



DRAFT ROPA 43

Regional Centres and Regional Corridors

Draft ROPA 43 – Proposed enhancements to achieve an urban structure of Regional Centres and Regional Corridors, served by rapid transit

Chapter 5 Policy Structure

- 5.1 Forecasting Growth
- 5.2 Community Building (*Refined*)
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REVISED DRAFT
– March 17, 2004

Proposed changes:

Underscore indicates latest changes, further to changes made in the Draft dated November 18, 2003

5.2 Community Building

Communities are a fundamental building block of this Plan. Communities are much more than the architecture of buildings and the design of neighbourhoods.

Communities are places where people interact, learn, work, play and reside. Excellence in community design is essential to creating a physical place where people have the opportunities and choices required to lead rewarding lives.

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

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

beyond. Policies are also included to encourage well designed streets and building locations that create vibrant, pedestrian-friendly, and transit-oriented streetscapes.

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

The primary focus of growth in the Region, however, needs to shift towards a growth management model that encourages intensification within the existing urban areas. The Regional Centres and Regional Corridors will be the prime locations for this type of growth within locally defined Key Development Areas. Local corridors and centres are also prime candidates for intensification but at a smaller scale. The concentration of people and jobs at specific locations is important to provide opportunities to live and work in the same area, efficient and effective transit services, a variety of housing opportunities, specialized human services, and economic vitality. A balance of growth within the Regional Centres and Corridors, local centres and corridors, and managed growth in new development areas is important in achieving sustainable urban growth over the long term.

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

Objective

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

It is the policy of Council:

1. That the majority of growth be directed to the urban areas identified on Map 5.
2. That area municipalities, in cooperation with the Region, are required to develop and monitor growth management strategies prior to the expansion of the urban areas shown on Map 5 and/or major growth in towns and villages. These growth management strategies shall be implemented through official plans and secondary plans and are to be based on the policies of this Plan including:
 - a) incorporation of the centres and corridors structure of this Plan;
 - b) promotion of infill and redevelopment that shows consideration for the existing built-form and surrounding land uses of the community through appropriate building design and massing;
 - c) provision for efficient, mixed-use and compact communities;
 - d) an assessment of the amount and distribution of the rural population; and

- e) assurance that travel demand and transportation facilities with an emphasis on public transit are kept in balance over time through the planning and development review/approval process at the local and regional level and in cooperation with adjacent jurisdictions.
3. To require an amendment to this Plan for any expansion of the urban areas identified on Map 5. Such amendments shall be adopted by Regional Council only if they are consistent with the following:
 - a) regional population and employment forecasts;
 - b) the need for expansion relative to other lands available for development in the area municipality;
 - c) the role of the new development lands identified in area municipal growth management strategies;
 - d) the capability of the area municipality to provide growth within the urban area;
 - e) an analysis of options for growth direction and sequencing with respect to environment, agriculture and the implications on the availability of servicing including water, sewer, road and transit networks and human services;
 - f) the protection of and integration with the Regional Greenlands System;
 - g) the amendment is large enough (i.e. a concession block) with clear and identifiable boundaries, such as concession roads, major natural features, rail or major utility corridors, to assess the creation of new communities at the regional level;
 - h) the role of the development lands is supportive of an urban structure of centres and corridors with transit supportive densities; and
 - i) the other policies of this Plan.
 4. To target a minimum 30% of the Region's forecasted population increase to existing built-up portions of urban areas, towns and villages in keeping with the centres and corridors structure of this Plan and by redevelopment of under-utilized areas and areas in transition. Increasing this target should be considered when reviewing the policies of this Plan.
 5. These strategies should identify minimum five year phasing programs for the logical, efficient and contiguous progression of development based, among other things, on capital works programs and the efficient provision of water, sewer, public transit, roads, schools and other human services.
 6. To promote civic centres in locations with good transit access as a focus for community activities and events and to help foster community identity. For example, the creation of civic centres in Vaughan and East Gwillimbury are important components of the municipalities' growth management strategies.
 7. To require the preparation of comprehensive secondary plans by way of area municipal official plan amendment for new areas of development within the urban areas shown on Map 5, based on the following:

