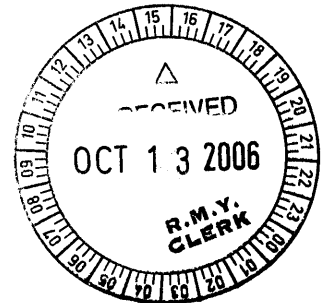




October 11, 2006

Mr. Denis Kelly  
Regional Clerk  
The Regional Municipality of York  
17250 Yonge Street  
Newmarket, ON L3Y 6Z1



RE: JOINT MUNICIPAL WASTE DIVERSION STRATEGY (5.1 & 13.4)

Dear Mr. Kelly:

This will confirm that at the meeting of Council held on October 10, 2006, the following motion was approved:

"Whereas in 2004, the Town of Markham established its "Mission Green" program with a 70% waste diversion target;

And whereas the Town of Markham is currently diverting 68% of its residential waste and anticipates achieving 70% waste diversion in 2007;

And whereas the Region of York and the local Municipalities have prepared a municipal waste diversion strategy entitled 'Working Together Toward a Sustainable Residential Waste Management System' setting out a range of waste diversion initiatives and recommending a Regional waste diversion target of 65% in the short term;

And whereas the Town of Markham has already implemented most of the initiatives proposed by the strategy and surpassed the recommended 65% diversion target;

Now be it resolved that the staff report 'Joint Municipal Waste Diversion Strategy' be approved;

And that the Joint Municipal Waste Diversion Strategy document titled "Working Together Toward a Sustainable Residential Waste Management System" be received;

And that Markham continue to participate in the Strategy implementation;

And that Markham encourage equivalent diversion targets be established by each local municipality to fully support the Regional target to divert a minimum of 65% of its waste from landfill;

And that the initiative to install bag breaking technology at the Region's recycling facility and the addition of plastic film and polystyrene plastic into the blue box be considered a priority initiative;

And further that the Region of York and the Local Municipalities be encouraged to continue to work together to expand upon the waste diversion strategy to include long term waste management plan development."

Yours sincerely,

Sheila Birrell  
Town Clerk

Report to: Committee of the Whole

Date of Meeting: Tuesday October 10, 2006

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**SUBJECT:** Joint Municipal Waste Diversion Strategy  
**PREPARED BY:** Claudia Marsales, Manager, Waste Management 3560

---

**RECOMMENDATION:**

WHEREAS in 2004, the Town of Markham established its "Mission Green" program with a 70% waste diversion target;

AND WHEREAS the Town of Markham is currently diverting 68% of its residential waste and anticipates achieving 70% waste diversion in 2007,

AND WHEREAS the Region of York and the local Municipalities have prepared a municipal waste diversion strategy entitled 'Working Together Toward a Sustainable Residential Waste Management System' setting out a range of waste diversion initiatives and recommending a Regional waste diversion target of 65% in the short term;

AND WHEREAS the Town of Markham has already implemented most of the initiatives proposed by the strategy and surpassed the recommended 65% diversion target;

NOW BE IT RESOLVED THAT the staff report 'Joint Municipal Waste Diversion Strategy' be approved;

AND THAT the Joint Municipal Waste Diversion Strategy document titled "Working Together Toward a Sustainable Residential Waste Management System" be received;

AND THAT Markham continue to participate in the Strategy implementation;

AND THAT Markham encourage equivalent diversion targets be established by each local municipality to fully support the Regional target to divert a minimum of 65% of its waste from landfill;

AND THAT the initiative to install bag breaking technology at the Region's recycling facility and the addition of plastic film and polystyrene plastic into the blue box be considered a priority initiative;

AND FURTHER THAT the Region of York and the Local Municipalities be encouraged to continue to work together to expand upon the waste diversion strategy to include long term waste management plan development.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

Not applicable

---

**FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS:**

This phase of the strategy development process has no financial implications to the Town.

**PURPOSE:**

The purpose of this report is to provide comment on the joint municipal waste diversion strategy developed by the Region and the local municipalities. Comments received through the public consultation process are also discussed.

