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#### **RICHMOND HILL/LANGSTAFF GATEWAY REGIONAL AND PROVINCIAL URBAN GROWTH CENTRE – FRAMEWORK FOR PROPOSED REGIONAL OFFICIAL PLAN AMENDMENT (ROPA) NO. 4 AND NEXT STEPS**

**The Planning and Economic Development Committee recommends:**

- 1. Receipt of the deputation and communication from Mr. R. Beaman, Thomson Rogers, on behalf of Markham Gateway Inc.;**
- 2. Receipt of the communication from K. Kitteringham, Clerk, Town of Markham regarding Town of Markham Resolution dated April 5, 2011;**
- 3. Receipt of the presentation from Sean Hertel, Senior Planner; and**
- 4. Adoption of recommendations 1, 2, and 3 contained in the following report dated March 31, 2011 from the Commissioner of Planning and Development Services with the following additional recommendation:**
  - 4. Markham OPA 183 (Langstaff Gateway) be brought forward for consideration by Regional Planning and Economic Development Committee no later than June 2011.**

#### **1. RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that:

1. The Region continue to take an active leadership role, and continue to consult with interested parties, in the planning and implementation of the Richmond Hill/Langstaff Gateway Regional Centre and Provincial Urban Growth Centre, given the strategic importance, development potential and complexity of the Centre, and level of Provincial and Regional infrastructure investment required.
2. The policy framework, attached to this report as *Attachment 1*, serve as the basis for a future formal Regional Official Plan Amendment (ROPA 4) to guide the Region's review and approvals of the secondary plans for the Centre, and that a statutory public meeting to consider ROPA 4 be held in accordance with the provisions of the Provincial *Planning Act* at the June 15, 2011 meeting of this Committee.

3. The Regional Clerk circulate this report and proposed draft Amendment framework, for information and consultation purposes, to the Town of Markham, Town of Richmond Hill and City of Vaughan, the Provincial Ministries of Municipal Affairs and Housing, Infrastructure, and the Office of the Provincial Development Facilitator.

## **2. PURPOSE**

Outlined in this report are the Region's strategic interests in the planning and implementation of the Richmond Hill/Langstaff Gateway Regional Centre and Provincial Urban Growth Centre ("the Centre"), based on the ongoing planning coordination and study process to date. This information will serve as the basis for further consultation, and will also shape the Region's approval framework for the secondary plans prepared by the Towns of Richmond Hill and Markham for the Centre. These Regional interests, including infrastructure financing and construction, are outlined in a draft policy framework for a Regional Official Plan Amendment (ROPA 4) which is attached to this report (*see Attachment 1*) for information and consultation purposes. This draft policy framework will provide the basis for the future recommended ROPA 4.

This report also provides an update of the Region-led planning coordination process which began in mid-2009 in collaboration with the Towns of Richmond Hill and Markham, and the neighbouring City of Vaughan, to support the planning and implementation of an integrated, cohesive and complete Centre. Strategic, Centre-wide studies and analyses to support the coordination process were initiated as part of this process; which have begun to shape the Region's interests and requirements as outlined in the proposed framework for draft ROPA 4. The proposed policy framework will serve as the basis for a more refined and finalized draft policy document, in the form of ROPA 4; which is proposed to be considered at a statutory public meeting under the *Planning Act* in June 2011. This report also provides an update of those concurrent Region-led studies and outlines the next steps; leading to the Region's approval of the secondary plans for the Centre.

## **3. BACKGROUND**

### **DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT AND PLANNING COORDINATION PROCESS**

#### **Coordination process initiated in mid-2009 by Region to coordinate and support concurrent local municipal planning for the Regional Centre**

The Towns of Richmond Hill and Markham have each initiated concurrent planning processes for their segments of the Regional Centre, beginning in early-2009 and mid-2008, respectively. Emerging through each process is a land use vision for the Centre which is dense, mixed-use, a complete community, and that is dependent on transit, including the extension of the Yonge Subway. A statistical summary of the proposed

development plans for the Richmond Hill and Langstaff Gateway segments of the Centre is outlined in *Table 1*, below.

**Table 1**  
**Adopted Development Scenarios for Regional Centre/UGC**

| Centre Segment | Area (hectare) | Residents     | Residential Units | Employees     | Office (sq.m.) | Retail (sq.m.) | Density*   | Employee to Resident |
|----------------|----------------|---------------|-------------------|---------------|----------------|----------------|------------|----------------------|
| Richmond Hill  | 70             | 15,800        | 7,900             | 15,693        | 340,000        | 93,000         | 450        | 0.99                 |
| Langstaff      | 47             | 32,248        | 15,140            | 10,794        | 217,850        | 62,152         | 916        | 0.33                 |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>117</b>     | <b>48,048</b> | <b>23,040</b>     | <b>26,487</b> | <b>557,850</b> | <b>155,152</b> | <b>637</b> | <b>0.55</b>          |

*\* Expressed as combined people and jobs per gross hectare*

The planning coordination process for the Centre was initiated in mid-2009 by the Commissioners of Planning from Richmond Hill, Markham and the Region to work towards common approaches for shared issues and developed Shared Principles for the Centre as a framework for moving forward. The City of Vaughan was also included in the process to reflect its interests as a neighbouring municipality to the planning area. The Province, through the Office of the Provincial Development Facilitator, is also involved in the process to observe and to serve as a link to the appropriate Provincial Ministries and related agencies (e.g. Metrolinx).