- a) the plans are generally for large contiguous blocks of land, approximately concession blocks of 400 hectares (1,000 acres);
 - b) the areas encompass one or more communities;
 - c) the development provides for a broad range of housing types in the community at overall transit-supportive densities;
 - d) the development includes continuous mid-concession block collector roads that run both north-south and east-west where possible and/or a grid system of roads;
 - e) the distance to a transit stop of generally no more than 500 metres (a 5-10 minute walk) for 90% of the residents and no more than 200 metres for 50% of residents;
 - f) community design to support the system of centres and corridors as identified in this Plan;
 - g) community design around a focal point or community or civic centre;
 - h) a mix of uses in order to improve the possibilities for working and living in close proximity;
 - i) a system of walkways and bicycle paths link the community internally and externally to other areas;
 - j) the incorporation of the Regional Greenlands System into the community plan and the inclusion of pedestrian-accessible green space and local parks;
 - k) community design that emphasizes public access and safety;
 - l) the completion of an environmental analysis which includes examination of natural functions, attributes and linkages, as well as cultural heritage resources;
 - m) an assessment of human development needs including education facilities, safety, social and health facilities, arts, culture and recreation facilities;
 - n) a road system which is linked with the regional road system and is generally designed to incorporate road patterns that offer a choice of routes and flexibility;
 - o) population and employment targets for the area municipality; and
 - p) the completion of a transit plan, led by York Region Transit, for the planning area which includes how the area can and will be serviced by transit and how transit service can and will be integrated with the regional rapid transit system, the planned Provincial Highway 407 Transitway, and GO Transit ~~rail~~ services
 - q) urban design criteria to ensure a high quality urban that addresses but is not limited to the following:
 - i) street definition through building location and design
 - ii) ~~relation of~~ building interface with ~~to~~ open space
 - iii) pedestrian movement and connection
 - iv) building design that complements existing neighbourhoods, and
 - v) pedestrian scale and amenity.
 - r) other policies of the Plan.
8. That major growth in towns and villages identified on Map 5 be governed by secondary plans based on the following criteria:
- a) sewer and water services are available to accommodate the proposed growth;
 - b) the planning area is sufficiently large to take a long-term view of the community;
 - c) the plan considers the entire town or village and integrates the new development area into the existing community; and
 - d) the plan meets criteria c), d) and f) through p) in Policy 5.2.7, and;

- e) that when transit services are introduced, the plan meets criteria e) in Policy 5.2.7.
- 9. To encourage municipalities to prepare secondary plans to guide redevelopment of areas in transition or areas that are under-utilized in keeping with the policies in this section.
- 10. To consider the impact and compatibility of potentially conflicting land uses on each other and the surrounding area including the assessment of noise impacts for land uses adjacent to arterial road and highway facilities.
- 11. To support area municipalities in their efforts to ensure that urban design plans, site plan submissions and/or zoning regulations promote pedestrian-friendly and transit-oriented streetscapes. The Region will support the area municipalities in their efforts to ensure access to buildings and public spaces by the disabled.
- 12. That the Region work with area municipalities in the completion of comprehensive growth management studies including the Growth Management Study Areas shown on Map 5 which address the policies and criteria of the Plan.
- 13. That the Region work with the Town of Richmond Hill in the completion of the growth management study of the entire municipal area, taking into account the existing urban service areas boundaries and levels of development presently in the urban fringe area.
- 14. The Township of King has adopted Amendment 54 — a Community Plan for the King City community. This Community Plan establishes population projections for the community of 10,000 persons to 2016 and 12,000 persons to 2021. The boundaries of the Community Plan and service area are fixed for the planning period.