**BACKGROUND:**

In January 2006, Regional Council directed staff to prepare an updated waste diversion strategy. The primary purpose of the initiative was to establish a plan that could be supported by all ten jurisdictions and would facilitate coordination of joint municipal waste diversion efforts. The development of a strategy and corresponding diversion targets would also allow the Region to determine how much residual waste it could anticipate managing through the EA (Environmental Assessment) process currently underway in partnership with Durham Region.

Local and regional staff subsequently formed the Inter-Municipal Waste Diversion Committee co-chaired by staff from Newmarket and the Region. Public meetings were held over the summer of 2006. A copy of the Executive Summary of the strategy document attached as APPENDIX 'A'.

**OPTIONS/ DISCUSSION:**

**The Strategy's Short Term Diversion Target Is 65%**

The Region's current collective waste diversion rate is 34%. One of the key objectives of the strategy was to develop a waste diversion plan that would increase diversion to be more in line with the current Provincial guideline of 60%.

The joint committee considered diversion targets ranging from 50% to a high of 75%. A majority of the municipalities felt their Councils may support a Regional target of 60%-65% diversion, mirroring the Provincial goal. Markham staff encouraged the establishment of an aggressive Regional diversion target matched with an equivalent diversion target established by each local municipality. This would ensure equal investment in diversion activities and prevent the averaging of targets allowing some municipalities to not fully participate.

Markham staff indicated to the committee that based on our 2005 waste audit, 80-90% of Markham's residential curbside waste is divertible if the Region had an expanded blue box recycling program that includes plastic film and polystyrene. Maximum recycling and participation could also be achieved with the use of blue bags for overflow material.

The final strategy document establishes a 65% diversion target as an initial goal and included provisions to increase the target to 70% over the 10-year planning horizon of the strategy implementation. Regional staff indicated that bag breaking equipment and the addition of new materials to the blue box is a 'future' consideration.

### Strategy Presented For Public Input

Public meetings were held from July to September to obtain public comment on the strategy. Public attendance was limited, averaging less than twelve residents per event. This low turnout was not entirely unexpected given that the events were held during the summer months and the budget to promote the open houses was limited.

In general, public feedback on the diversion strategy and the various options were overwhelmingly positive and were broadly supported by the attendees. The primary comment of the attendees was the desire to see implementation of the diversion initiatives as soon as possible in particular the Green Bin organics program and its immediate implementation in all local municipalities.

One of the most repeated comments was that local and regional governments should be doing more to advocate for change by industry and businesses, in particular the over packaging issue.

Table #1 below outlines the diversion initiatives put forward by the committee accompanied by Markham staff comments. While the goal was to reach consensus, it was recognized by the committee that Markham has already implemented most of the recommended initiatives and supports a more aggressive implementation schedule.

**Table #1**  
**Diversion Initiatives**

| <b>Diversion Initiative</b>                                            | <b>Committee Comment</b>                                                                                                                                                                     | <b>Markham Staff Comments</b>                                                                                                                                                                    |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| SSO collection<br>25-30% of waste<br>Potential Diversion:<br>68,000 t  | Target implementation by all local municipalities by September 2007                                                                                                                          | Markham completed SSO implementation in 2005. Planning to expand to high-rises in 2008.                                                                                                          |
| Optimized Blue Box<br>5-8% increase<br>Potential Diversion:<br>15,600t | No consensus. Desire of some local municipalities to add new materials, make packaging more recyclable and use alternative collection containers. Region placed as longer term consideration | Staff supports addition of polystyrene/plastic film to blue box, and to allow residents to use clear blue plastic bags for over flow materials as soon as possible.                              |
| Community Environmental Centres (CEC)<br>Potential Diversion: 3,000t   | Region supports development of large centralized CEC facilities                                                                                                                              | Staff supports use of local community based recycling depots. Expand local recycling depots to include materials such as wood, foam and reuse. Support local partnerships with local businesses. |