The secondary plan (Markham OPA 183) for the Langstaff Gateway segment of the Centre was adopted by Town of Markham Council in June 2010, and has been forwarded to the Region for approval. A secondary plan for the Richmond Hill segment is in development, and is expected to be adopted by Town of Richmond Hill Council in 2011.

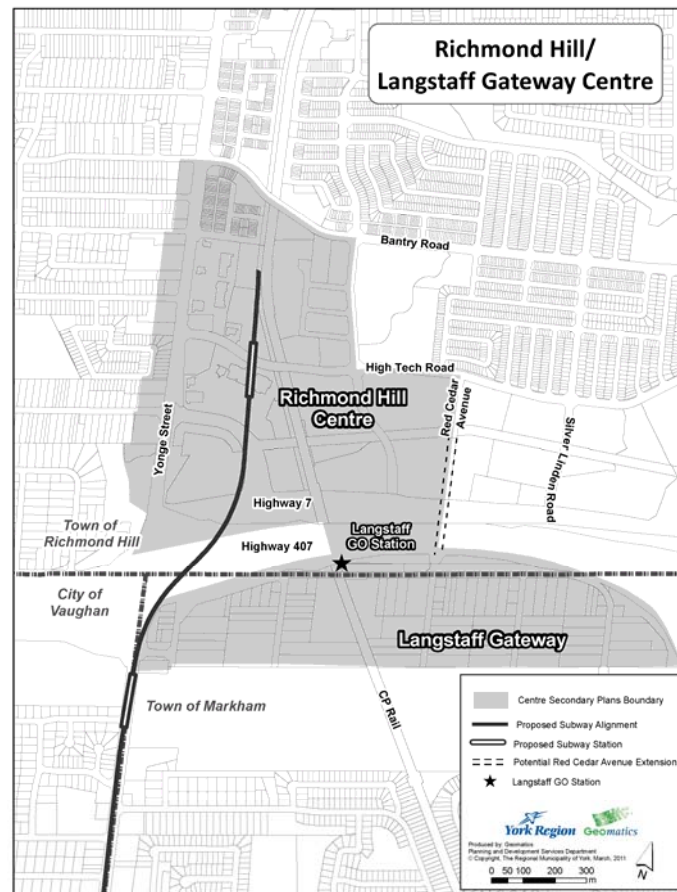
**Shared Principles and a coordination structure for staff collaboration was agreed upon, to make recommendations on issues of common interest within the Centre**

The Shared Principles (included as *Attachment 2*) established for the Centre, which were endorsed by Regional Committee and Council in September 2009 (refer to Report No.6, Clause No. 8 of the Regional Planning and Economic Development Committee, September 9, 2009) have been fundamental in guiding the process, and informing the emerging land use and design visions by Richmond Hill and Markham. The Shared Principles provide a level of structure and consistency for the planning and implementation process working towards the achievement of a cohesive Centre. The Principles were formed around the following six common and important issue areas:

- 1) Land Use and Urban Design
- 2) Building Complete Communities
- 3) Community Integration
- 4) Physical Infrastructure
- 5) Implementation of Community and Servicing Requirements
- 6) Financial Principles

Working towards common approaches for the above issue areas based on the Principles, staff from the Region and the local municipalities were mobilized into four sub-group teams to discuss and deliver detailed recommendations in the following four areas:

- 1) Community Facilities & Services
- 2) Financial Tools & Models
- 3) Physical Infrastructure
- 4) Planning & Design



The Principles have been effective for fostering a dialogue on issues of common interest regarding the Centre, and the evolving planning framework for the Centre is, on balance, consistent with the Principles to ensure an integrated, complete and successful community; with respect to assigned density and employment objectives. The general intent of the Principles has been integrated into the policy framework for the Centre and overall, a planning framework is coming into place to achieve a Centre that is dense, transit-supportive, mixed-used and complete to serve the needs of a diverse population. The emerging development vision for the Centre as a whole reflects the Principles in sum, and the proposed ROPA framework in combination with the Region's full review and approval of the secondary plans will be applied to ensure a successful Centre.

## FURTHER STUDIES AND ANALYSES

**Additional, Region-led studies have been initiated through the coordination process for issues critical to the planning and development of the Centre**

While there has been significant background work completed by Richmond Hill and Markham to support the planning for their respective segments of the Centre, the coordination process has led to the initiation by the Region of supplemental studies and

analyses. Looking at the Centre from a broader perspective – viewing the Centre as a unified whole – the Region initiated the following supplemental work, in collaboration with the area municipalities:

- 1) Centre-wide transportation study
- 2) Financial assessment and strategy
- 3) Community facilities and services inventory/requirements
- 4) Water and waste water servicing capacity analysis.

This supplemental work, consistent with the recommendations adopted by Regional Council in April 2010 (refer to Report No.3, Clause No.2 of the Regional Planning and Economic Development Committee, April 7, 2010), will guide the Region's approval of the secondary plans for the Centre, up to and including any required modifications. The required elements of the secondary plans, and subsequent planning and development applications for the Centre, have been incorporated into the draft policy framework to guide and support the implementation of the Centre in the short- and long-term.

*Attachment 3* identifies the draft Richmond Hill/Langstaff Gateway Study Areas and proposed development.

