be listed as a next step.
- It is recognized that, at this time, the specific densities of some areas/parcels can not be determined until additional studies are completed. In this case, a range of densities can be used as a preliminary basis.

Figure 5: Intensification Matrix Framework Criteria

Matrix Levels	Density Targets (2)	Estimated Unit Potential (4)
Regional Centres	2.5 FSI per parcel	25,640
Regional Corridors (3)	Average 2.5 FSI	14,490
Other Major Corridors	TBD	5,900
Local Centres	TBD	25,890
GO Stations	TBD	2,490
Local Infill	TBD	10,930
TOTAL		85,340

SOURCE: York Region Planning Department

1. Future subway stations are considered part of the Regional Centres estimated unit potential.
 2. Excluding the Regional Centres and Corridors, the density target for the other matrix levels will be based a detailed analysis of intensification areas/parcels.
 3. The 2.5 FSI target pertains to the average of all intensification areas/parcels along the Regional Corridors.
 4. These figures represent preliminary estimates to be confirmed by area municipal work.
- With respect to the Regional Centres, the *Places to Grow Plan* specifies a density target of 200 people and jobs per hectare in the provincially defined urban growth centres of Markham, Newmarket, Richmond Hill and Vaughan. This density target applies to the entire gross area which includes all developable and non-developable lands.
 - The *Regional Official Plan* specifies the following long-term density targets: a target of 2.5 FSI in each of the Regional Centres; and, a target of 2.5 FSI pertains to the average of all Key Development Areas along the Regional Corridors. The intensification areas/parcels identified in this capacity study that fall along the Regional Corridors are considered equivalent to Key Development Areas in which the 2.5 FSI target would apply.
 - Determining the density targets for the matrix levels, other than the Regional Centres and Corridors, can be based on a more detailed analysis of each specific intensification area/parcels.
 - As mentioned, one of the primary goals of the intensification strategies is to emphasize mixed-use development and a strong live-work relationship in the intensification areas/parcels. Employment is strongly encouraged in the planning and design of the intensification areas. At a minimum in the Regional Centres, the number of forecasted jobs should be enough to employ the total labour force residing in that particular Centre.

Step 3: Calculate Land Area

- For each intensification area/parcel, determine the following land areas as a precursor to the unit potential calculation:
 - o *Developable Area*: as a percentage of gross area and as an absolute number in hectares
 - o *Net non-residential area*: as a percentage of developable area and as an absolute number in hectares

- o *Net residential area*: as a percentage of developable area and as an absolute number in hectares.
- **Developable Area**: Total land area excluding non-developable lands such as major infrastructure and transportation corridors (i.e. 400-series highways, regional roads, hydro corridors, gas easements etc), as well as, natural features as defined in the Provincial Policy Statement (PPS), Regional Natural Heritage System, the ROP, and associated area municipal natural heritage systems.
- **Net Non-Residential Area**: All private non-residential developable lands including employment, commercial or institutional functions. All roads, stormwater requirements, parks and pedestrian walkways and other public uses are excluded as well.
- **Net Residential Area**: The calculation of this area is explained extensively in Section 3. Essentially, net residential area refers to all private lands for residential purposes. It does not include lands within the net developable area for: 1) public use such as roads, stormwater requirements, schools, parks and pedestrian walkways or; 2) non-residential private lands for employment, commercial or institutional purposes.

Step 4: Calculate Unit Potential

- Using the appropriate density ranges and/or targets identified in step 2, the unit potential for each intensification area/parcel can be determined on the net residential area.
- Using the same density ranges/targets, the employment capacity on the net non-residential area can be determined if employment uses are anticipated. Employment uses are strongly encouraged in the planning and design of the intensification areas to strengthen the live-work relationship. The Regional Centres should be planned to have at least enough jobs for the planned labour force residing in the area. These jobs include a broad array of retail, office, and population-serving jobs.
- It is recognized that not all intensification areas/parcels will be built-out by 2031. Area municipalities will likely identify areas/parcels that have the capacity to potentially exceed the specified 2031 target (Figure 1). In this respect, this surplus capacity can be classified as long term post-2031 potential.
- This is a high-level cursory analysis of unit potential to verify the March 2007 draft matrix. Additional detailed studies that have been conducted on a particular intensification area can be used to identify unit potential. Otherwise, further site-by-site investigation and design, if required, can be conducted at a later date or when appropriate.
- It is recognized that, at this time, the unit potential of some areas/parcels can not be determined until additional studies are completed. In this case, a range of unit potential can be applied as a preliminary basis.

Step 4a): Regional Centres: Provincial Urban Growth Centre Boundaries

- Under the *Places to Grow Plan*, a target of 200 people and jobs per hectare applies to the provincially-defined urban growth centres of Newmarket, Markham, Richmond Hill and Vaughan. This target applies to the entire total **gross** area of the urban growth centres which includes all developable and non-developable lands. MPIR intends to release the final urban growth centre boundaries in the Spring 2008.
- Calculate the total gross area of the most recent urban growth centres as defined in consultation with the Province, the Region and the area municipalities.
- Determine the anticipated land-use distribution of residential and employment capacity in terms of number of people/number of jobs.
- Estimate the number of residential units and jobs required by 2031 to meet the 200 people and jobs/ha target within the respective urban growth centre. Convert the number of people to number of units based on the Regional 2031 forecasted persons per unit calculation.
- Now that the targeted number of residential units has been calculated, the realistic unit capacity within the urban growth centre can be determined. The centres have the potential to exceed the provincial target, and in this case, the unit surplus represents long-term post-2031 capacity. There is also an option to determine employment capacity.
- For the development of complete, mixed-use communities, there is a need to have employment uses in the intensification areas. In the Centres and Corridors, the number of potential jobs should be at minimum enough to employ the planned total resident labour force residing in that particular Centre. These jobs include a broad array of retail, office and population-serving jobs.
- This analysis will result in two figures: 1) target number of residential units to meet the *Places to Grow* 200 people and jobs/ha requirement; and, 2) a long-term potential number of residential units that can be accommodated within the urban growth centre.
- It is recognized that, at this time, the unit potential of some urban growth centres will not be determined until additional studies are completed. In this case, a range of unit potential can be used as a preliminary basis.

