



Town of East Gwillimbury

PLANNING REPORT P2005-103

To: Committee of the Whole Council (Planning)
Date: November 7, 2005
Subject: Employment Corridor Review and Economic Analysis
Origin: Planning Department

1.0 **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 1.1 THAT the Town request the Region of York to participate and partner with the Town in terms of a comprehensive Corridor Analysis and Study for Employment Lands in the Town of East Gwillimbury with a focus on the strategic areas identified in Appendix 1, including the following;
- Yonge Street Corridor;
 - Green Lane Corridor;
 - Highway 404 Corridor;
 - Bradford By-pass Corridor; and
 - Queensville University.
- 1.2 THAT staff be authorized to prepare a detailed Terms of Reference for the Corridor Analysis in consultation with the Regional Municipality of York.
- 1.3 THAT Council authorize the necessary funds to finance the Town's portion of the Employment Lands Analysis referred to above, as a joint venture with York Region.
- 1.4 THAT the Corporate Services Department forward a copy of this report to the Ministry of Public Infrastructure and Renewal, Ministry of Transportation, Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing as well as the Regional Municipality of York, Commissioner of Planning and Commissioner of Transportation and Works.

2.0 **PURPOSE**

In August of 2004, the Town's Growth Management Review and Update concluded that there would be a shortfall in employment lands across the municipality. More recently, the Region's September 2005 analysis of vacant employment lands has identified a very limited supply of immediately available employment lands across York Region. In addition, the Province of Ontario's Draft Places to Grow document identifies a need for additional residential and employment lands beyond that which has been accommodated by the Region's Official Plan. The purpose of this report is to respond to the findings of the Region and Town in the area of employment lands and to address future employment needs as a result of the Provincial Draft Growth Plan. To this end, this report seeks

Council's authorization to initiate, as a joint venture with York Region, a comprehensive Corridor Analysis and Study of Employment Lands in East Gwillimbury.

3.0 BACKGROUND

Concurrent Planning Report P2005-102 dealt with short term growth projections through to 2010 which were related only to residential development. A comprehensive growth management strategy must also deal with non-residential development. The purpose of this report is to present a 5-year non-residential growth projection for the Town for the period through to 2010. The revised short-term non-residential growth projection is intended to act as an interim measure in revising the Town's overall comprehensive Growth Management Review and Update of August 2004, and present the basis for comprehensive corporate planning, budgeting, and business planning for the short term.

In August 2004, Council adopted and approved the Town's Growth Management Review and Update. This Growth Management Review and Update dealt comprehensively with the Town's supply of designated lands for the purposes of employment uses within the municipality including industrial, commercial and institutional lands. The review inventoried areas designated for employment uses within the urban and rural areas of the Town. Employment areas are predominantly found within the Queensville Community Plan area. Additional industrial and employment uses are also found within the Holland Landing Community Plan and, to a lesser extent, within the Mount Albert and Sharon Community Plan areas. In addition, the Growth Management Review and Update considered areas designated for commercial and industrial uses outside the Community Plan areas, including the Green Lane Centre, the Leslie/Green Lane/404 industrial area, and the Bales industrial area.

One of the principal findings in conclusions of the Growth Management Review and Update of August 2004 was that the Town could expect to realize a short-to-medium term shortfall in the area of designated and available lands for employment purposes.

4.0 DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Relationship between Residential and Non-Residential Growth

The Town has very limited developed, or serviced, employment land and, therefore, most residents must commute out of the Town for jobs and for many goods and services. Efforts must be made to provide for a balance of residential and employment opportunities with a goal to create and maintain an acceptable assessment balance as well as to provide for an appropriate live-work environment.

4.2 Employment Lands within Existing Approved Growth Areas

4.2.1 Community of Mount Albert

Mount Albert has a limited area designated for Industrial development on the western side of the community, abutting the railway, as well as some commercially designated land abutting the Industrial designation along the east side of Highway 48. Commercial uses are also planned for the Village Core and in the Community Commercial designation south of Mount Albert Road at the western edge of the community. Much of the industrial and commercial area has not developed to date. A large portion of the existing lands which are designated commercial support existing residential uses. It is anticipated that these lands may redevelop but over the long term.