### **Province has initiated its own strategic study to align priorities to support the Centre, and to identify required Provincial infrastructure**

The Province, through the Office of the Provincial Development Facilitator (Ministry of Infrastructure), has retained the Toronto-based firm of Planning Alliance to undertake a strategic review of the Provincial ministries and programs, and to make recommendations on prioritized Provincial actions specific to the Centre. Regional and area municipal staff support the study, and have been consulted both in the development of the terms of reference and in the information-gathering stages of the study. Through the coordination process, Ministry staff and its consulting team have been informed of the critical importance of Provincial support to achieve the full potential of the Centre, including funding commitments for the Yonge Subway Extension to Highway 7, and new legislative and financial tools to support city-building consistent with the requirements of the Provincial *Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe – Places to Grow* (the "Growth Plan"), and the Metrolinx *Regional Transportation Plan* and associated *Mobility Hub Guidelines*. A recommendations report on the study is expected to be released by the Province in the Spring of 2011.

### **Regional Official Plan Amendment (ROPA), informed by the ongoing coordination process, would recognize the unique characteristics and challenges to support the planning and implementation of this Centre**

The emerging development visions for the Richmond Hill/Langstaff Gateway Centre are consistent with the City Building and Regional Centres policies of the newly-adopted Regional Official Plan, as established in Section 5.4. However, amending the Plan to include a required policy framework to guide and support the secondary plans and subsequent development approvals for the Centre, would provide a basis for the

infrastructure and phasing recommendations arising from the concurrent background studies. This anticipated framework was introduced early in the planning coordination process. The range and complexity of the issues associated with the planning and long-term implementation of the Centre warrant special treatment in the Regional Official Plan. The policy framework proposed in this report, and the ultimate Amendment (ROPA 4), would serve to ensure a unified vision of the Centre and the coordinated planning and implementation of the Centre. The draft ROPA framework contains proposed policies that address issues and characteristics (e.g. transit-dependency, multiple jurisdictions, etc.) which are unique to this Regional Centre.

As reported to the April 2010 meeting of the Regional Planning and Economic Development Committee, the Amendment (ROPA 4) would provide a high-level and supportive framework to ensure the implementation of the following critical elements of a successful Centre:

- A mix of residential and employment development at each phase, including protections for employment land use designations.
- Development density/phasing based on specific, firm, and contiguous phases and associated thresholds.
- Specific studies and other critical requirements that must be completed and/or satisfied as conditions of planning and/or development approvals.
- Non-auto transportation capacity and related non-single occupancy vehicle travel levels established, including pre- and post-Yonge Subway Extension development thresholds.
- The securement and construction of the fine-grained street grid, including new and/or enhanced connections for pedestrians and cyclists.
- The provision of community facilities and services, including urban schools, to serve each phase of new development.
- Water and waste water servicing capacity.

The draft policy framework introduced in this report is consistent with this direction.

#### **4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS**

##### **REGIONAL OFFICIAL PLAN AMENDMENT**

**Draft preliminary framework for an Amendment (ROPA 4) outlines the Regional interests and requirements for the Centre, with implementation details to be included in secondary plans**

The draft preliminary policy framework introduced through this report, and the formal Amendment (ROPA 4) it will culminate in, has three purposes: 1) to ensure a unified vision for the Centre that integrates the complex issues and interests and gives directions on these issues, to ensure a vibrant, vital and new “City” Centre; 2) to give direction on

what policies and related details the secondary plans for the Richmond Hill/Langstaff Gateway Centre must include in order to be approved by Regional Council; and, 3) to provide support for development approvals by the Towns of Richmond Hill and Markham for the Centre, in a manner consistent with the secondary plans, once the documents are in place.

The policy framework builds on the City Building and Regional Centres policies of the Regional Official Plan (2010), which establish the planning framework for the Provincial Urban Growth Centres within the Region. Specifically, the final Amendment (ROPA 4) will identify and direct those elements identified through the planning coordination process as being of critical Regional and common interest in the planning and implementation of the Richmond Hill/Langstaff Gateway Centre. The policies within the Amendment are then to be addressed in the secondary plans for the Richmond Hill/Langstaff Gateway Centre, to ensure that development applications submitted under those plans are consistent.

The development of the Centre is an undertaking with many interests, but a vital key is the significance of the Regional and local partnerships. In recognition of these partnerships the policy framework and the final Amendment (ROPA 4) are designed to be firm about the “rules” for planning and developing the Centre, while relying on the local planning documents to be detailed and definitive – to move the vision forward through development approvals.

The final ROPA 4, based on the draft policy framework, will provide a strong level of support and clarity in planning implementation at the local municipal level. Specifically, the ROPA will focus on the following key elements of successful planning implementation, which are a Regional interest:

- Development phasing and staging.
- Linking the timing of development to the delivery of “hard” (e.g. Yonge Subway) and “soft” (e.g. community services) infrastructure.
- Non-single occupancy vehicle modes of transportation including transit, carpooling, walking and cycling, and related monitoring.
- A balanced mix of residential and employment-generating land uses.
- Monitoring of development and the performance of non- single occupancy vehicle modes.

The policy framework proposes to require Regional approval for any proposed development that is inconsistent with secondary plan policies that have a Regional interest (e.g. density, development phasing, etc.). It is proposed that consideration for any such approval would be based on the intent of the Regional policies for the Centre, cost and phasing implications, and may include the requirement for a privately-initiated Amendment to the Regional Official Plan. This approach, as currently proposed, is intended to provide a high level of certainty, clarity and consistency across the Regional and area municipal planning objectives and processes for the Centre. Feedback received

from Town of Richmond Hill staff regarding the approach for a ROPA 4 suggests that the Amendment will need to make a strong linkage to the Shared Principles. Overall, the forthcoming ROPA 4 is intended to enable the right decisions to be made at the right time over the long-term planning and development lifecycles of the Centre.