In accordance with the policies of Amendment 54, new urban development in the Community is to be serviced on full municipal water and sanitary sewer services through an extension of the York Durham Servicing Scheme. It is recognized that extending the York Durham Servicing Scheme is only intended to service the Community of King City and not to provide the additional capacity for urban uses outside of the community plan.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, the service area may be extended to provide sewage capacity for lands designated “Institutional” in the Township of King Official Plan which abut the boundary of the King City Community Plan and which are occupied by Seneca College and the Country Day School for the institutional uses on those sites where those uses meet the following criteria:

- a) that the private sewage system(s) for the institutional use has reached its capacity and requires extension enlargement or improvement to meet environmental standards appropriate for the size and type of use;

- b) that the financial costs for the extension are borne entirely by the institutional use and,
- c) that all other approvals required by the Township and the Region of York and other agencies are met.

However, no extension of the system shall be considered for any non-institutional use.

Prior to the commencement of the capital works associated with the sewage infrastructure related to the extension of the York Durham Servicing Scheme to King City, the Regional Municipality of York shall have entered into the appropriate Fish Habitat Compensation Plan with the Ministry of Natural Resources and the Department of Fisheries and Oceans.

15. To work with the Town of Georgina to address environment and development issues as well as servicing implications along the Lake Simcoe shoreline.
16. To work with the Town of Markham to identify additional urban areas beyond the Town's ~~identified 20-year~~ current urban area designation shown on Map 5, consistent with the Table 1 forecast.
17. The Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville has adopted Amendment No. 101, a Community Plan for the Stouffville community. This Community Plan establishes a population target of 24,500 persons for the year 2021. The boundary for the urban serviced area within the community plan is fixed for the planning period and is shown on Map 5.

In accordance with the policies of Amendment No. 101, new urban development in the Community is to be serviced on full municipal water and sanitary sewer services through an extension of the York Durham Servicing Scheme. It is recognized that extending the York Durham Servicing Scheme is only intended to service the urban serviced area of the Stouffville Community and not to provide additional capacity for urban uses outside of this boundary

18. That the Town and Village designation, west of Woodbine Avenue, north of Baseline Road in Georgina, known as Maple Leaf Village Estates, corresponds to the approved Town of Georgina Official Plan Amendments 10, 11 and 12.

5.3 Regional Centres

It is the intent of this Plan to identify Regional Centres and provide for a hierarchy of Local Centres that can act as a focus for public- and private-sector investment. Centres make effective and efficient use of existing and proposed infrastructure, including transit services. Centres can create greater identity for the Region and the area municipalities. It is intended that centres include a broad mix of uses to encourage live/work opportunities, be compact, pedestrian-~~oriented~~ -friendly, transit-~~oriented~~ supportive, safe and accessible.

Regional Centres should have the greatest variety and highest concentration and intensity of uses in the Region. This plan identifies four strategically located Regional Centres with access by major roadways and transit, as shown on Map 5: Newmarket Centre in the north, Vaughan Corporate Centre in the west, Markham Centre in the east, and Richmond Hill Centre in south. ~~Together, and connected by Regional Corridors, these four centres~~ These four Regional Centres, and the Regional Corridors that connect them, are the foundation of the Region's urban structure. These areas ~~would be a~~ are to be a focus of business, government, entertainment and culture within the Region with complementary pedestrian-scale and transit-supportive development.

The Regional Centres will have the highest concentration and variety of land uses in the Region—becoming the primary destinations for residents, businesses and visitors to live, work, play and learn. Regional-scale commercial, employment, entertainment and government facilities within walking distance of compact, higher-density housing and transit services will be located here. Regional Centres place emphasis on growth in an urban setting and reinforce the preservation of agricultural land, rural landscape and natural areas.

Development in the Regional Centres will be supported by the early implementation of rapid transit services in the Yonge Street and Highway 7 Corridors, with connections to the Toronto Transit Commission subway system in the Vaughan Corporate Centre Corridor and the Markham Centre-Warden Avenue Corridors. to the south, the Yonge Street and Highway 7 corridors, in the Vaughan Corporate Centre York University corridor, and in the Warden Avenue corridor linking Markham Centre with the Toronto Transit Commission subway system to the south.

It is recognized that Regional Centres will evolve over time to meet the needs of a growing and changing Region. The four Regional Centres will become more established beyond the life of this Plan to further add to the sustainability of the Region's natural environment, economic vitality and the health of our communities.