4.2.2 Community of Holland Landing – River Drive Park

Commercial uses are approved in the Village Core designation and also intended for the Community Commercial designation along Yonge Street. Smaller Convenience Commercial uses are permitted and planned in residential areas and such sites may include mixed use sites with upper storey residential units. A General Industrial designation in the north-west portion of the Community contains industrial uses that have developed on private services. Approximately half of the area remains vacant and there is no current commitment to extend full municipal services to this area. Lands designated for Business Park purposes are located in the west part of the Community between Holland Landing Road and Regional Road No. 1. This Business Park area cannot develop until full municipal servicing becomes available.

4.2.3 Community of Sharon

The Council adopted Sharon Community Plan, O.P.A. No. 122, anticipates small scale commercial uses within the Heritage Policy District along the Leslie Street core of the Community. In addition, the Community Plan includes a Commercial Area at the south-east corner of Leslie Street and Farr Avenue as well as a Mixed Use Area at the south-west corner of Leslie Street and Mount Albert Road. The Commercial Area designation reflects those lands which currently support commercial uses. The Mixed Use Area would permit a range of commercial uses as well as providing for the combination of commercial with medium density residential uses. Development of these limited employment lands would be subject to the availability of full municipal servicing.

4.2.4 Community of Queensville

The majority of the Town's employment land is designated within the Community of Queensville. Significant industrial lands are identified in the area adjacent to the Highway No. 404 extension. The area designated Town Centre is intended to become the

primary commercial focus of the Community. These lands will include a wide range of commercial, recreational, and institutional uses along with the opportunity to incorporate residential units within commercial buildings. In addition, there are lands designated in the north-east section of the Community for a private university. The development of these lands cannot proceed without the benefit of full municipal servicing as well as the extension of Highway No. 404.

4.2.5 Green Lane West Community Plan

The Green Lane West Community Plan recognizes the existing Regional Commercial Area located at the south-west corner of Yonge Street and Green Lane West. This designation permits large scale commercial uses. The non-residential (commercial) component of the specific site is currently built-out.

4.2.6 Rural Area

There are pockets of existing rural commercial/industrial lands located within the rural area of the Town. Any redevelopment of the existing uses will be limited and/or prohibited by the policies of the Oak Ridges Moraine and Greenbelt Plan. The rural area includes: a portion of the Green Lane Centre, specifically that portion located on the south-east corner of Yonge Street and Green Lane East, which is approaching build-out; the Caratuck industrial subdivision on the south side of Green Lane East between Leslie Street and Highway 404; and, the Bales Drive industrial area.

4.3 York Region Vacant Employment Land Inventory, September 2005

The Region of York's Planning and Economic Development Committee has recently adopted a detailed report from the Planning Department which summarizes and inventories the availability of employment lands within the Region. This report has developed a category of employment lands identified as "encumbered" as it relates to their availability, given servicing and infrastructure constraints. Employment lands within the Town of East Gwillimbury, particularly within the Queensville Community Plan, have been identified by the Region within the "encumbered" category. It would appear that the employment lands within the Community of Holland Landing have not been included in this "encumbered" category even though the development or redevelopment of such is dependent upon the provision of servicing by means of the York Durham Sewerage System extension. The Region's 2004 Vacant Employment Land Inventory indicates that there is currently an 18.5 year supply of vacant employment land. Excluding the encumbered and industry on private services lands from the analysis, there is an 11.8 year supply on a Region-wide basis.

4.4 **Draft Provincial Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe**

The Province of Ontario has recently re-entered the growth management field through the production and introduction of the "Places To Grow" Draft Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe. The Draft Growth Plan, in conjunction with the previous Greenbelt Plan, represents the Province's initiative to contain and control traditional urban sprawl within the GTA and Golden Horseshoe in favour of communities which are balanced in terms of employment and residential growth. One of the objectives of the Draft Growth Plan is *"to promote the economic vitality and competitiveness of our communities through innovative partnerships, supportive tools and maintaining strategic employment lands"*. The Plan identifies that providing a balance of jobs and housing depends on a well placed supply of employment lands.

The Draft Growth Plan includes an updated employment forecast to 2031 for all upper tier municipalities within the Greater Golden Horseshoe. For York Region, this updated forecast anticipates 740,000 jobs by 2026 and 780,000 jobs by 2031. The Region's Official Plan had identified a 2026 target of 696,000 jobs. Regional staff are currently working on distributing the updated Provincial forecast to local municipalities. It is important that East Gwillimbury position itself strategically to be considered within the Region's distribution of the updated Provincial forecast. The undertaking of the Comprehensive Needs Analysis and Study for Employment Lands in the Town, discussed below, would be a valuable tool in ensuring that due consideration is given to opportunities in East Gwillimbury.