Step 5: Revise Draft Matrix and Produce Intensification Map

- Do the results of the urban capacity study meet or exceed the Region's intensification assignment for the area municipality as listed in Figure 1?
- Prepare the map of intensification locations and their associated unit potential.
- Document any additional intensification that can be classified as post-2031 potential by location and number of residential units.

3.2. Building the Next Generation of Compact Communities

Urban capacity studies are one component in developing intensification areas. This section discusses the key attributes of high quality, sustainable and compact communities. Complete the template in Figure 6 to determine if the identified intensification areas/parcel, as a whole, has the potential to fully reflect these key attributes.

Some area municipalities have conducted extensive visioning exercises in this respect. If this is the case, please refer to these plans and/or documents to demonstrate alignment with the key attributes in Figure 6. Examples of visioning exercises include the City of Vaughan, *Avenue 7 Vision* and the Town of Markham, *Markham Centre Guiding Principles*.

Other area municipalities may not have conducted such a visioning exercise. In this case, generally discuss how the identified areas/parcels will satisfy the key attributes and regional principles by completing the template outlined in Figure 6. Further detailed design and analysis may be conducted at a later date or when appropriate.

In addition to key attributes identified in Figure 6, discuss the role of the following “other considerations” in advancing the Region’s Sustainability Strategy:

- LEED and Sustainable Design and Construction
- Energy Efficiency, Community Energy Systems and Conservation
- Effective Waste Management (ie. 3-stream waste management in high-rise buildings)
- Housing affordability
- Best Practises for Quality Urban Design and Architecture

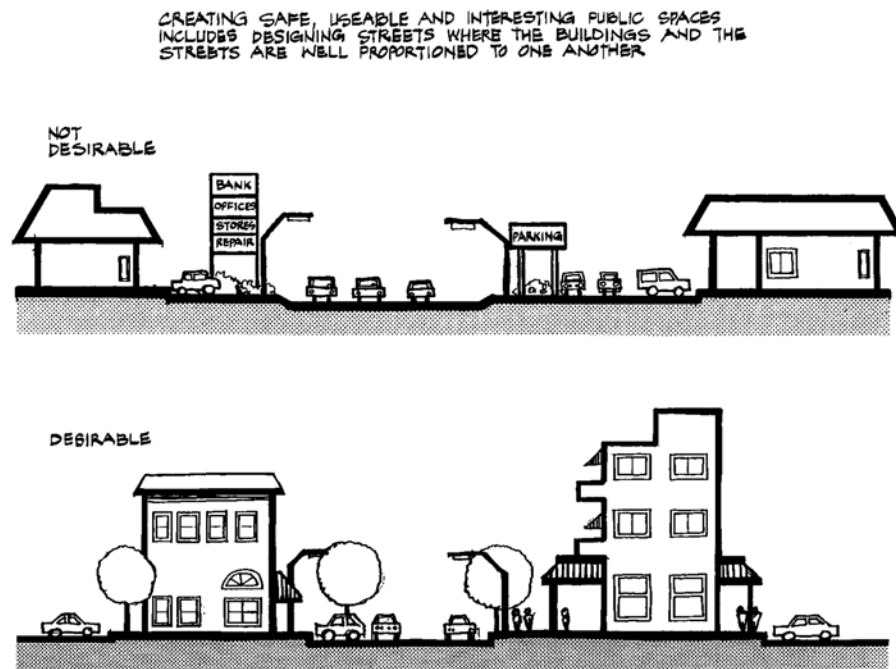


Figure 6: Key Attributes of Intensification Areas

In terms of a complete community, are these attributes adequately addressed considering the intensification areas in their entirety?

Key Attributes of Intensification Areas	Yes	No
Mixed Use: Will the area have a broad array of land uses including employment, shopping, entertainment, arts and culture, parks, schools and other community services?		
Live/Work Considerations: Will the area support close live-work opportunities through the arrangement of land uses and accessibility to transit and transportation?		
Physical Activity: Does the area promote an active lifestyle with connected pedestrian walkways, bicycle lanes, parklands and a well designed street network?		
Built Form: Are the buildings and streets well-proportioned to one another? Are there established urban design and architectural standards to foster a sense of place that would appeal to existing and prospective residents?		
Natural Heritage/Open Space: Are natural heritage features protected? Are public spaces varied, interconnected and accessible to all neighbourhoods? Are they interesting, carefully spaced and proportioned?		
Housing Options: Is there a broad mix and range of unit sizes, housing forms, types and tenures that will satisfy the needs of the Region's residents and workers?		
Human Services: Can people of all ages, backgrounds and capabilities meet their needs throughout the various stages in their lives including opportunities for employment, learning, inclusivity, culture, recreation and spiritual, emotional, physical and social well-being?		
Culture: Is the Region's cultural heritage resources and values recognized, conserved and promoted as a benefit to the community?		
Transit and Connections: Are there provisions for efficient and effective higher order transit? Are the buildings and spaces in between transit stations connected by sidewalks and other walkways?		
Traffic/Parking: To maintain a pedestrian-friendly area, is there innovation in parking provisions such as structured and underground parking, and municipal lots?		
Energy Planning: Are there provisions to accommodate any land requirements for community energy systems, alternative energy and energy efficient technologies?		