The establishment of a strong centres and corridors urban structure will promote growth that can contribute to a high quality of life through efficient transportation and transit systems, water and sewer systems and accessible schools and hospitals.

In addition to Regional Centres, this Plan provides for a series of ~~urban centres and~~ local centres that would be identified in area municipal plans.

Objectives

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

It is the policy of Council:

1. To support a well-defined urban structure of Regional Centres and Regional Corridors. This will be achieved through implementation of a Centres and Corridors Strategy that includes a suite of policies, programs, infrastructure and financial tools.
2. To recognize that the influence of Regional Centres and corridors extends beyond the urban area, having a region-wide impact. Focusing the most intensive and higher-order land uses in these areas helps preserve agricultural land, protect and enhance the natural environment, optimize the use of infrastructure, create transportation choices, and improve economic competitiveness and increase opportunity for investment and development.
3. To recognize that the Regional Centres of Newmarket Centre, Vaughan Corporate Centre, Markham Centre, and Richmond Hill Centre as identified on Map 5 are the major focal points for urban development in the Region, and are intended to support a concentration of employment, residential, cultural and government functions in an intensive land use form.
4. That densities should be highest within the Regional Centres and should support an overall, long-term density target of a Floor Space Index of 2.5 in the Regional Centres and Regional Corridors.
5. That the development in Regional Centres will balance employment and residential growth and be supported by parks, open space, and community facilities appropriate for an intense urban setting.
6. That Regional Centres will be promoted as the primary locations for mixed-use developments including a variety of residential, institutional and employment uses and live-work opportunities.
7. That a variety of higher density housing types will be directed to Regional Centres to service all housing needs including affordable and assisted housing.
8. That Regional Centres should be the primary and priority locations for public investment including public buildings and investment supporting community facilities and services. Major Regional buildings and facilities will be located in the Regional Centres. The municipalities will be encouraged to locate major public buildings and facilities in the Regional Centres.
9. Area municipalities will undertake the review of their Official Plans as required by the *Planning Act*. The Secondary Plan for the Regional Centres should be established or reviewed to:
 - a) Ensure appropriate planning policy, urban design principles, provision of infrastructure and provision of appropriate human services are in place as follows:

- i. ~~Building~~ form and land use shall promote transit ridership through urban design, scale, densities, land use mix and location;
 - ii. Development is connected by a fine grain of streets and pedestrian links that provide direct access to rapid transit routes;
 - iii. Regional Centres should be compact in form and provide for high-transit ~~–supportive–~~ density development to increase potential transit ridership;
 - iv. Plans should contain ~~minimum density requirements~~ long-term density targets, consistent with Policy 5.3.4 of this Plan;
 - v. ~~Priority for residential development other than low density should be given;~~ Residential designations should favour higher density residential forms over single- and semi-detached dwellings;
 - vi. New development shall be integrated with surrounding land uses and built-form through appropriate scale, design and use;
 - vii. Regional Centres should permit the greatest mix of uses within the municipality including residential, institutional, retail, office and human service uses;
 - viii. Rapid transit facilities should be easily accessible to pedestrians;
 - ix. Regional Centres shall be designed to be serviced by rapid transit;
 - x. Regional Centres should create focal points for community activity and civic pride;
 - xi. Provision should be made for public gathering places, streetscaping and planting to enhance the pedestrian environment;
 - xii. Connections with the local and Regional greenland systems including parks, bicycle and pedestrian systems and natural features shall be provided;
 - xiii. Phasing plans should be developed to ensure that Regional Centres ~~should be designed so that they can~~ evolve and intensify beyond the period of this Plan;
 - xiv. Specific employment targets should be identified in order to encourage a balanced choice of live/work opportunities; and should contribute to a ~~minimum target resident to employee ratio of 1:1;~~
 - xv. ~~Ensure that~~ Ground-floor uses of mixed-use buildings should enhance the vibrancy of the street;
 - xvi. Provide locations for human services that meet Region-wide needs; and
 - xvii. recognize and protect the cultural heritage resources in the Regional Centre.
- b) Promote the creation or review of urban design guidelines ~~with the assistance of ,~~ working with the Region, to achieve pedestrian friendly, transit oriented places through:
- i. ~~pedestrian friendly development in terms of scale, safety, connectivity, vibrancy, and consideration of sun, shade and wind;~~
 - ii. ~~development that provides pedestrian connections directly to the street and transit routes;~~
 - iii. ~~street and public space definition through building location and design;~~
 - iv. ~~streetscapes that provide a high standard of design in the public realm;~~