4.5 **Provincial Policy Statement, 2005**

The importance of properly planning for employment areas is incorporated within the Provincial Policy Statement (PPS). Section 1.3.1 of the PPS specifically states,

"Planning authorities shall promote economic development and competitiveness by:

- a) providing for an appropriate mix and range of employment (including industrial, commercial and institutional uses) to meet long-term needs;*
- b) providing opportunities for a diversified economic base, including maintaining a range and choice of suitable sites for employment uses which support a wide range of economic activities and ancillary uses, and take into account the needs of existing and future businesses;*
- c) planning for, protecting and preserving employment areas for current and future uses; and*
- d) ensuring the necessary infrastructure is provided to support current and projected needs."*

Planning for the long-term employment needs of the Town intrinsically requires that necessary and realistic short-term strategies must also be in place.

4.6 Designated Areas Constrained

It is important to note that immediate areas available for industrial/commercial development are limited to a relatively small vacant portion of the Green Lane Centre area, the Bales industrial area, and the remaining lots within the Caratuck industrial subdivision on the south side of Green Lane between Leslie Street and Highway 404. As noted previously, the industrially and commercially designated lands within the Holland Landing, Sharon and Queensville Community Plan areas cannot be developed in advance of the introduction of water and sanitary sewer servicing. In addition, designated industrial development within the Community of Mount Albert requires a local pumping facility or pumping station in order to address sanitary servicing requirements in that Community.

The policies of the Queensville, Holland Landing, Sharon and Mount Albert Community Plans all require the provision of full services as a pre-condition to industrial development. This policy approach is consistent with the policies of the York Region Official Plan and the Provincial Policy Statement. In the absence of the provision of full services within the approved community plan areas, industrial and commercial development can only proceed over the short-term within the existing approved areas of the Bales subdivision, the Caratuck subdivision, and the completion of the Green Lane Centre commercial area.

The foregoing was the basis for the conclusion and findings of the Town's Growth Management Review and Update report which identified a short-term supply deficit with respect to the availability of employment lands within the Town.

4.7 Revised 5-Year Non-Residential Growth Projections

Establishing a predictable five-year growth projection for employment growth is difficult to anticipate, given market considerations and industry trends. Recent examples would include the Multimatic and Kasai developments which were impossible to predict in 2004, but materialized in 2005. Collectively, these two industries will provide a total of almost 400 new jobs within the Town of East Gwillimbury, and much needed non-residential assessment for the tax base.

As Council is aware, the largest designated growth area in the Town is within the Queensville Community Plan area which will result in an ultimate build-out population of approximately 30,000 people. The Plan also includes over 200 ha (500 acres) of industrial employment lands as well as a university and Town centre.

The Queensville Plan represents a unique vision for community building which establishes a specific linkage between the provision of non-residential floor area and employment opportunities for future residents and the development of residential units. This policy approach is founded on the basic objective of providing for a livable community. The policies of the Queensville Community Plan require that for every residential unit within the Community Plan, a complimentary amount of 600 square feet of non-residential floor area is to be provided within the Plan area.

Using the 2005 year with the Kasai and Multimatic development, as a base, the following illustrates the impact of the Queensville model as it relates to corresponding residential units:

$300,000 \text{ ft}^2 \div 600 \text{ ft}^2 \text{ (per residential unit)} = 500 \text{ residential units}$ 500 residential units at 3.1 persons per unit = a population of 1,550 Targeted employment growth per year = 300 to 500 new jobs

Staff have prepared Revised Five-Year Non-Residential Growth Projections based on the objective of ensuring that a minimum amount of non-residential development is provided concurrently with residential growth. Appendix 2 illustrates the amount of employment uses and employment lands required based on the Revised Residential Growth Projections outlined in Planning Report P2005-102 and using the Queensville model as a basis for our calculations. It is important to note that the 600 square feet per residential unit was established in 2001. Based on activity rates and modified square foot per employee assumptions, the supply of what would be considered adequate employment area may be higher than identified on Appendix 2.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Regional Municipality of York and the Town have had preliminary discussions regarding a joint effort to conduct a review of the Town's supply of employment land in conjunction with the ongoing Regional initiatives. The study recommended by this report is estimated to cost approximately \$50,000 and is to be jointly funded by the Town and the Region. All funding will be financed from Development Charges as this is a growth related study.