Source: York Region Planning Department, 2008

3.3. Public Engagement and Awareness

Given the issues associated with meeting the provincial intensification targets, the urban fabric of the Region will undoubtedly evolve over the next 30 years. Some of the Region's built-up areas, such as the Centres and Corridors, will gradually evolve into more urban areas with higher density development supported by rapid transit. Communicating to our public where intensification will occur, or more importantly, where it will not occur is critical as well. Involving our Councils, stakeholders, partners and public at key points along the intensification strategy is critical to successfully transitioning the built form to higher densities.

Engaging and raising awareness among our stakeholders and public will allow the Region and its area municipalities to create compact communities that satisfy the lifestyle choices and expectations of our residents and workers.

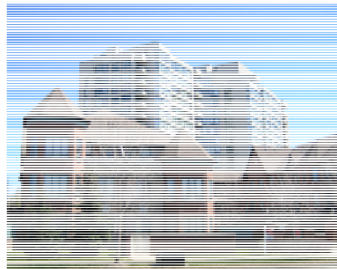
In developing this marketing strategy, the following factors will be addressed:

- Engagement of Local Council
- Engagement of key stakeholders and the public
- Various techniques to engage the diverse segments of the public (ie different ethnic group, young people, seniors, residents of lower income areas)
- Potential partnerships such as input from the business, environment and human services sectors, as well as the development industry
- Marketing techniques to illustrate existing and future intensification in York Region such as photographic illustrations and 3-D modelling.

Photographic Illustrations

The Region's *Growth Management Public Information and Engagement "Planning for Tomorrow"* initiative included a number of photographic examples of intensification for display at public meetings. Figure 7 offers a sample of the many "Made in York" photographs that can be used as part of the public engagement and awareness component of the area municipal intensification strategies.

Figure 7: Examples of Intensification in York Region



Medium & High Density, Thornhill



Density in Newmarket



Office Development along
Highway 7, Richmond Hill



Sense of Place, Old Woodbridge

SOURCE: York Region Planning Department, April 2008

In addition, MPIR recently compiled a computer-generated montage of hypothetical visualizations of intensification, densities and architecture. This can be accessed on the Ministry's website at <http://www.placestogrow.ca> under Tools and Resources.

3.4. Implementing Intensification Strategies

Completing the intensification strategy discussed in the Guide is only the first step. A number of steps are essential in creating vibrant, well-designed intensification communities. Next steps may include:

- Undertaking more detailed secondary plans for intensification areas.
- Preparing urban design/ sustainability guidelines.
- Preparing a Regional Best Practices for Excellence in Intensification document.
- Phasing plans for intensification where appropriate
- Adopting the Intensification Strategy at the area municipal level.
- Identifying regulatory and/or institutional barriers to intensification.
- Identifying innovative approaches for encouraging high quality intensification (eg. incentives, LEED™)

3.5. Monitoring Intensification

A regional intensification monitoring system will evaluate whether the key attributes and targets are being attained in a consistent fashion across all area municipalities. Working with the area municipalities, the Region will develop a system to track progress on intensification using the area municipal strategies and intensification guide as a basis. The monitoring system will also contain a separate assessment for the Regional Centres (i.e. the Provincial Urban Growth Centres).

The regional monitoring system will track progress towards the area municipal assignments in terms of:

- Building permits for new units within the built boundary on an annual basis
- Development applications for potential units within the built boundary on an annual basis
- The Region's Annual Survey of Employers

The Region will consult further with the area municipalities in developing the monitoring system. Once completed, the monitoring system will be incorporated into each of the area municipal intensification strategies.

Provincial Monitoring Requirements

The Province has indicated that they will monitor achievement of the 40% intensification target. MPIR released a Technical Backgrounder on Intensification and Density Targets which can be accessed on their website. Key points on monitoring the *Places to Grow* Targets include:

- MPIR will monitor residential development within the built boundary on an annual basis to track the achievement of the intensification target.
- MPIR will monitor achievement of the density target for the urban growth centres using the most current census data for population and jobs, and assess progress towards the target every five years on release of the census.

The Region and the area municipalities will also work together with the Province to refine the Regional monitoring system as part of this process.

4. Conclusion

The purpose of *Enhancing York Region's Urban Structure: A Guide to Developing Area Municipal Intensification Strategies* is not only to demonstrate achievement of the *Places to Grow* targets, but also to provide a long-term framework for a new generation of sustainable compact development focused in the centres and corridors. In this way, the Region and the area municipalities can approach long-term intensification within the planned urban structure of centres and corridors in a consistent manner.

The Intensification Strategy has the added, and perhaps, more important benefit of clarifying how and where each area municipality will intensify. The public often views intensification with some worries, if not alarm. This will help clarify where intensification could occur and where it is not permitted. This will also clarify how intensification will fit with surrounding areas, the appropriate scale, and high quality design.