This report recommends that the ROPA framework be received for information and consultation purposes. The framework will serve as the basis for a formal ROPA 4 Amendment, which will be the subject of the upcoming statutory public meeting under the *Planning Act* to be held at the June 15, 2011 meeting of the Regional Planning and Economic Development Committee. Regional staff would incorporate any changes arising from that meeting, and bring forward a final version of the ROPA 4 Amendment for Regional Council approval in September 2011. Recommendation of the Langstaff Gateway secondary plan would proceed in the same timeframe.

## **ONGOING REGION-LED STUDIES AND NEXT STEPS**

### **Concurrent Region-led studies and analyses for the Centre are nearing completion, and will support the Regional approval of secondary plans**

Supplemental studies and analyses in the areas of community services/facilities, finance, transportation, and water and waste water servicing, were initiated in late 2010 to support the planning coordination process for the Centre, and are nearing completion. Preliminary information arising from this work has informed the drafting of the policy framework. The final conclusions and recommendations arising from these studies and analyses will be subject to a comprehensive analysis as part of further reports to Regional Committee and Council, leading up to and supporting the Region's full review and approval of the Centre secondary plans. These detailed technical studies will be presented to Committee, leading up to the consideration of the secondary plans.

### **Preliminary recommendations are emerging for transportation and waste water infrastructure requirements**

The Region-led studies are progressing to a point where key infrastructure and service requirements by phase are becoming known. This work is being coordinated by Regional staff with the participation of, and with input from, staff from the Towns of Richmond Hill and Markham, and the City of Vaughan. The emerging preliminary findings of the studies have been discussed with local staff and are being refined and finalized with their input. Consultation meetings with the industry will also be scheduled to review the preliminary findings of the studies.

### **Centre-wide transportation requirements are emerging; including north-south street connection and emphasis on non-auto travel modes**

The Centre-wide transportation study initiated by the Regional Transportation Services Department, and being undertaken by a multi-disciplinary consulting team led by the firm

of GENIVAR Inc., has produced preliminary recommendations for the consideration of the Region, the sub-group team of local staff, as well as the landowners. Chief among the conclusions emerging from the study is that the Centre is a “transit-dependent” development, and that the Yonge Subway Extension is a critical component for proceeding beyond Phase 1. Among the recommendations emerging from the study are the following, in addition to the subway extension:

- The southern extension of Red Cedar Avenue under Highway 407 (there is an existing bridge under the Highway) to Langstaff Road prior to the first phase of development, to provide a higher level of connectivity across the Centre.
- Transit Priority, including physical infrastructure improvements (e.g. High Occupancy Vehicle lanes) for Bayview Avenue, concurrent with the first phase of development.
- A high proportion of trips to, from and within the Centre to be made by non-single occupancy vehicle modes (e.g. transit, carpooling, walking, etc.).
- Transportation Demand Management (TDM) measures including “carshare” and “bikeshare” programs.
- A parking strategy that includes reduced parking standards and shared facilities for all development.
- Continual monitoring to assess implementation of transportation improvements and travel behaviour, including TDM measures.
- Pedestrian concourse at an early stage of development, linking the Langstaff Gateway to the Richmond Hill transit terminal.

**While there is sufficient water capacity, new sewage infrastructure will be required to accommodate the planned growth of the Centre**

An analysis of the waste and waste water servicing requirements to support the development of the Centre is being undertaken by the Infrastructure Planning Branch of the Regional Planning and Development Services. This work is being undertaken with input from the Regional Environmental Services Department and engineering staff from the Towns of Richmond Hill and Markham. The preliminary finding regarding water servicing is that there is sufficient capacity to service the planned development, through local connections to the existing Regional watermain in the area (Pressure District 6).

Substantial improvements to existing waste water servicing are to be considered, which comprise the following elements:

- A new gravity sewer (Regional), to be constructed between Yonge Street and Bayview Avenue, south of Highway 407.
- A new local pumping station, to be located in the southwest quadrant of the Langstaff Gateway lands, to divert flows to the new gravity sewer.

Due to the unique physical features and constraints of this Centre, further analysis is being conducted to confirm the preliminary waste water servicing requirements. Preliminary cost estimates will also be developed and be incorporated into the Centre-wide financial analysis.

### **Findings of background studies may impact the proposed development phasing of the Centre**

The Region-led studies for the Centre are leading towards reviewing, with the various interests of the Centre, the current proposed phasing for the Centre including the Town of Markham Council-adopted secondary plan (OPA 183) for the Langstaff Gateway. The Markham secondary plan proposes a “pre-subway” phase of development with associated development thresholds linked to geographically-defined areas. To the extent that they are currently progressed, the transportation and market analyses are indicating that the recommendations on the phasing of development and associated infrastructure delivery, including Phase 1 (pre-subway), are close to being finalized, and that these thresholds will need to be carefully managed, especially in the initial stages of development. Specific details on the phasing of development has been under review, and is ongoing, by Regional staff, the Region’s consulting team, and local municipal staff through the coordination sub-group on infrastructure issues. Consultation with other interested parties, including the landowners, is the next step.

