

Feedback



- Concerned about the idea of having employment lands in Queensville abutting the Greenbelt with no buffer or transition area.
- I believe the lack of democracy here might work well, because York Region can say no to bad development.
- The Bradford Bypass is not locally supported. In the Transportation Master Plan, we need to model an extension of Ravenshoe Road like the one washed out by Hurricane Hazel. This could help change some of the planning assumptions around the Bradford Bypass.
- If the Province is trying to protect Lake Simcoe, they should not support the Bradford Bypass, as it will only bring development and traffic pressures to the Lake Simcoe communities.
- Hydro infrastructure is not designed properly, power costs continue to increase, and we are reaching capacity. Why not require that all new construction include solar energy? This is not only energy efficient, but energy positive. Our new communities are the perfect opportunity. You must require developers to do this or it won't get built.
- I agree that the area around the Green Lane Go Station should be a focus for employment.



Feedback



- The Province issued Places to Grow, which demands a minimum intensification rate of 40%. Then York Region conducted two phases of public consultation and came up with exactly the same thing. Why bother?
- *It is important for the public to have a voice in these processes. York Region is also working to ensure that additional aspects of growth are addressed, such as human services and natural heritage. Many aspects of the Province's work has been taken from the Region's plan and put into the Province's plans.*
- Do York Region planning staff and Council have their own ideas about what would be appropriate growth numbers, planning horizon, and what's good for York Region?
- *Our employment numbers are higher than the Province's. After testing different intensification scenarios, Regional Council selected 40% intensification as appropriate for the interim.*
- The Province has set out restrictions, such as the number of people/jobs we will receive, concern is that after going through all the work and consultation, the Region comes up with a preferred growth scenario that does not follow all the restrictions set out by the Province.



Feedback



- Concern about lack of control over development – if a developer wants to put up a 67 storey building, what can York Region do to stop it?
- *The Planning Act and other policies have been strengthened so that developers are prevented from doing boundary expansions. If we are very clear about what kind of development we want and where it should go, we will be in better shape to prevent unwanted development and protect ourselves at the OMB. Provincial legislation, Region and local policies back us up.*
- How are these plans going to be implemented? How much of the current tax levy will be going to new growth and how much will be paid for by new development? Has York Region put money aside for this?
- *Regional Council's policy is that growth will pay for growth – which determines the level of development charges. Those funds come back to the Region and local municipalities to pay for services.*



Feedback



- This is a Chicken and Egg situation. We need the roads, schools, etc. in place to have new development occur, but we don't have the money for those services until the new people are here to pay for them.
- *Many services previously paid for by the Province and Federal government are now local municipal responsibilities. Regional Council has told the Province that we can't take on additional growth without money to service this growth. York Region has put some money aside to deal with this. Local municipalities may have to take on some debt for a period of time.*
- We need to preserve our agricultural lands, instead of paving over them and needing to truck food in.
- The ratio of population to jobs does not match up and is not appropriate. Just because southern municipalities have impetus does not mean East Gwillimbury shouldn't get its fair share.



Feedback



- Does York Region consider cemeteries a human service? How will York Region provide for cemeteries with a growing population? The problem stems from the increasing population and increased demand for land. It is difficult for cemeteries to compete for the land they need. Cemeteries are also restricted in the Oak Ridges Moraine and Greenbelt areas.
- We understand that our population is aging, but we also have a tremendous amount of new Canadians. At what point do we shift our primary focus from the aging population to the needs of other segments of our population, such as new Canadians.
- *York Region is paying very close attention to this and is spending time trying to determine how to better serve new Canadians. We know that we need to make special outreach attempts and tailor services, such as language skills and credential upgrades.*



Feedback



- Thank York Region for the democracy provided.
- The ratio of jobs to people in East Gwillimbury is currently 27%. In 25 years, York Region's numbers forecast we will be at 36%. Some municipalities, like Vaughan, are already at 50%. We should be planning for East Gwillimbury to be at that same level in 25 years – we have the potential.
- It might be helpful to include existing numbers in statistics.
- What criteria was used to determine where growth goes in York Region? Markham is slated for more growth than East Gwillimbury, yet it is farther away from the 400 series Highways.
- *We look at the growth in municipalities over the past few years and the amount of lands already designated for growth. The vast majority of growth has come from south to north, mostly occurring in the southern municipalities. Northern municipalities have grown more modestly, but East Gwillimbury's share has been increased significantly.*



Feedback



- The Yonge Street "spine" should be strengthened with growth.
- Concern that development will leapfrog. We must reinforce strong transit opportunities now, so that we do not have to provide new expensive services to sprawl later on.
- *The growth that occurs in the northern municipalities will be more expensive than in the south. East Gwillimbury is going to grow very dramatically and the community needs to be sure it wants this much growth.*
- Toronto experience is to grow up Yonge Street and then a subway was built along Sheppard Avenue (without the densities) at a great expense.
- Question around whether Highway 404 is being extended closer to Keswick. What are the implications of this extension on growth projections, development, ratios of employment and housing.