The first section on the Intensification Guide is the Regional framework which includes principles of intensification and description of the matrix framework. This framework identifies the key strategic areas that are best suited to accommodate intensification. The Region has forecasted that an estimated \$10 billion in capital expenditures, including rapid and public transit, will be required over the next 10 years to help meet the *Places to Grow* targets. There is a limited market for compact development and, as a result, it is important to direct this form of development to key strategic areas served by the Region's public and rapid transit network to ensure financial efficiencies in infrastructure investments. By locating the highest densities in these areas, the market for transit ridership can be maximized and capital costs can be better recovered on a long-term basis.

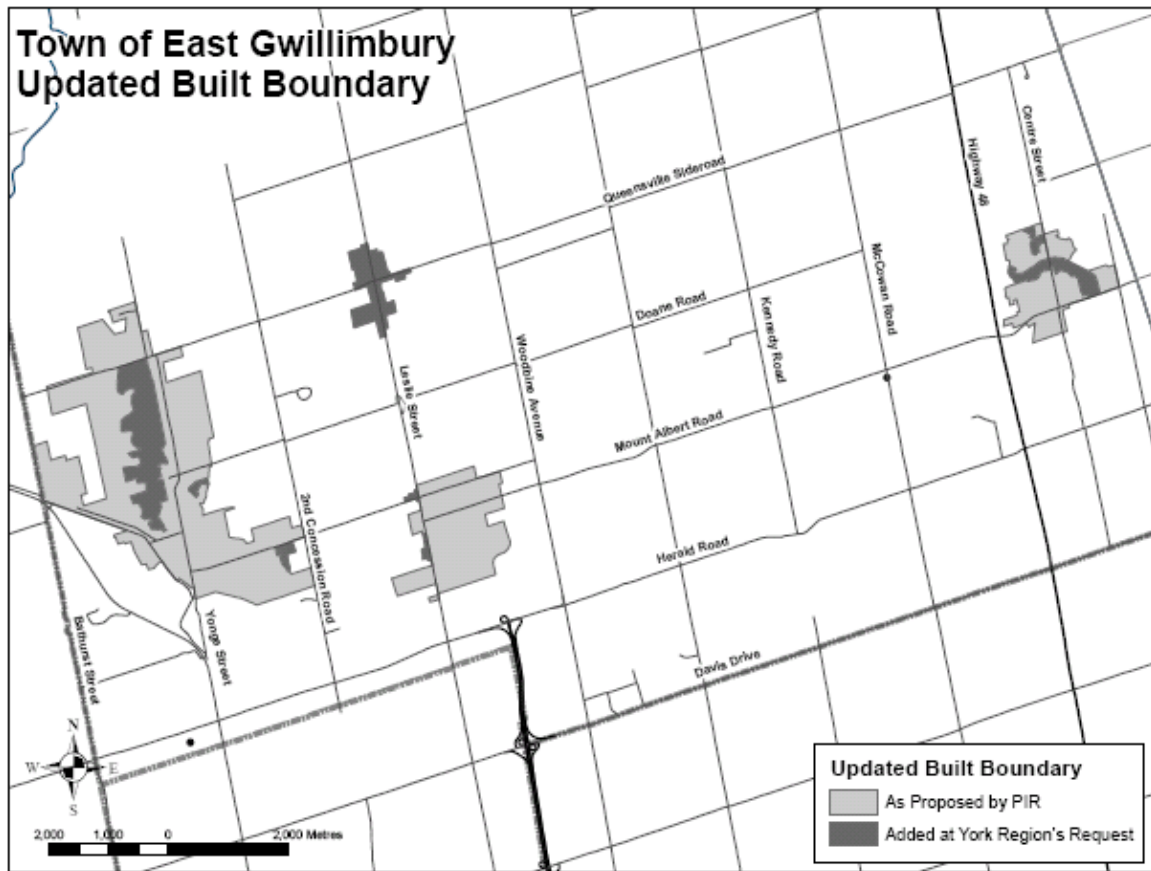
The Guide to Area Municipal Intensification Strategies includes five components including an urban capacity study, attributes of sustainable compact communities, engagement and awareness, next steps to implementing the area municipal strategies and developing a Regional intensification monitoring system.