Phasing details for the Richmond Hill segment of the Centre are currently being developed through the Town’s ongoing secondary plan process. The degree to which those emerging details would be impacted by the Region’s ongoing analyses is not yet known. Richmond Hill development phasing will likely occur differently compared to the Langstaff Gateway; given that it has been under development for over a decade and has a level of existing infrastructure, community services and pre-existing development permissions.

### **Regional review and approval of local secondary plans for the Centre to be based on newly-adopted Regional Official Plan, and key elements arising from planning coordination process and related studies**

The Region’s approval of the Richmond Hill and Markham secondary plans for the Centre will be based on the newly-adopted Regional Official Plan generally, and the City Building and Regional Centres policies of Section 5.4 specifically. Within this broader policy framework, a focused review of the secondary plans will also incorporate the recommendations arising from the ongoing and concurrent Region-led studies to support the Centre.

There are several key elements that are of critical Regional interest to the planning and implementation of the Centre; making for a complete community and successful city-building. These elements include transportation and water/waste water infrastructure, reducing auto-dependency, access to community services, and overall community connectivity and integration. Given the critical importance of these elements, and the associated investments, policies related to and/or containing the following must be considered in the secondary plans for the Centre, in addition to the policies of the Regional Official Plan:

- Minimum and maximum thresholds of development for each phase of development, based on pre- and post-subway construction scenarios, and including all required infrastructure (e.g. new street connections, transit improvements, waste water, etc.).
- Community facilities and services (e.g. schools, parks, emergency services, etc.) shall be provided within each phase of development, as required, and be built to compact urban standards including multi-functional, integrated or shared configurations.
- Specific and measurable development standards (e.g. non-auto driver trips, mix of residential to non-residential development, community services, etc.) to be achieved within each phase of development, prior to the release of any further phase.
- Streamlined and coordinated development review and approvals, including considerations for a Development Permit System (DPS). DPS is a *Planning Act* tool that combines zoning, site plan and minor variance applications into a single and more dynamic approval process.
- The northern extension of the Yonge Subway to Richmond Hill, with stations within the Centre located at Langstaff Road and Richmond Hill Centre/Highway 7, prior to the release of Phase 2 development.
- Innovative approaches to transportation demand management including, but not limited to transit, walking, cycling and car- and ride-sharing, and parking management.
- Continual and coordinated monitoring of development phasing in relation to required infrastructure and service requirements.

Regional and local municipal staff are working closely through the ongoing and concurrent studies to address the above elements. Regional staff will also be consulting with the major Centre landowners, as part of this process. The Markham secondary plan (OPA 183) for the Langstaff Gateway segment has been received by the Region and does incorporate the above basic elements. The secondary plan for the Richmond Hill segment of the Centre is currently being developed by the Town. Should modifications of the secondary plans be required, Regional staff will first notify and work with local municipal staff on the purpose, content and extent of any potential modification by the Region, as part of the Regional review and approval process.

**Recommended next steps are to approve ROPA 4 in September 2011, which will serve as the benchmark for Regional approval of the Centre secondary plans**

An expedient timeline is being pursued with respect to the Region's complete review and approval of the proposed Langstaff Secondary Plan for the Centre. The review and approval of the Richmond Hill secondary plan will also proceed, once it is completed by the Town and forwarded to the Region for consideration. Following a statutory public meeting on ROPA 4 as part of the June 2011 meeting of this Committee, Regional staff propose to recommend Regional Council approval of ROPA 4 to the September 2011 meetings of Committee and Regional Council. With the Regional policy framework for the Richmond Hill/Langstaff Gateway Centre in place through ROPA 4, Regional staff

would present a full and comprehensive review of the Langstaff Centre Secondary Plan within the same timeframe. Regional Council's consideration of the Richmond Hill Official Plan, which contains a policy framework for the forthcoming secondary plan for the Centre, is scheduled to proceed to Regional Council for consideration in May 2011.

### **Relationship to Vision 2026**

The planning and implementation of the Richmond Hill Centre/Langstaff Gateway, and the coordination being undertaken to achieve it, is a good example of cooperative planning at the inter-municipal and agency level. The introduction of further, detailed policies (ROPA 4) to the Regional Official Plan to support the Centre would serve to strengthen this approach. The planning objectives and related process are highly consistent with and will serve to advance all eight goal areas of Vision 2026, and especially "Quality Communities for a Diverse Population", "Managed and Balanced Growth", "Infrastructure for a Growing Region" and "Engaged Communities and a Responsive Region".

## **5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

### **Implementing the Centre will require significant infrastructure investments from all government levels, and new financial tools to encourage transit-dependant development while minimizing risk**

There will be significant financial implications associated with achieving the vision for the Centre as a dense, urban, mixed-use and transit-dependant community. The public and private sectors will contribute to achieving this vision, which will generate both significant costs and revenues as the Centre becomes constructed over the short-, medium-, and longer-term. While there is significant development potential – and related potential revenues – associated with the emerging development vision for the Centre, there are also very significant capital investments required to support this development, such as water and waste water infrastructure, roads and transit. Chief among these investments is the estimated \$3-billion for the Yonge Subway Extension, that the Centre will be dependent on, and is to be a Metrolinx/Provincial initiative. It is anticipated that there are finite thresholds of development contingent upon the financing and construction of critical infrastructure, of which the Yonge Subway Extension is critical.