- v. high quality design;
- vi. building and parking layout that will allow for future intensification in a phased manner;
- vii. parking design and standards that assist in achieving pedestrian friendly, transit oriented development, including above or below grade parking structures;
- viii. a transition between existing residential communities and new development that applies appropriate scale and design of buildings, including step backs or terracing. Appropriate building heights and setback requirements shall be promoted in the area municipal plans and implemented in the area municipal zoning by laws, and;
- ix. A system of streets and development blocks based on a grid layout to encourage connectivity throughout the site, with an emphasis pedestrian movement and safety.

- i) pedestrian scale, safety and comfort;
- ii) enrichment of the existing areas;
- iii) a grid network of streets;
- iv) pedestrian connections directly to streets and transit routes;
- v) attractive buildings, landscaping and public streetscapes;
- vi) compatibility with and transition to surrounding land uses;
- vii) appropriate building placement and orientation;
- viii) appropriate building massing and articulation, and;
- ix) appropriate parking design and standards including provision for above and below grade parking structures.

c) Provide support and direction for regional infrastructure investment. Coordinate infrastructure investment, in consultation with the Region, to coincide with the build-out of the Regional Centre, including:

- i rapid transit and conventional transit network;
- ii road network, including streetscaping in the rights-of-way, and;
- iii sewer and water systems

10. To support the Town of Newmarket in the preparation of a Secondary Plan for the Regional Centre. The area municipality shall have the primary responsibility for the preparation of this plan.
11. To support development in the Regional Centres by the early implementation of rapid transit services in the Yonge Street and Highway 7 corridors, in the Vaughan North-South Corridor (connecting the Vaughan Corporate Centre with York University) corridor, and in the Markham North-South Corridor (connecting Markham Centre with the Toronto Transit Commission Subway) Warden Avenue corridor linking Markham Centre with the Toronto Transit Commission subway system in Toronto to the south

12. That the area municipalities, ~~in partnership working~~ with the Region, ~~shall are encouraged~~ to develop implementation strategies for the policies of the Secondary Plans, which may include:
- a) encouraging public investment from all levels of government;
 - b) using a wide range of innovative financial tools to encourage development consistent with this Plan, including Tax Increment Financing and ~~site-area~~ specific Development Charges;
 - c) providing opportunities for joint development between the transit agency and developers to encourage and facilitate transit supportive development and the transit infrastructure itself;
 - d) promoting transit ridership through controlled parking standards within the Regional Centre including maximum parking standards, parking authorities and cash-in-lieu of parking under the *Planning Act*;
 - e) developing a suite of Transportation Demand Management measures, including the establishment of Transportation Management Associations;
 - f) designating Regional Centres as Community Improvement Plan areas under *Section 28* of the *Planning Act* to assist in the implementation of this Plan;
 - g) establishing a development permit framework or pre-zoning based on the principles of streamlining and promoting development in a cost-effective manner;
 - h) establishing phasing plans for the build-out of the regional centres, recognizing that the build-out may occur beyond the life of this Plan;
 - i) the use of *Section 37* of the *Planning Act* to achieve net community benefits which are supportive of a compact community form;
 - j) innovative policies and programs to provide schools, parks and open space to serve the Regional Centres, including ~~bonusing and~~ alternative parkland provisions.

~~13. The location and quantity of parking should be planned in such a manner that minimizes surface parking in favour of above or below grade parking structures.~~

13. Development should be monitored by the Region and the local municipalities to determine the effectiveness and appropriateness of existing policies and practices for the planning and implementation of Regional Centres.
14. The delivery of transit services shall support the development objectives of this Plan.
15. Priority shall be given to capital infrastructure improvements in Regional Centres and Corridors.