Towards a Sustainable Region

**Town of Richmond Hill
Town Hall Meeting Feedback
September 24, 2008**



- The following comments, questions and suggestions are a summary of the public input received at the consultation session held in the Town of Richmond Hill. Regional staff attempted to respond to questions and provide additional input. Please contact the Region if this summary does not adequately reflect your input or ideas, or if you have any additional thoughts.
- Comments from the public are recorded in black.
- *Regional staff comments are recorded in blue italics.*



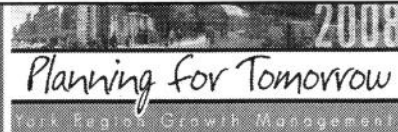
Feedback



- We support intensification but are concerned that there are still far too many single detached homes and strip malls being built.
- How can we put more jobs in employment areas?
- *Much of this depends on the type of use. York Region is currently looking into different structures and the densities of employees per hectare.*
- We are representatives of the Observatory Hill Home Owners Association. Concerned about road plans, particularly the expansions of Bayview Avenue and 16th Avenue. These are mature neighbourhoods with schools, homes and senior residents. Noise, safety and pollution are problems. We are aware of the Regional Transportation Master Plan, but does not feel that 6 lane roads are the solution.
- What are the plans around intensification in Richmond Hill itself?
- *(RH Staff) The "People Plan" process is one of the background studies to look at intensification – but we do know a lot of growth will be directed towards Highway 7, Yonge Street and Richmond Hill Centre. We will be out over the next year to talk to residents about growth and intensification.*
- David Dunlop lands should be preserved as greenspace.



Feedback



- Only two municipalities in York Region currently permit second suites as-of-right. These units help to provide more affordable and safe housing.
- Concern about rate of property tax increases.
- There is an acute need for affordable housing in York Region. This area of responsibility tends to be Regional but this aspect of social planning also needs to be local - there must be a dialogue at the community level to properly address these issues.
- 13% of our population, 112,000 persons live below the low income cutoff.
- More Federal and Provincial funding is required, but there will always be challenges because we don't speak at the local level about affordability and NIMBY-ism.
- *We need to redouble our efforts on this – we need to do a new housing study in York Region to understand the issues and update our housing strategy.*
- The waiting lists are still the same – 5,500 households for affordable housing.
- Wouldn't allowing secondary suites in all local municipalities help solve this issue? But people oppose this in local community meetings.



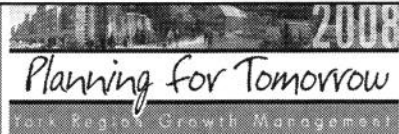
Feedback



- Water supply in Richmond Hill is from Lake Ontario and it's pumped 7 times on the way. This is expensive and energy intensive. What are the possible changes to this?
- *York Region is landlocked, which is an issue. Local sources like aquifers and Lake Simcoe are limited. We are taking a comprehensive look at this through our Water and Wastewater Master Plan. We also need to rethink how we use water and pursue sustainable ideas, such as drought resistant plants, using rainwater, etc.*
- Funding available for bike trails all over York Region – Vaughan and Markham have received funding, what about Richmond Hill?
- *We have an annual funding program to assist local municipalities in constructing local bicycling facilities. Local municipalities must submit projects. Richmond Hill has not yet submitted a project because it is in the process of preparing a Bicycling Master Plan.*



Feedback



- Intensification is a very important concept in terms of transit, cycling, walking, mixed use, but it is a “tough nut to crack” in terms of NIMBY-ism. How are we going to approach this issue, encourage developers to build this way and get local residents who live along these corridors accept the type of development that is needed?
- *Over the past 5-6 years, there has been an increased understanding of what intensification is and how it can accommodate the varying needs of our communities/residents, such as where our children are going to live. We have been developing tools to help show people what intensification will look like and how it will fit.*
- *(RH Staff) The Oak Ridges Moraine and Greenbelt plans are relatively new, but people now recognize that sprawl is a problem and there is now a reasonable expectation that things are going to change. People see that by clustering development closer together, we get to keep more green spaces.*
- *(RH Staff) For example, a local community worked with the Town and a developer to arrive at an agreement around the type and form of a more intense form of housing.*