|                                                 |                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|-------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                 |                                                                                                          | Habitat for Humanity, and charitable organizations to divert used household items, clothes, and renovation materials. Cost effective, multiple, readily accessible locations.   |
| Increased Promotion & Education                 | Consensus that ongoing promotion and education is needed                                                 | Communication most effective when it is community based. Staff prefers a local program supported by Regional grants                                                             |
| Expansion of Regional Processing Infrastructure | Further study needed                                                                                     | Region recycling facility is at capacity. Need to invest in recycling infrastructure in near future to optimize Blue Box. Strongly support addition of bag breaking technology. |
| Use of Bag Limits & Financial Incentives        | General support for bag limits and paying for additional bag tags. Should be established at local level. | Staff proposes to pilot 2 bag limit with clear bags for garbage. Potential to increase diversion target to 75-80%.                                                              |
| Textiles Diversion                              | Supported by committee                                                                                   | Markham has 2 Goodwill depots and supports additional locations. Salvation Army containers are at fire stations.                                                                |
| Diversion Construction & Demolition materials   | Future Consideration                                                                                     | Public considers this item a high priority. Staff supports C&D recycling in south part of region and Habitat for Humanity location in Markham.                                  |
| Improved yard waste collection                  | Local municipalities to implement                                                                        | Staff recommends no change to current collection program in Markham                                                                                                             |
| Use of Mandatory Recycling By-laws              | Establish sub-committee to study                                                                         | Pilot program for clear garbage bags in 2007.                                                                                                                                   |

**FINANCIAL TEMPLATE:**

Not Applicable

**ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS:**

Developing a comprehensive, long term plan to increase waste diversion is consistent with Markham's environmental focus.

**ACCESSIBILITY CONSIDERATIONS:**

Not Applicable

**ENGAGE 21<sup>ST</sup> CONSIDERATIONS:**

Developing a comprehensive, long term plan to increase waste diversion is consistent with Markham's goal of managed growth, infrastructure management, and to create a better quality community.

Developing a comprehensive, long term plan to increase waste diversion is consistent with Markham's goal of managed growth, infrastructure management, and to create a better quality community.

**BUSINESS UNITS CONSULTED AND AFFECTED:**

Not Applicable

**CONCLUSION:**

In 2004, Markham Council established a target of 70% diversion by 2007. Markham residents have embraced the Town's Mission Green 70% diversion target. Staff anticipates meeting this target in 2007 and moving toward a 75% diversion target and a 'Zero Waste' philosophy.

Input from recent focus group sessions indicated that our residents are proud of their waste diversion achievements and are willing to 'reduce, reuse and recycle' even more. The 90% participation rate in Markham's Green Bin program supports this position.

Markham staff recommends that the strategy document be received as Markham has already implemented a majority of the strategy's initiatives and has surpassed the recommended 65% diversion target.

Staff further recommends that each local municipality match the Regional target to divert a minimum of 65% of waste from landfill and that the Region of York be requested to pursue the installation of bag breaking technology at the Region's Waste Management Centre and add plastic film and polystyrene plastic as accepted blue box materials.

**NEXT STEPS:**

The joint committee proposes to begin working on action plans for each of the initiatives to establish more detailed timelines and budgets.

Markham staff will continue to support the diversion committee and encourage the development of long term waste management strategy that considers HHW management, composting, business/school recycling, and renovation material recycling.

**RECOMMENDED**  
**BY:**

  
Peter Loukes, P.Eng.  
Director of Operations

  
Jim Sales, Commissioner of  
Community and Fire Services

**ATTACHMENTS:**

"A" Executive Summary: "Working Together Toward a Sustainable Residential Waste Management System"

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Management\Reports\2006\Operations\Waste\strategy report.doc**

# Joint Waste Diversion Strategy

Working together  
to reduce  
waste  
and increase  
recycling  
in the  
Greater Toronto  
Area  
& York Region



**Aurora**  
**East Gwillimbury**  
**Georgina**  
**King**  
**Markham**  
**Newmarket**  
**Richmond Hill**  
**Vaughan**  
**Whitchurch-Stouffville**  
**York Region**



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## Executive Summary

York Region and its 9 local municipalities have developed a strategy to manage the recyclable and organic material that remains in the residential waste stream. The development of the Waste Diversion Strategy (Strategy) was completed by the Inter-municipal Waste Diversion Committee. The Committee consisted of member representatives from each of the 9 local municipalities and York Region.