5.4 Local Centres

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

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

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

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

Objective: To create a series of local centres that provide a concentration of residential, business and institutional activities for the surrounding community.

It is the policy of Council:

1. To require municipal official plans to identify the locations of local centres in the communities of Newmarket, Aurora, Richmond Hill, Thornhill, Unionville, Markham Village, Cornell, Cathedral, Langstaff, Milliken, Woodbridge, Carrville, Vellore Village, Maple and Keswick and other local centres as determined by the area municipality.
2. That Local Centres that are wholly or partially located on rapid transit corridors will may also be subject to the Regional Corridor policies of Section 5.5 of this Plan.
3. That area municipalities prepare plans for these Local Centres that address the following criteria: [renumbered from 5.3.5]
 - a) the Local Centres should permit a range and mix of uses within the municipality including residential, community, institutional, retail, office and human service uses; [renumbered from 5.3.2(c)]
 - b) transit facilities should be easily accessible to pedestrians; [renumbered from 5.3.2(d)]

- c) Local Centres should create focal points for community activity and civic pride; [renumbered from 5.3.2(e)]
- d) ~~local Centres should be integrated with the local greenlands systems, including local parks, bicycle and pedestrian systems and local natural features;~~ Local Centres should be integrated with bicycle and pedestrian systems, and local greenlands systems, including local parks and natural features. [renumbered from 5.3.2(f)]
- e) Local Centres should provide for pedestrian plazas, streets, and/or parks and promote a pedestrian environment; [renumbered from 5.3.2(g)]
- f) the areas around the Local Centres should relate to, be efficiently connected to, and contribute to the vitality of the Local Centre; [renumbered from 5.3.2(h)]
- g) the specific location and boundaries of the ~~urban centres~~ Local Centres should be identified using approximately 30 hectares (75 acres) as the focus of the ~~urban centre~~ Local Centre; [renumbered from 5.3.5(b)]
- h) the size of the Local Centre and the context for development should be in relation to the surrounding community and corridors; [renumbered from 5.3.5(c)]
- i) permitted uses within Local Centres should be similar to those permitted in Regional Centres with greater emphasis on residential and local employment uses; [renumbered from 5.3.5(d)]
- j) with the exception of Regional Centres, Local Centres should comprise the highest density and mix of uses when within urban areas, ~~with the exception of Regional Centres;~~ [renumbered from 5.3.5(e)]
- k) specific employment targets should be identified and contribute to a minimum target resident-to-employee ratio of 1:1; ~~a balanced choice of live/work opportunities;~~ [renumbered from 5.3.5(f)]
- l) Local Centres can vary in size, scope, role and function to reflect a hierarchy of Centres within the Region; [renumbered from 5.3.5(g)]
- m) the location of Local Centres should be in the immediate vicinity of the highest-capacity roads, centrally located to serve the residential community around it, and highest capacity transit service; the road pattern should be composed of a hierarchy of roads, progressing downwards from these intersections, into areas that are progressively less dense and contain less mixed use; [renumbered from 5.3.5(h)]
- n) promote their development as focal points for local and regional transit;
- o) plans for existing Local Centres should identify intensification targets for development; [renumbered from 5.3.5(i)]
- p) plans should also examine methods to reduce or slow down traffic within the centre, as well as improvements to local parking in support of local business, particularly through the development of higher-density development that may provide opportunities to create below-grade and on-street public parking when in urban areas; and [renumbered from 5.3.5(j)]
- q) where cultural heritage resources exist in centres, they should be conserved, if possible. [renumbered from 5.3.5(k)]