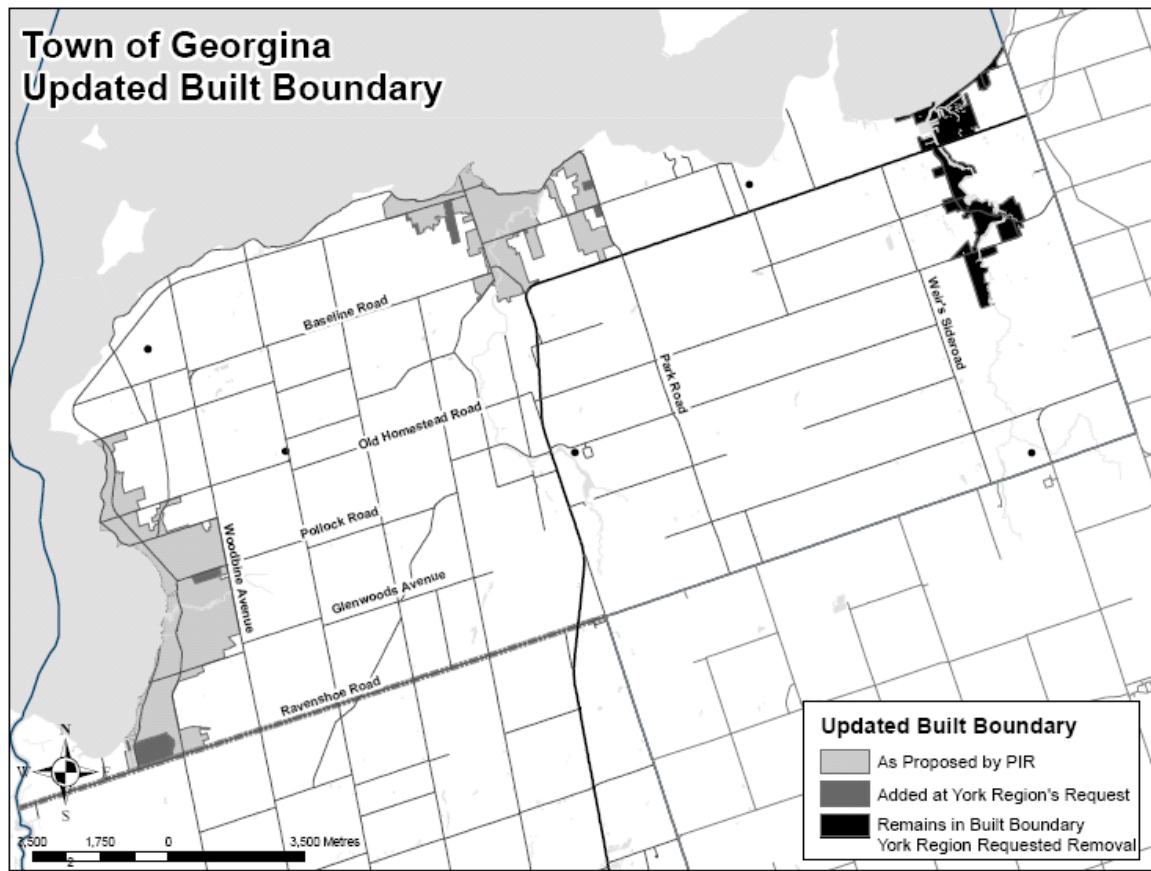
The provincial 40% intensification target not only represents a specific number of units that must be constructed by 2031, but also a new approach to planning and designing the Region's built-up areas. This approach involves identifying areas best suited to accommodate intensification, strategically arranging buildings and streets in a proportioned fashion and emphasizing the connection between people, uses and transit. In this way, the Region and its area municipalities can work together to meet and, hopefully, exceed the lifestyle choices and expectations of our residents and workers.

5. Appendix 1: Provincial Final Proposed Built Boundary

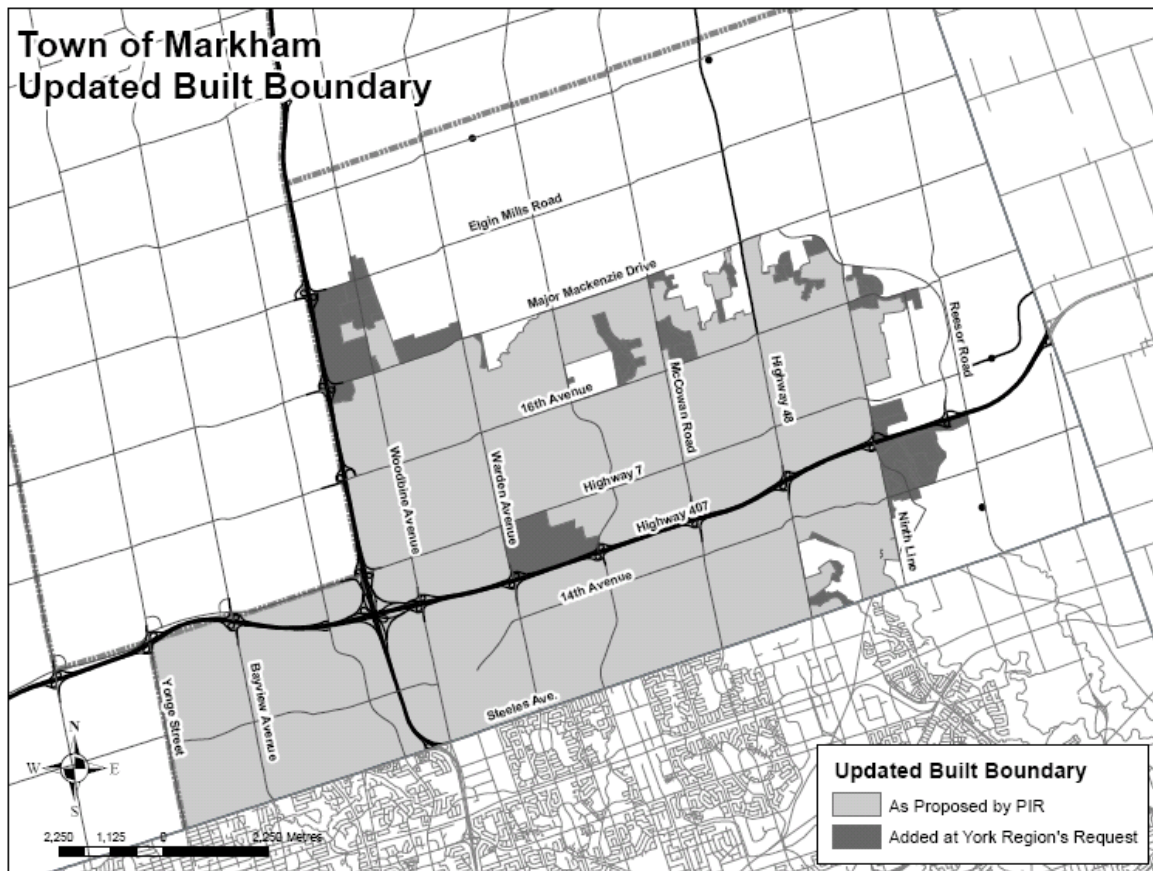
This appendix contains the Proposed Final Built Boundary for the *Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2006* as of Fall 2007. Additional revisions have been requested by the Region and the area municipalities within the parameters of the Provincial methodology. The final built boundary is expected to be released sometime in the Spring 2008.