In 2005 the municipalities in York Region diverted approximately 34% of the residential waste from disposal. The Committee's objectives were to design a waste diversion system that will divert approximately 65% of the residential waste stream from disposal in the short term and increase this rate to over 70% in the 10-year planning horizon of the Strategy. To meet these objectives, the following waste diversion components were proposed for consideration as part of the potential waste diversion system:

| Option                                          | Description                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Diversion Potential |
|-------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|
| Source Separated Organics Diversion             | Diversion of household compostable wastes excluding yard waste. Requires specialized containers, collection and processing.                                                                                      | 30%                 |
| Optimized Blue Box Diversion                    | Weekly collection; addition of new materials; using bags and alternative collection containers; and/or collecting from local schools.                                                                            | 8%                  |
| Improved Yard Waste Diversion                   | Improved collection service across all municipalities to a minimum of biweekly collection (April – November).                                                                                                    | 5%                  |
| Use of Community Environmental Centres          | Location of convenient and accessible depots to receive reusable and recyclable materials and waste that cannot be set out for curbside collection.                                                              | 5%                  |
| Use of Mandatory By-laws                        | Development of by-laws by the Region and local municipalities to mandate recycling and/or restrict collection of waste containing recyclables.                                                                   | 5%                  |
| Use of Bag Limits & Financial Incentives        | Restriction of the number of bags of garbage set out for collection. Often combined with financial incentives such as bag tags that require payment for any additional amounts set out.                          | 5%                  |
| Enhanced Communication and Public Outreach      | Expanded and cooperative promotion and education efforts by both levels of government using multi-media and public engagement techniques and tools.                                                              | 3%                  |
| Construction & Demolition Diversion             | Diversion of reusable and recyclable waste from residential and/or commercial renovation & construction.                                                                                                         | 2.5%                |
| Textiles Diversion                              | Engagement of not-for-profit organizations such as Goodwill Industries to divert clothing and other goods via a collection or drop-off program.                                                                  | 2%                  |
| Expansion of Regional Processing Infrastructure | Expansion/upgrading of the Region's Material Recovery Facility (MRF) and development of new Community Environmental Centres (CEC) and/or composting facilities to meet local municipal needs in a timely manner. | N/A                 |
| Expanded Advocacy Efforts by the Region         | Lobbying of organizations/governments responsible for policy decisions such as "over packaging".                                                                                                                 | N/A                 |

The Committee evaluated 11 potential waste diversion initiatives based on their waste diversion potential, cost, past performance and reliable end use for material. Once the evaluation was complete, the Committee agreed to 7 priority and 4 future initiatives as follows:

**Priority Initiatives:**

- Source Separated Organics
- Optimized Blue Box
- Community Environmental Centres
- Bag Limits/Financial Incentives
- Enhanced Communication and Public Outreach
- Diversion of Textiles
- Infrastructure Development

**Future Considerations:**

- Bi-weekly Yard Waste Collection
- Mandatory Recycling By-law
- Advocacy
- Small Quantity Industrial, Commercial & Institutional (IC&I) Waste Generators

These waste diversion options are inter-connected in a variety of ways to create a potential waste diversion system that could be used to reduce the amount of waste going to disposal. The Committee has also agreed to continued research of new initiatives and technologies that may arise in the future to assist the local municipalities and York Region to maximize the diversion of waste from disposal.

The implementation of the Strategy's initiatives will require the development of new infrastructure and enhancement of existing infrastructure to manage increased tonnages and new materials such as food waste.

**Infrastructure enhancements include:**

- Increasing capacity of York Region's Material Recovery Facility;
- Siting and construction of Community Environmental Centres;
- Capacity to compost organic food waste; and
- Additional yard waste composting capacity.

The cost of implementing the priority initiatives over the Strategy's 10-year planning period is estimated to be approximately \$13 million to \$23.4 million or \$54.00 to \$97.50 per household annually for operating and \$20-\$35 million for capital costs.

**Next Steps**

The draft Waste Diversion Strategy will be reviewed by the 10 municipal councils between May and June, 2006 and subsequently released for public consultation and comment. Based on the results of the public consultation, a final report will be presented to the local municipal Councils in the fall of 2006. Once approved, the Inter-municipal

Waste Diversion Committee will conduct the required research and studies to develop a detailed implementation plan for the Strategy components.