### **Detailed and strategic financial analyses are underway to assess the cost implications of building the Centre**

The Region has initiated a broad-based and strategic financial review of the costs and revenues associated with the development of the Centre, as currently proposed. This review is being undertaken by the firm of urbanMetrics inc. as part of the ongoing and concurrent studies arising from the planning coordination process. This review is incorporating the estimated costs associated with the conclusions and recommendations

arising from the other studies, including the transportation study, which has a separate and specific financial component built into the scope of work.

The broad-based financial review of the Centre will summarize the major costs and revenues associated with the build-out of the Centre, and also make recommendations on financial strategies and tools that could be applied to deliver required infrastructure and services, encourage development, and manage municipal financial risk. These considerations will form the basis of the Region's fiscal analysis of the Centre secondary plans.

## **6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT**

### **Ongoing planning coordination process is supporting and guiding the local planning and implementation of the Centre**

The Towns of Richmond Hill and Markham, and neighbouring City of Vaughan, have been active participants in the Region-led coordination process for the Centre since it began in mid-2009. They have also been engaged in the ongoing studies and analyses arising from that process, through participating in the working groups established for infrastructure and other common interests. While the Richmond Hill/Langstaff Gateway is a Regional Centre with many key Regional interests (e.g. Yonge Subway Extension), the planning coordination process was struck, and is ongoing, in recognition of very important local municipal issues, and the importance of the Centre to the planning objectives of the Towns of Richmond Hill and Markham.

### **Proposed new Regional Official Plan policies provide a unified vision, and direction and support to local secondary plans**

The policy framework being introduced through this report was drafted with input from local municipal staff, and on the basis that local planning and implementation of the Centre be supported through descriptive, yet firm, Regional policies. In particular, the policy framework proposes that a policy within the ROPA 4 Amendment would trigger the requirement for Regional approval of any amendments to change the policy requirements (e.g. phasing triggers, etc.) prescribed in the local secondary plans for the Centre. The Region is the approval authority for the locally-initiated secondary plans for the Centre.

Detailed comments on an earlier version of the policy framework have been submitted to the Region by Richmond Hill staff, and have been considered by Regional staff in refining the latest draft. Although written comments have not been submitted by Markham staff, the draft policies have been discussed and Markham staff comments have also been reflected in the latest draft. There will be further opportunities to provide comments on, and to shape, the latest version of the policy framework and the

recommended ROPA 4 before it is considered in a final form for Regional Council approval in September 2011.

## **7. CONCLUSION**

A policy framework for a Regional Official Plan Amendment (ROPA 4) has been drafted to assist in making the vision for the Centre a reality. The policy framework is introduced in this report for information and consultation purposes, with recognition of the Centre's strategic importance, and the number and complexity of issues across all government levels. The framework will provide the basis for the formal ROPA 4 Amendment, which will be the subject of the upcoming statutory public meeting. Once finalized, ROPA 4 will serve as the basis for the Region's approval of the secondary plans for the Centre, and will support local planning implementation once the secondary plans are in place. Overall, the policy framework and the ultimate ROPA 4 Amendment will enable the right decisions to be made at the right time over the long-term planning and development lifecycles of the Centre.

The key elements (e.g. the requirement for development phasing, performance standards, etc.) of the policy framework establish the components for an overarching policy structure for the emerging conclusions and recommendations arising from the ongoing concurrent studies. This work has been initiated by the Region, in partnership with the local municipalities, as part of the ongoing planning coordination process for the Centre, which began in mid-2009 with the participation of staff from the Towns of Richmond Hill and Markham, neighbouring City of Vaughan, in consultation with the Province through the Office of the Provincial Development Facilitator. This report sets the stage for a more fulsome discussion of the initial study findings with all parties.

The proposed next steps in the process are: a statutory public meeting to consider ROPA 4, based on the policy framework outlined in this report, at the June 2011 meeting of the Regional Planning and Economic Development Committee, and; the recommendation to the Committee to approve ROPA 4 at the September 2011 meeting. A draft version of ROPA 4 would be provided to the Committee for information purposes at the May 2011 meeting. The final conclusions and recommendations of the concurrent studies and analysis to support the Centre, including a fiscal assessment, will also be reported on at the June 2011 Committee meeting. Approval of the Langstaff Gateway Secondary Plan will follow within the same timeframe.

For more information on this report, please contact Heather Konefat, Director of Community Planning, at (905) 830-4444, Ext. 1502, or Sean Hertel, Senior Planner, at Ext. 1556.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.

*(The three attachments referred to in this clause are attached to this report.)*



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**SENT BY E-MAIL**

April 5, 2011

Regional Municipality of York  
P.O. Box 147  
17250 Yonge Street  
Newmarket, Ontario  
L3Y 6Z1

Attention: Denis Kelly, Regional Clerk

Dear Sirs/Mesdames:

**Planning and Development Committee Meeting – April 6, 2011**  
**Richmond Hill/Langstaff Gateway Urban Growth Centre**  
**Framework for Proposed Regional Official Plan Amendment (ROPA) No. 4**  
**Our File No. 050683**

We are writing on behalf of Markham Gateway Inc., a major landowner in the Markham/Langstaff portion of the Growth Centre.

In June 2010, the Town of Markham adopted OPA 183 setting out detailed Secondary Plan policies for development of the Langstaff Centre. The Markham Plan has been thoughtfully compiled, was the subject of an extensive public process and was adopted unanimously by Markham Council. The amendment is before the Region for approval.