Feedback



- Leadership is a big factor, a perfect example of this is Mayor Mazel McCallion on her bike for “Car Free Day”.
- There’s nothing about democracy in the literature on the planning process. Would like to see more discussion at the local level.
- Should adopt “two will do” to stop increased population growth.
- York Region was a “stitch up” of the Davis government. Farmers controlled the north end and this should continue. The southern 3 municipalities are not connected enough with the Regional Centre (Administration Building) – it should have been located in the south.
- Should divide York Region, because northern and southern areas do not related to one another – residents in Markham don’t know, or care, about what is happening in Georgina.
- *Region of York exists because issues are so large, we need to take a bigger picture, systematic approach. For example, water and sewer systems, roadways and transportation systems.*



Feedback	
• Is it possible to talk about planning on a watershed basis? There is no mention of it in any of the papers – this should be in the materials. • <i>Over the past 5 years, Regional Council has funded updates of our watershed plans which will inform our processes.</i> • I'm on the Yonge Street Subway Committee. Concerned about lack of communication regarding the water systems in other local municipalities. If you cross Yonge Street, Markham doesn't know what Vaughan is doing and vice versa. York Region should have some role in ensuring municipalities (especially those sharing borders) are talking to each other about water. • <i>York Region is currently rationing sewage capacity and is being careful about where we allow it until we get more capacity online. We have discussions going with Markham and Vaughan to work together on capacity.</i> 	

Feedback	
• We ask that Bayview Avenue and Bathurst Street not be widened or have construction on them while the subway is being built on Yonge Street. Drivers will move over to these streets, causing more traffic issues. • <i>York Region avoids working on parallel roads simultaneously.</i> • Should advertise Regional meetings like this one on the Richmond Hill website. More availability of public notification would get more people showing up. • <i>We welcome any ideas on how to get information to people – for example, ask on our website to be added to mailing list.</i> 	



Towards a Sustainable Region

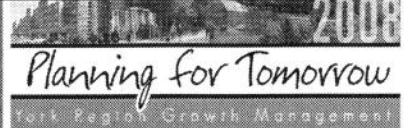
**Town of Newmarket
Town Hall Meeting Feedback
September 25, 2008**



- The following comments, questions and suggestions are a summary of the public input received at the consultation session held in the Town of Newmarket. Regional staff attempted to respond to questions and provide additional input. Please contact the Region if this summary does not adequately reflect your input or ideas, or if you have any additional thoughts.
- Comments from the public are recorded in black.
- *Regional staff comments are recorded in blue italics.*



Feedback



- I sell real estate. I know these plans but still see "big box" stores popping up. Things built now are going to be around for a while, why do we not see apartments above them?
- *As we become more urban we will see more and more of this. Planners still not sure what to do with big box stores. We must experiment with organizing them differently.*
- In NYC you have mall below, condos above; we currently see growth going to the north (Davis Drive) that are ideal locations for these types of buildings. These things should be done now - we're losing the current opportunities.
- *In North York, a grocery store was built underneath high-rise condos and is one of the largest grossing stores around. This is a good example of how to mix uses.*
- The electricity system appears to be stressed at times. How will the electrical system handle all of the stresses of this proposed growth – what are the current plans for the electrical grid?
- *Planning for electricity is done by Province. Hydro providers are aware of the forecasts and will have to meet that level of electrical capability/transmission. But we must also build buildings that use less electricity, water, gas, etc. Some local municipalities require all new buildings to reach Energy Star ratings.*



Feedback



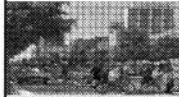
- What are the thoughts on including things like solar panels to generate electricity in the building codes? What about bringing in more transmission lines?
- *New standards will be in place for 2012, but we should not be waiting that long to implement - perhaps the thousands of new homes we will build before then should have higher standards too.*
- *We're also looking into incentives or "carrots" to encourage better development. For example, Regional Council adopted a policy where if you build to a LEED standard, you will get the equivalent of what you save to create additional new units in the building.*
- There are many countries that use solar panels to generate electricity. This is a prime opportunity for York Region to initiate these programs and look into this area.



Feedback



- Concerned about the various housing options. I see people who are just starting out and are beginning to raise families, looking for housing with backyards to play with their kids in. These people do not want to be in apartment buildings, they want the pseudo-countryside. How do you change this mindset?
- *Previously, there was little choice in terms of housing types in York Region. We're now seeing a change and need to continue with a broader array of housing and affordability choices. If we build good communities with lots of choices, people will elect to use them.*
- *York Region sent out a survey asking employers what they look for when choosing where to locate their business. Affordable housing and transit were key concerns.*
- I liked the pie charts shown today, but I wanted to see more on employment. We have seen huge growth retail, but these are often lower wage jobs. Often these workers must move to Toronto, as they can't afford homes in York Region. What are we doing about this? Where do you see each economic sector across York Region?
- *We are meeting with the municipal Economic Directors to discuss these issues, and continue to annually survey local businesses to monitor how employment is changing*
- *We do need more high quality jobs in York Region. We also realize that having only one type of job in a municipality is not healthy, it needs to be diverse.*