4. That all Local Centres be serviced by transit within the lifecycle of this Plan, and connect to the planned rapid transit services in the Yonge Street and Highway 7 corridors.
5. To support the development of Local Centres by giving priority to transit and infrastructure improvements in these areas. [renumbered from 5.3.6]
6. To encourage area municipalities, as part of planning Local Centres, to revitalize and preserve traditional mainstreet areas by conserving cultural heritage resources and reinforcing the character of the mainstreet. . [renumbered from 5.3.7]
7. That area municipalities be supported in their planning for the Local Centres of the communities of Sutton, Pefferlaw, Mount Albert, Holland Landing, Sharon, Stouffville, Nobleton, Schomberg, Kleinburg, Ballantrae/Musselman Lake and King City. That plans for these Local Centres should meet the following criteria in addition to the applicable criteria of Section 5.4.3:
 - a) identify the area of the commercial core;
 - b) protect the significant natural features of the community such as rivers, lakes, etc.;
 - c) recognize the potential for commercial and tourist activity;
 - d) recognize the servicing capacity of the community;
 - e) encourage efficient land use patterns, including the identification of areas for infill development ,and;
 - f) provide human services for surrounding rural and agricultural areas.

5.5 Regional Corridors

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

The Regional Corridors form the key connections between the Regional Centres. These corridors are considered the main arteries of the Region's urban structure. They provide for the movement of people and of goods between the Regional and Local Centres to support their vitality. Major Road and transit networks also intersect along these corridors to create opportunities for "sub-centres" or "inter-modal nodes" between the Local and Regional Centres. These areas may be identified as Key Development Areas in local official plans, consistent with the policies of this Plan.

This Plan promotes a comprehensive overall view of the corridors identified on Map 5, as a linking and unifying element in the Region that provides a transit system connecting to the larger Greater Toronto Area. In addition to Yonge Street and Highway 7, a Vaughan North-South Corridor and Markam North-South Corridor form part of the broader

Regional Corridor system. The Vaughan North-South Corridor will provide a rapid transit connection between the Vaughan Corporate Centre, York University and the Toronto Transit Commission subway (Downsview station on the Spadina Line). The Markham North-South Corridor will provide a rapid transit connection between Markham Centre and the Toronto Transit Commission subway (Don Mills station on the Sheppard Line).

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

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

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

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

Objective: To achieve vibrant active corridors that support public transit and link Regional Centres.

It is a policy of Council:

1. To require Official Plans for Aurora, Newmarket, Vaughan, Richmond Hill and Markham to identify and designate Regional Corridors in accordance with the locations identified on Map 5.

2. That the Region, as requested by and in association with the area municipalities, consider extensions to the existing Regional Corridors, as shown on Map 5 of this Plan.
3. To require the Official Plans for the area municipalities identify and designate the major transit spines: Yonge Street from Steeles Avenue to Davis Drive; Highway 7; the Vaughan Corporate Centre to York University North-South link, and; the Markham North South link at Warden Avenue.
4. That the Region assist work with the area municipalities in identifying the different conditions of each Regional Corridor on a segment-by-segment basis. This should occur in a comprehensive manner that identifies Key Development Areas within these segments, representing one or more of the following:
 - a) areas with the greatest opportunity for mixed-use and higher-density development,;
 - b) areas assigned early priority for rapid transit facilities and services generally located within 500 metres of existing and planned conventional and rapid transit stops, with the highest densities located within 200 metres ;
 - c) areas abutting or adjacent to rapid transit stations, and;
 - d) areas of the corridor that intersect with other major transportation routes or facilities.
5. That the Key Development Areas identified according to Policy 5.5.3 of this Plan serve as places where higher-density and mixed-use development is encouraged. This will provide clarity as to where infill and intensification will occur.
- ~~2. That area municipal policies direct new employment and mixed-use development to Key Development Areas within 500 metres of existing and planned conventional transit and rapid transit stops with the highest densities within 200 metres of transit stops.~~
- ~~3. That rapid transit stations along the corridors will be supported by higher density development and/or unique public destinations such as historic mainstreets and public facilities.~~
6. That rapid transit services should be initiated as early as possible in the Regional Corridors to encourage development and redevelopment in these corridors.
7. Key Development Areas described in Policy 5.5.4 of this Plan ~~will~~ should support an overall, long-term density target of 2.5 Floor Space Index for Regional Corridors and Regional Centres combined.
8. To assist the area municipalities in developing urban design guidelines for the various segments of the Regional Corridors, consistent with Policy 5.3.9.b) of this Plan.