Prior to OPA 183, Markham adopted OPA No. 171 to implement the Provincial Growth Centre and establish principles for development of a Master Plan for the Langstaff Centre. OPA 171 was of course subject to public hearings and ultimate approval by the Region. This amendment set the framework for the secondary plan and no mention was ever made of the need for a Regional Official Plan Amendment. We take the position that none is necessary and that the Region should deal with OPA 183 under the policy framework as it exists.

Finally, I would note that the recommendation in the Staff Report will occasion significant delay to the first phases of the Markham Gateway project that can occur prior to subway extension.

We would, therefore, ask that the Committee refuse the Commissioner's recommendations and instead direct the Commissioner to provide an early approval of Markham OPA 183.

Yours very truly,



Roger T. Beaman

RTB/aph

cc: Mr. Sam Balsamo  
cc: Mr. Peter Walker  
cc: Mr. Bryan Tuckey, Commissioner of Planning and Development



RESOLUTION OF COUNCIL MEETING NO. 7 DATED APRIL 5, 2011

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**NEW/OTHER BUSINESS**

**(3) LANGSTAFF GATEWAY PROPOSED OFFICIAL PLAN  
AND SECONDARY PLAN AMENDMENTS (10.0)**

- 1) That the Region of York Staff Report dated April 6, 2011 entitled "Richmond Hill/Langstaff Gateway Regional and Provincial Urban Growth Centre – Framework for Proposed Regional Official Plan Amendment (ROPA) No. 4 and Next Steps", be received; and,
- 2) That the Region of York be requested to expedite the review and approval of Town of Markham Official Plan Amendment No. 183, being the Official Plan and Secondary Plan for the Langstaff Gateway Planning Area, as adopted by Markham Council on June 8, 2010, and which is consistent with the Urban Growth Centre Policies of the Regional Official Plan; and,
- 3) That the Town of Markham supports the Region of York's efforts to undertake studies to coordinate public works and services to realize the goals of the Regional Official Plan for the Urban Growth Centre; and,
- 4) That Markham OPA 183 (Langstaff Gateway) be brought forward for consideration by Regional Planning and Economic Development Committee and approval by Regional Council, no later than June 2011; and further,
- 5) That Town staff report back to Markham Development Services Committee and Council regarding the Region's consideration of OPA 183, proposed ROPA 4, and related matters, as further information becomes available.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kimberley Kitteringham', written over a horizontal line.

Kimberley Kitteringham  
Town Clerk



# **Richmond Hill/Langstaff Gateway Centre – Policy Framework and Next Steps**

**Presentation to Planning and Economic  
Development Committee  
(Clause No. 3)**

**Sean Hertel, Senior Planner  
April 6, 2011**

**This report presents new information, and serves  
as a platform for further consultation**

## **Overview**

- ❑ Area context and background
- ❑ Planning coordination and related studies
- ❑ Regional policy framework
- ❑ Emerging development concepts
- ❑ Next steps



## Regional Centre is unique, and at the cross-roads of a rich emerging urban context



## Coordination process initiated in mid-2009 to find common approaches to shared interests

- ❑ Staff from Region, Richmond Hill, Markham and Vaughan mobilized into sub-groups:
  - ❑ Community Services & Facilities
  - ❑ Financial Models & Tools
  - ❑ Planning & Design
  - ❑ Physical Infrastructure
- ❑ Planning coordination guided by Shared Principles
- ❑ Province has issued its own strategic study of the Centre, to align its priorities

## Regional Council direction in April 2010 initiated supplemental studies, based on process

- ❑ Process pointed to additional studies to support decision-making:
  - ❑ Centre-wide transportation study
  - ❑ Strategic financial assessment
  - ❑ Water and waste water servicing analysis
  - ❑ Community services inventory
- ❑ Studies are nearing completion
- ❑ Interim results are being discussed with local staff, through the sub-group teams

## New Regional Official Plan policies to be considered to guide and support the Centre

- ❑ Emerging visions for the Centre consistent with Regional Official Plan
- ❑ Policy framework introduced in report to build on, and add detail to existing policies
- ❑ Key interests are infrastructure, phasing, employment and successful implementation
- ❑ More specific Centre policies would carry the study recommendations, support build-out

## Richmond Hill Concept



Regional Planning and Economic Development Committee, April 6, 2011

Slide 7

## Five modes of transit to converge at transit hub in Richmond Hill



Regional Planning and Economic Development Committee, April 6, 2011

Slide 8

## Langstaff Gateway Concept



Regional Planning and Economic Development Committee, April 6, 2011

Slide 9

The Centre is well-positioned to be an integrated, complete and transit-dependent community



Regional Planning and Economic Development Committee, April 6, 2011

[Movie](#)

Slide 10

## Report recommends that process and consultation continue, leading to approvals

- ❑ Region to continue leadership role given key interests, and continue to consult
- ❑ Policy framework to be considered as basis for future Amendment (ROPA 4)
- ❑ Hold ROPA 4 statutory public meeting on June 15, 2011
- ❑ Consultation with interested parties to be part of process

## Next Steps

- ❑ Continue to consult with local municipalities, other interested parties (e.g. Metrolinx)
- ❑ Prepare draft of ROPA 4, based on framework
- ❑ Hold ROPA 4 public meeting, and report on studies' conclusions to PED Committee in June 2011
- ❑ Bring forward ROPA 4 and Langstaff Gateway Secondary Plan (Markham OPA 183) for consideration