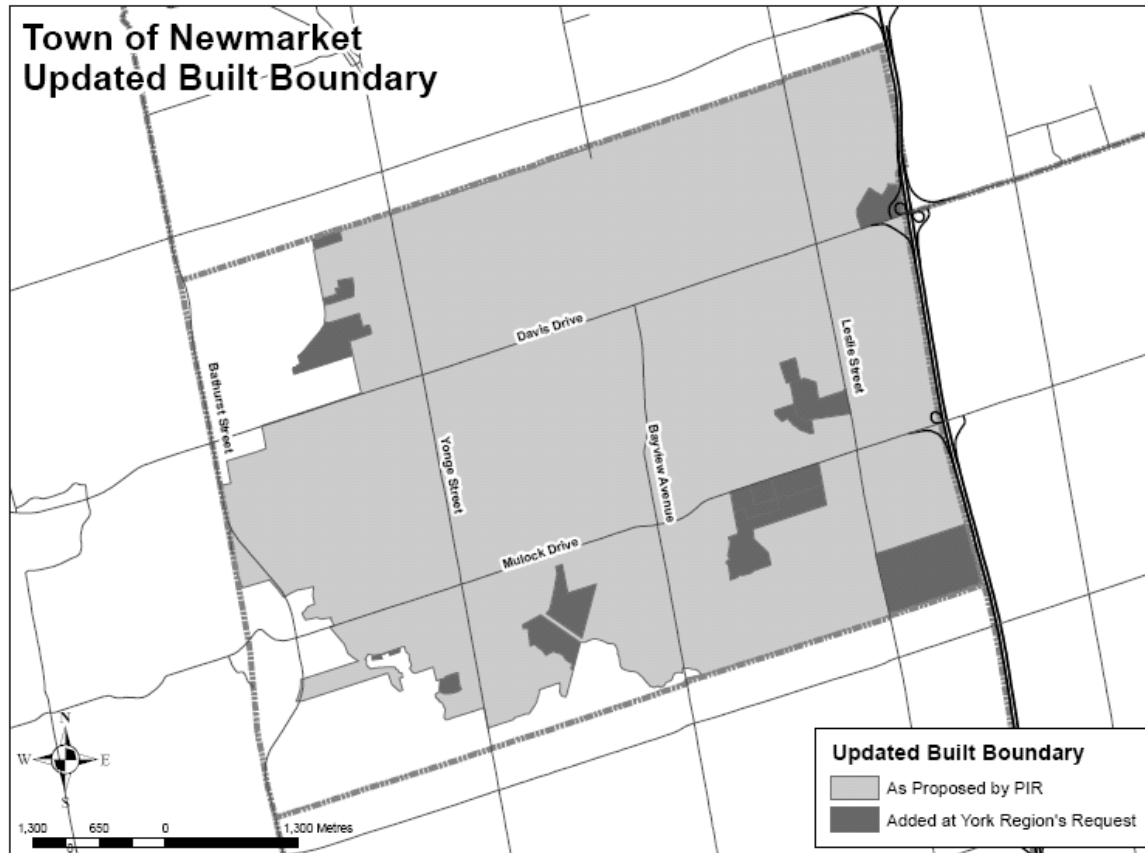


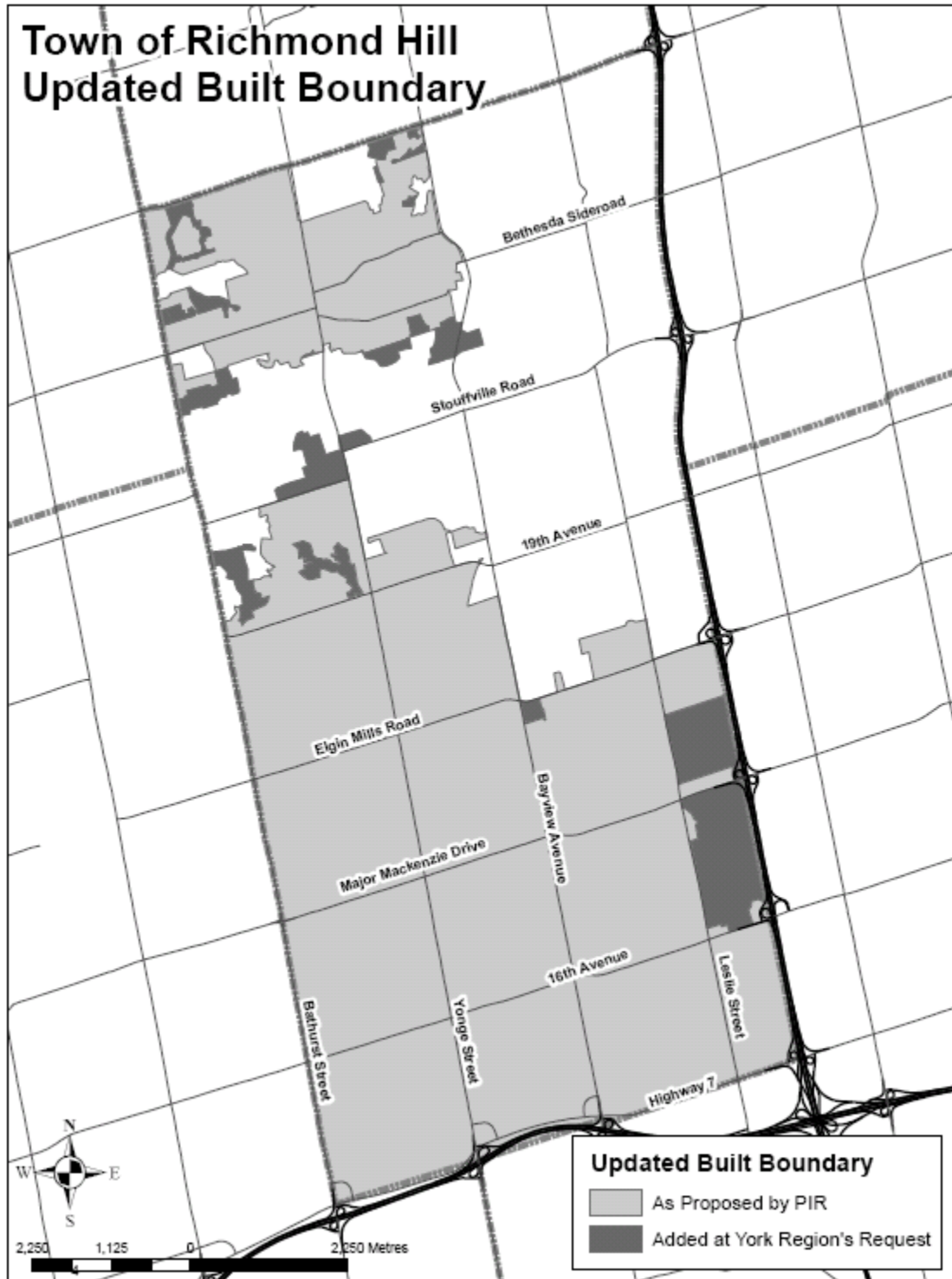




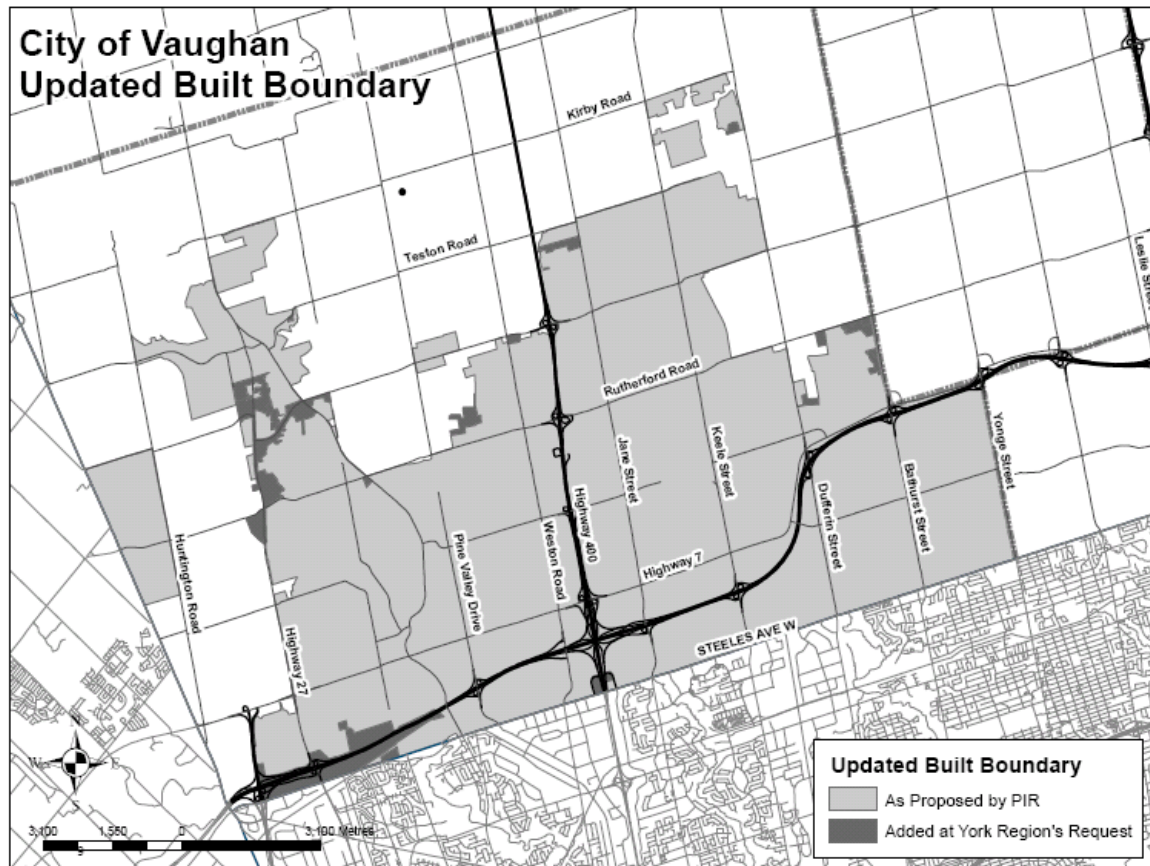












6. Appendix 2: March 2007 Draft Intensification Matrix

Required Intensification to Reach 40% Intensification Growth (2006-2031)