Table 1: Waste Diversion Options

| Option                                          | Description                                                                                                                                                                             | Diversion Potential |
|-------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|
| Source Separated Organics Diversion             | Diversion of household compostable wastes excluding yard waste. Requires specialized containers, collection and processing.                                                             | 30%                 |
| Optimized Blue Box Diversion                    | Weekly collection; addition of new materials; using bags and alternative collection containers; and/or collecting from local schools.                                                   | 8%                  |
| Improved Yard Waste Diversion                   | Improved collection service across all municipalities to a minimum of bi-weekly collection (April – November).                                                                          | 5%                  |
| Use of Community Environmental Centres          | Location of convenient and accessible depots to receive reusable and recyclable materials and waste that cannot be set out for curbside collection.                                     | 5%                  |
| Use of Mandatory By-laws                        | Development of by-laws by the Region and local municipalities to mandate recycling and/or restrict collection of waste containing recyclables.                                          | 5%                  |
| Use of Bag Limits & Financial Incentives        | Restriction of the number of bags of garbage set out for collection. Often combined with financial incentives such as bag tags that require payment for any additional amounts set out. | 5%                  |
| Enhanced Communication and Public Outreach      | Expanded and cooperative promotion and education efforts by both levels of government using multi-media and public engagement techniques and tools.                                     | 3%                  |
| Construction & Demolition Diversion             | Diversion of reusable and recyclable waste from residential and/or commercial renovation & construction.                                                                                | 2.5%                |
| Textiles Diversion                              | Engagement of not-for-profit organizations such as Goodwill Industries to divert clothing and other goods via a collection or drop-off program.                                         | 2%                  |
| Expansion of Regional Processing Infrastructure | Expansion/upgrading of the Region's MRF and development of new Community Environmental Centres and/or composting facilities to meet local municipal needs in a timely manner.           | N/A                 |
| Expanded Advocacy Efforts by the Region         | Lobbying of organizations/governments responsible for policy decisions such as "over packaging".                                                                                        | N/A                 |

### 1.2.1 Public Consultation

A draft Waste Diversion Strategy report was submitted to the 10 respective municipal Councils for their consideration and then released for public consultation. Over the months of July to September, 2006 local and regional staff jointly organized and held a number of consultative sessions. Public open houses were held at 4 central locations throughout the local municipalities. Representatives from several local environmental groups attended the sessions. A number of Regional and local councillors also

attended the sessions to lend support and facilitate discussion with residents. Staff also made presentations regarding the Waste Diversion Strategy to each of the local municipal Environmental Advisory Committees.

Furthermore, information about the Strategy, along with an explanation on how to provide comments, was posted on municipal web sites. The Strategy was also brought to the attention of residents at other public events organized by municipalities such as the Region's Environmental Assessment public consultation meetings. The following is a list of the locations and dates of the consultation activities for the Waste Diversion Strategy:

| Activity                      | Location                                                 | Date                          |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Public Open House             | Oak Ridges Recreation Centre,<br>Richmond Hill           | June 21 <sup>st</sup>         |
| Public Open House             | City of Vaughan Civic Centre                             | June 27 <sup>th</sup>         |
| Public Open House             | York Region Waste Management<br>Centre, East Gwillimbury | July 6 <sup>th</sup>          |
| Public Open House             | Town of Georgina Civic Centre                            | July 11 <sup>th</sup>         |
| Newmarket EAC                 | Town of Newmarket Offices                                | June 7 <sup>th</sup>          |
| Aurora EAC                    | Town of Aurora Civic Centre                              | June 12 <sup>th</sup>         |
| Georgina EAC                  | Town of Georgina Civic Centre                            | June 13 <sup>th</sup>         |
| King EAC                      | King Township Offices                                    | June 22 <sup>nd</sup>         |
| Markham EAC                   | Town of Markham Offices                                  | June 29 <sup>th</sup>         |
| East Gwillimbury EAC          | Town of East Gwillimbury Offices                         | September<br>12 <sup>th</sup> |
| Whitchurch-Stouffville<br>EAC | Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville Offices                   | September<br>18 <sup>th</sup> |

Public attendance at the open houses was limited, averaging less than twelve residents per event. This low turnout was not entirely unexpected given that the events were held during the summer months and the budget to promote the open houses was limited. However, informal survey work conducted by Regional staff also revealed that even though residents knew of the open houses, they did not plan on attending as they had no concerns with the proposed Strategy.