9. To explore opportunities with area municipalities and related agencies to trench public utilities such as hydro wires.
10. To explore opportunities with area municipalities to provide sidewalks and lighting in the street right-of-way in order to enhance the visual appearance of the streetscape.
11. Area municipalities will undertake the review of their Official Plans as required under the *Planning Act* and establish or review existing secondary plans that include segments of the regional corridors, consistent with the following:
 - a) identify the role and function of the secondary plan area;
 - b) promote transit ridership through urban design, scale, land use mix ~~and~~, location and transit supportive densities;
 - c) appropriately integrate new development with existing development to maintain and enhance historical mainstreets;
 - d) recognize and protect the cultural heritage resources;
 - e) buildings shall be oriented to the street to create a consistent setback and building form adjacent to the street right-of-way;
 - f) building design should set a high standard of urban design;
 - g) buildings and sites shall be designed to achieve accessibility in terms of transit, pedestrians, cyclists and persons with disabilities;
 - h) contributes to the overall mix of commercial, housing, employment and institutional uses in the Regional Corridor;
 - i) complies with the Regional Streetscape Policies;
 - j) identifies Key Development Areas within the regional corridor segment, consistent with Policy 5.5.4 of this Plan;
 - k) identify the existing areas which will not redevelop in the near future but have redevelopment potential in the long term;
 - l) provide for public gathering places, streetscaping and greening supportive of the pedestrian environment and integrated with the local and Regional greenland systems including parks, bicycle and pedestrian systems and natural features;
 - m) appropriately integrate with and transition to the surrounding land uses and built form through scale, use and design, and;
 - n) other policies of this Plan.
12. That development should be monitored to determine the effectiveness and appropriateness of existing policies and practices for the planning and implementation of regional corridors.
13. That the delivery of transit services shall support the development objectives of this Plan.
14. To assign priority to Regional capital infrastructure improvements in regional corridors.
15. That the area municipalities, in partnership with the Region, shall develop implementation strategies for the policies of the secondary plans reviewed or

developed under Policy 5.5.13 of this Plan. These strategies will be consistent with Policy 5.3.14 of this Plan.

- ~~16. Priority for residential development other than low density should be given.~~
Residential designations should favour higher density residential forms over single- and semi-detached dwellings
18. That all new development shall either front or flank the Regional Corridor roadway or other routes for higher order transit services. New backlots are not permitted.

5.6 Local Corridors

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

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

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

Objective: Promote opportunities for residential and employment growth and intensification along local corridors serving the local communities.

It is the policy of Council:

1. That development and redevelopment in the corridors address the following criteria:
 - i. identify the function of each section of the corridor;
 - ii. establish a range of residential and commercial uses, including unit types, ~~tenures and commercial uses~~, including retail, offices, mixed uses and services;
 - iii. establish density and performance standards to encourage mixed-use residential and commercial building forms, in addition to single-use buildings, with particular attention to creating public spaces at grade;
 - iv. establish consistent setback provisions to encourage a continuous building form adjacent to the street right-of-way;
 - v. establish site-specific parking requirements that recognize the level of planned transit service and the need for residential and commercial activities; as well, to encourage the provision of alternatives to street parking along the

- street frontage, for example, underground or parking at the rear with appropriate screening;
- vi. encourage pedestrian activity through the arrangement and design of a development and streetscaping; and
 - vii. observe the Regional Streetscape policies in Section 5.2.
2. That major new development or redevelopment proposals on corridors be evaluated in terms of the policies of this section of the Plan.
 3. That area municipal policies concentrate new employment within 200 metres of transit stops.
 4. To encourage area municipalities, as part of corridor planning, to revitalize and preserve traditional main street areas.
 5. To require that secondary plans contain policies which indicate the function of corridors considering the historic function and provide land use policies along the Local Corridors.
 6. That those segments of local corridors identified through the environmental assessment process as locations for rapid transit services and facilities may be subject to and consistent with the Regional Corridors policies under Section 5.5 of this Plan.

Amendment to the Definition Section:

Floor Space Index: means the ratio of gross floor area to the lot area.