Feedback



- The Toronto Real Estate Board comment on how they want to lower business taxes to keep business in Toronto, but we want them to locate up here.
- *York Region has done a pretty good job at getting our share of jobs; our level of jobs is approximately equal to those in the labour force – however a large number of residents commute outside of York Region to work. We have a lot of manufacturing in York Region, but not a lot of homes that these workers can necessarily afford.*
- What does York Region intend to do about affordable housing? Second suites are only available in Newmarket and East Gwillimbury. As we see people moving towards condos (whether for lifestyle or affordability), are there any other options?
- *This is a big issue and we're not sure of the answers yet. We have done a housing strategy and research into the affordability situation. We build as many affordable housing units as we can with government funding, but we haven't done enough for affordability. We need new strategies, perhaps with the development industry to be able to provide these units. We also speak with the Human Service Planning Coalition about these issues.*
- In some parts of the world they sell the shell of an apartment. The unit is not finished inside, so it is cheaper, and people can then choose to finish it the way they want, when they can afford it. This can help with affordability, as people can do things at any price point over any length of time.



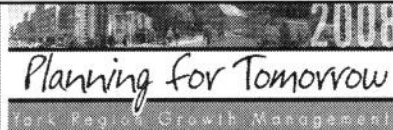
Feedback



- Has York Region considered looking at retrofitting older buildings? Older homes that use motors to vent our furnaces and water heaters (using electricity) use a lot of power.
- *We have done some retrofitting. It can be costly, but the payback period can be very quick. With increases in energy costs, we will likely see more movement towards retrofitting.*
- When addressing human services, we've talked about schools and health services but we cannot forget that poverty is rising at an alarming rate. Children are being fed by volunteer food banks and not getting enough recreation programs. This is not being talked about enough – we all think we live in a fairly rich community and that it doesn't exist, but beautiful homes on the outside can have multiple families inside. The current systems are not meeting the needs of these individuals and we must advocate this more to the Province and Federal government to help with this.
- *There is a significant homelessness problem, and thousands of families only one paycheque away from homelessness. It is far more common than we're aware of and need to do more.*



Feedback



- I have 100 acres that straddles the Greenbelt and Oak Ridges Moraine. We talk of sustainability and protection, but now need to "walk the talk". With all the anticipated growth, you will be going into these protected areas one way or another (i.e. roads), and this can change the character and put pressures on these lands. (i.e. the Holland junction) Where do we go with 21st century solutions for people who own property and are looking to pass it on to other generations/sell it – but not for development, we want to keep these lands green.
- *Just a few years ago we didn't have these green plans. Today we have a much better basis for protecting it. The line was drawn very clearly in legislated plans, so these land uses will require an amendment to change. There will be pressures, but many people have invested time and effort to ensure these plans remain in place and these lands are protected.*
- *On the other hand, we also hear people who have protected land who want to develop on it and want compensation because they can't.*



Feedback	
• Want more information on the Transportation Master Plan. The spillover from these growing urban areas impact the countryside in King Township in various ways, such as transportation. For residents of King (who want to live in a country setting), these roads can be threatening. These growth plans need to be aware of how communities outside the urban areas will be affected by them. Both major highways and country roads are affected. • As a resident, I would not like to see more roads. Without doing so, how do you deal with the impending traffic and keep it safe? We see lots of major transport truck traffic along these roads. Who will compensate the townships for the extra traffic on these rural roads so they can be maintained? • <i>This issue came up at King Council earlier too. There is increasing traffic on all our roads (urban and rural). No one compensates the townships for the traffic on the roads.</i> • <i>We are trying to take an approach to transportation that emphasizes shorter trips, carpooling, and other ways to ease congestion. We invite you to come to Transportation Master Plan meetings and hear what they have to say.</i> 	

Feedback	
• If you get a high efficiency furnace or other newer technologies, you can get a grant. Young people are often doing this, but older people tend to be unwilling to change. There are seniors with large two storey houses wanting to move but cannot afford to live in bungalows in the city. Many young people are willing to move into smaller units without the big backyard and living room. However, older people often do not want to live without those features and will choose to move farther and farther north, where they can afford homes with these features. These people should not be moving farther away from hospitals and services. • Are there any plans to highlight the Regional forest tracts in the future? Perhaps we can create places where you can safely park and utilize these areas, as there are many places where it is not safe to park on the side of the road. For larger tracts, we should have more than one parking spot, as there are many diverse and interesting spots. • <i>York Region is looking at the possibility of creating a Regional Trail System, which can go through these Regional forests and beyond. Will bring this to Regional Council in the future.</i> 	