6.0 CONCLUSIONS

In response to the findings of the Town's Growth Management Review and Update of 2004, the Region of York's recent Vacant Employment Lands Inventory Study and the Province's initiatives with Places To Grow, the Town of East Gwillimbury finds itself in a position to explore short-term opportunities to provide for additional employment and

non-residential assessment within the municipality. Phase V of the East Gwillimbury Growth Management Report identified certain strategic locations where consideration could be given to the possible introduction of employment uses. These locations benefit from such factors as proximity to major transportation linkages, i.e. Provincial highways and the new Go Station, as well as proximity to existing employment uses and servicing infrastructure. In staff's review of the non-residential growth projections, within the context of the Provincial "Greenbelt Plan" and "Places to Grow" initiatives, it has become increasingly evident that undertaking a detailed review and needs analysis of employment lands within the Town would be prudent; the results of which would become an integral part of subsequent future planning in East Gwillimbury. Staff have identified 4 key areas for study, identified on the attached Appendix 1, as follows:

- Yonge Street Corridor;
- Green Lane Corridor;
- Highway 404 Corridor;
- Bradford By-pass Corridor; and
- Queensville University.

The Green Lane Corridor, particularly in the vicinity of the Highway 404 interchange, represents a unique and advantageous set of opportunities for mixed-use development, including employment, within the Town. In addition, the corridor study may address possible future land use options for the Yonge Street corridor extending north of Green Lane. External growth pressures affecting the lands along the Green Lane corridor have contributed to an ad hoc approach to growth and development in this area. Additional strategic opportunities exist along the extent of the approved Highway No. 404 extension corridor from Davis Drive to the Bradford By-Pass. At the present time, the consideration of these lands for potential employment uses is constrained by the existing policy framework of the Greenbelt Plan and the Province's emerging policies associated with Places To Grow in the Draft Growth Plan for the GTA and Golden Horseshoe. Shorter term opportunities may exist along the Green Lane Corridor which would be the focus of the proposed land use planning exercise.

Staff are recommending that the Town request York Region to participate and partner with the Town in terms of undertaking a Comprehensive Needs Analysis and Study for Employment Lands in East Gwillimbury with a focus on the above noted corridors. Based on preliminary discussions with the Region, and given the status of the Provincial Draft Growth Plan, staff have concluded that a detailed land use study and possible Official Plan Amendments may not be appropriate at this time. As an initial phase of advancing the supply of non-residential lands within the municipality, staff are recommending that Council support a joint study process in partnership with the Region of York which will focus on economic and fiscal elements of the Town's short and long-term supply of employment lands relative to residential growth. The intended planning study would be comprehensive and involve the consideration of all disciplines and

matters including transportation, environment and land use compatibility. The conclusions and findings of such study may evolve into additional phases and more specific work which could potentially involve amendments to the Town and Region Official Plan, i.e. corridor land use studies. Corridor land use studies would take into account such matters as extent and location of specific types of land uses, i.e. industrial, commercial, and institutional, as well as transportation, servicing and environmental considerations. A component of the corridor land use studies will also deal with fiscal impact analysis.

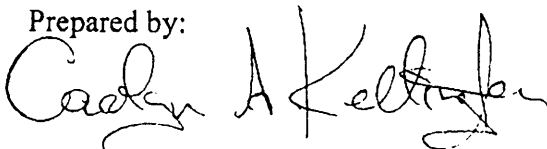
This report must be reviewed in conjunction with Planning Report P2005-102 pertaining to residential growth projections.

7.0 ATTACHMENTS

- Appendix 1 - Identification of Corridor Study Areas to form part of a Needs Analysis and Study for Employment Lands in East Gwillimbury
- Appendix 2 - Non-Residential Growth Forecast, Building Area Requirements based on Residential Units

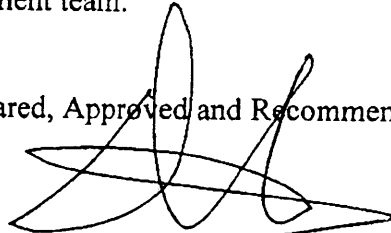
This Report has been reviewed by the senior management team.