In general, public feedback on the proposed Strategy and the various options were overwhelmingly positive and were broadly supported by the attendees. The primary concerns raised by attendees were aimed at enhancing some of the Strategy initiatives as follows:

- Yard Waste - The collection frequency of yard waste should be increased to a bi-weekly level of service as appropriate in each area municipality.
- Source Separated Organics - The implementation of source separated organics will result in an estimated 30% diversion rate increase and is the primary initiative required to achieve the 65% diversion goal. At all public consultation activities, there was overwhelming support for the source separated organics program as well as its immediate implementation in all local municipalities.

- Optimized Blue Box Collection - Need to expand the acceptable type of collection containers which residents can use and address further diversion opportunities within multi-residential buildings.

The public consultations also suggested that greater action by governments be taken to encourage and/or force businesses and industry to do more to divert waste. The majority of public comments regarding government action were centered on three key points including:

- Action by government to encourage manufacturers to reduce over packaging;
- Action by government to encourage manufacturers to make plastic packaging recyclable; and
- Action by government to encourage local businesses to establish recycling programs in stores and multi-residential dwellings.

The environmental groups contacted as part of the consultation process were also very supportive of the draft Strategy. Again, the most common comment was that local and Regional governments should be doing more to advocate for change by industry and businesses. These groups were also supportive of the Strategy as a means to minimize the amount of waste that must be managed through the Region's residual waste Environmental Assessment process.

Other comments received suggesting that the draft Strategy reconsider the recommendation to discontinue further consideration of diverting residential construction and demolition (C&D) waste. C&D waste was initially identified by staff as a possible diversion option. Subsequent discussion led staff to conclude that this option should be dropped as it is not normally handled in significant quantities curbside. Comments from the consultation process suggested that efforts should be made by all local jurisdictions to educate residents about non-municipal diversion (including charitable) opportunities for this material such as Habitat for Humanity.

The results of the public consultation program were incorporated into the final Waste Diversion Strategy. Furthermore, as the Strategy moves through the planning and implementation phases, further public consultation will be incorporated, where appropriate, into planning for new waste diversion initiatives

## 2. Overview of the Existing Waste Management System

Waste management services are a shared responsibility between the Region of York and the 9 local municipalities of Aurora, East Gwillimbury, Georgina, King, Markham, Newmarket, Richmond Hill, Vaughan and Whitchurch-Stouffville.

Where applicable, the local municipalities are responsible for the delivery of the following waste management services within their respective communities:

- Collection of garbage
- Collection of Blue Box materials
- Collection of yard waste materials
- Collection of bulky items and white goods
- Collection of Source Separated Organics
- Waste management policies and enforcement
- Promotion and Education
- Recycling depots
- Public space recycling
- Provision of recycling containers

York Region is responsible for the delivery of following waste management services:

- Processing and marketing of Blue Box materials
- Transfer and disposal of residual waste
- Transfer and marketing of yard waste
- Transfer and marketing of Source Separated Organics
- Design, construction and operation of Community Environmental Centres
- Waste management policies and enforcement
- Promotion and Education
- Operation of Household Hazardous Waste depots
- Operation of municipal waste transfer, white goods Blue Box recycling drop-off facilities
- Operation of residential electronics drop-off facilities
- Operation of reusable goods diversion events

The level of waste management collection services and programs vary according to each municipality. Appendix B illustrates the municipal collection programs and the corresponding collection frequencies provided in each of the 10 local municipalities.

The following information provides a brief description of each municipality.

### **Aurora**

The Town of Aurora is currently the fifth largest of the 9 municipalities in York Region with approximately 48,000 residents. Aurora is located in the heart of York Region, approximately 30 minutes north of the City of Toronto. Aurora's most distinctive