Municipality	Total	Intensification Area	Matrix Level
Aurora	1,520	Yonge and Other Major Corridors	Regional Corridor and Other Major Corridor
	140	Wellington - Bathurst to Bayview	Other Major Corridor
	100	Aurora GO Station	VIVA/GO
	1,180	Dispersed	Local Infill
Total	2,800		
East Gwillimbury	370	Holland Landing	Local Centre
	310	Sharon	Local Centre
	250	Queensville	Local Centre
	100	Mount Albert	Local Centre
Total	1,030		
Georgina	1,840	Keswick	Local Centre
	860	Sutton	Local Centre
Total	2,690		
King	360	King City	Local Centre
	250	Nobleton	Local Centre
	160	Shomberg	Local Centre
	150	King City GO Station	VIVA/GO
Total	920		
Markham	12,290	Markham Centre	Regional Centre
	1,130	Hwy 7 - Langstaff	Regional Corridor
	740	Hwy 7/Woodbine/404	Regional Corridor
	1,920	Hwy 7/ Markville	Regional Corridor
	20	Warden (Steeles - 16th)	Regional Corridor
	1,870	Unionville/ Markham Village	Local Centre
	1,900	Leitchcroft	Local Centre
	7,640	Cornell Centre	Local Centre
	30	Steeles Ave	Other Major Corridor
	200	Bayview Avenue	Other Major Corridor
	30	Miliken	Local Centre
	50	Berzcy Village	Local Infill
	930	Wismer Commons	Local Infill
	130	Greensborough	Local Infill
	TBD	Unionville GO Station	VIVA/GO
	TBD	Centennial GO Station	VIVA/GO
	TBD	Markham GO Station	VIVA/GO
	TBD	Mount Joy GO Station	VIVA/GO
	910	Infill - Remaining Areas	Local Infill
Total	29,790		

Required Intensification to Reach 40% Intensification Growth (2006-2031)

Municipality	Total	Intensification Area	Matrix Level
Newmarket	2,330	Newmarket Centre	Regional Centre
	430	Yonge Street	Regional Corridor
	320	Regional Health Centre	Local Centre
	210	Historic Downtown Centre	Local Centre
	1,070	Local Infill	Local infill
Total	4,360		
Richmond Hill	3,520	Richmond Hill Centre	Regional Centre
	2,310	Yonge & Hwy 7	Regional Corridor
	640	Yonge and 16th Carrville	Regional Corridor
	960	Yonge b/w Elgin Mills & Gamble	Regional Corridor
	60	Yonge and Westwood Lane	Regional Corridor
	100	Yonge and Garden Ave*	Regional Corridor
	480	Hwy 7 b/w Valley Mede and Chalmers **	Regional Corridor
	480	Major Mac b/w Yonge - Bayview	Other Major Corridor
	320	Newkirk GO Station	VIVA/GO
	2,650	Infill - Remaining Areas	Local Infill
Total	11,530		
Vaughan	7,500	Vaughan Corporate Centre	Regional Centre
	3,100	Hwy 7 Corridor	Regional Corridor
	1,490	Bathurst/Centre	Regional Corridor
	490	Dufferin (Steeles to Hwy7)	Other Major Corridor
	3,940	Steeles (Jane to Keele)	Other Major Corridor
	4,080	Carrville District Centre	Local Centre
	3,920	Thornhill Centre	Local Centre
	150	Woodbridge	Local Centre
	30	Kleinburg	Local Centre
	TBD	Rutherford GO Station	VIVA/GO
	140	Maple GO Station	VIVA/GO
	1,560	Steeles Subway Station	VIVA/GO
	TBD	Highway 407 Station	VIVA/GO
	350	Maple CP	Local Infill
	80	Block 33 E	Local Infill
	30	Block 39	Local Infill
	3,350	Infill - Remaining Areas	Local Infill
Total	30,210		
Whitchurch-Stouffville	1,200	Stouffville	Local Centre
	710	Ballantrae	Local Centre
	100	Stouffville GO Station	VIVA/GO
Total	2,010		
York Region Total	85,340		

SOURCE: York Region Planning Department, March 2007

NOTES:

1. The matrix includes the total intensification units required to meet municipal assignments and the 40% Region-wide intensification target in Figure 1.
2. This is a preliminary analysis, to be confirmed by area municipal work.
3. Intensification includes redevelopment, development on vacant lands, infill, conversions and expansions as per the Provincial Policy Statement and the Places to Grow Plan.
4. Higher intensification levels are given first priority when determining location of intensification.
5. Local Centres in rural municipalities include the entire town, village or hamlet.
6. All Intensification Areas identified in Richmond Hill are based on the Richmond Hill Intensification Study, 2006.
7. Figures may not reflect the full unit potential as specified in various secondary plans and/or municipal studies. As a result, some areas have an estimated unit capacity beyond 2031 requirements.
8. Totals may not add up due to rounding.