Prepared by:



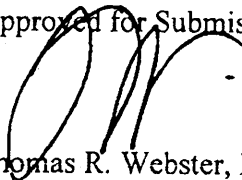
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Prepared, Approved and Recommended by:



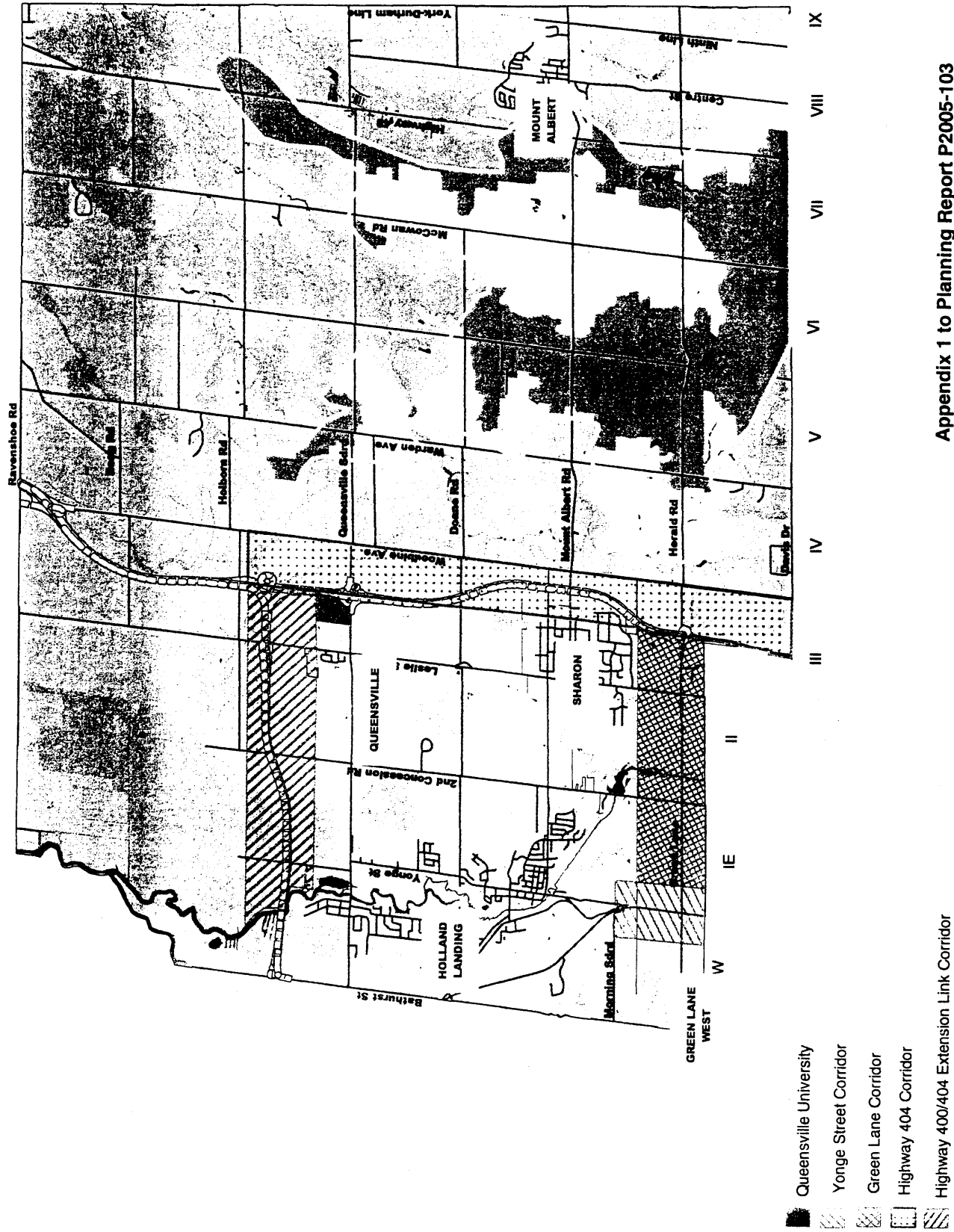
Dan Stone, MCIP, RPP,
Director of Planning

Approved for Submission:



Thomas R. Webster, M.B.A., B.COMM.
Chief Administrative Officer.

Encl.
(November 2nd, 2005)



**NON-RESIDENTIAL GROWTH REQUIRED TO SUPPORT
PROJECTED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT***

Year	Projected Residential Units*	Required Gross Floor Area of Employment Buildings (square metres)	Required Land Area for Employment Uses (square metres)
2006	75	4,181	8,361
2007	381	21,237	42,474
2008	731	40,746	81,492
2009	731	40,746	81,492
2010	731	40,746	81,492

This would equate
to supplying
approximately 300
to 500 new jobs per
year.

*based on "Growth Assuming Additional YDSS Allocation" identified in Appendix 1 of Planning Report P2005-102

APPENDIX 2