## POLICY FRAMEWORK

*This framework builds on, and is intended to be considered in association with, the existing City Building and Regional Centres policies in Section 5.4 of the new Regional Official Plan (2010).*

Elements to be considered in a Regional Official Plan policy (ROPA 4) to guide planning and development implementation of the Centre, are:

- a) A comprehensive phasing and sequencing development plan established.
- b) Required infrastructure and services in place for each phase and sequence of development (ROPA 4 to establish specific development thresholds associated with key infrastructure delivery, including pre-subway development levels and other key requirements).
- c) Specific transportation modes and modal splits in each development phase and sequence, as well as parking restrictions and any other specified transportation-demand management measure, given the transit-dependent nature of the Centre.
- d) The level and mix of land uses required in each phase and sequence of development, including office, retail and civic uses.
- e) The infrastructure, service and land use planning requirements for each phase and sequence of development be met, in order for development to occur in the subsequent phase.
- f) Monitoring, to ensure consistency with the development phasing and sequencing requirements, land use mix including residential and employment, and transportation modes and modal splits, will be undertaken by the Region and the Towns of Richmond Hill and Markham throughout the planning and development approvals process.
- g) Proposed Amendment(s) to the secondary plans for the Centre will require Regional approval; consideration of such approval by the Region will include the implications on the overall planning and development vision of the Centre, cost and timing implications of infrastructure and service delivery, achievement of development sequencing requirements including non-single occupancy vehicle travel modes (e.g. modal splits), and any other issues of Regional interest.

## POLICY FRAMEWORK BACKGROUND

The Richmond Hill /Langstaff Gateway Centre is one of the most important new high-density and mixed-use development nodes emerging in the Greater Golden Horseshoe area. It is strategically important as a Regional Centre and Provincial Urban Growth Centre: given its central location; potential for transit-oriented development, and; unique characteristic as being the only Urban Growth Centre located within two local municipalities. Further, a city-building model of development and related standards (e.g. urban approaches to stormwater management, high-quality civic spaces, smaller and integrated school sites, etc.) is critical to the implementation of a successful Centre, and requires new and innovative approaches compared to more conventional developments of the past. It is projected that this Centre will be home to approximately 48,000 residents and the workplace of approximately 26,000 employees.

The Towns of Richmond Hill and Markham have each initiated concurrent planning processes for their segments of the Regional Centre, beginning in early-2009 and mid-2008, respectively. Emerging through each process is a land use vision for the Centre which is dense, mixed-use and dependent on transit, including the extension of the Yonge Subway. While there has been ongoing dialogue throughout the process, the overall planning and implementation of the Centre, as a whole, would benefit from a broader strategic planning and development framework on how to manage the integration of the plans into one Centre, and how to phase development with the delivery of critical infrastructure (e.g. Yonge Subway extension).

A planning coordination process for the Centre was initiated in mid 2009 by the Commissioners of Planning from Richmond Hill, Markham and the Region to work towards common approaches for shared issues. The City of Vaughan was also included in the process to reflect its interests as a neighbouring municipality to the planning area. The Province, through the Office of the Provincial Development Facilitator, was also involved in the process to observe and to serve as a link to the appropriate Provincial Ministries and related agencies (e.g. Metrolinx).

Principles guiding the planning coordination process were agreed to by the participants, and were adopted by Regional Council on April 22, 2010. The principles were designed to provide a level of structure and consistency to the planning and implementation process, to optimize integration, compatibility and the creation of a cohesive centre. The principles were formed around the following common and important issue areas or themes, requiring detailed and coordinated approaches:

- Land Use and Urban Design;
- Building Complete Communities;
- Community Integration;
- Physical Infrastructure;
- Implementation of Community and Servicing Requirements; and,
- Financial Principles.

Arising from the planning coordination process and the shared principles, supplemental studies and analyses were initiated by the Region to support the completion, and the Region's approval of, the local secondary plans for the Centre. This work, undertaken in collaboration with the towns of Richmond Hill and Markham, and neighbouring City of Vaughan, comprised the following:

- Inventory of required community services and facilities;
- Centre-wide transportation study;
- Financial assessment and strategy;
- Water and waste water servicing needs assessment; and,
- Development and density analysis.

The range and complexity of the issues associated with the planning and long-term implementation of the Centre warrant detailed and specific policies within the Regional Official Plan. Although the emerging development visions for the Centre are generally consistent with the City-Building and Regional Centres policies of the new Regional Official Plan, a ROPA will serve to enhance the broader planning and implementation of the Centre by addressing the issues and characteristics (e.g. transit-dependency, multiple jurisdictions, etc.) that are unique to this Regional Centre, and based on the findings and recommendations arising from the coordination process, and related studies and analyses. Based on that process, it was concluded that the ROPA would address the following components:

- A mix of residential and employment development at each phase, including protections for employment land use designations;
- Development density/phasing based on specific, firm, and contiguous phases and associated thresholds;
- Specific studies and other critical requirements that must be completed and/or satisfied as a condition(s) of planning and/or development approval(s);
- Non-auto transportation capacity and related non-auto mode splits, including pre- and post-Yonge Subway Extension development thresholds;
- The securement and construction of the fine-grained street grid, including new and/or enhanced connections for pedestrians and cyclists;
- The provision of community facilities and services, including schools, to serve the population, and;
- Water and waste water servicing capacity.

This direction was reported on to the Regional Planning and Economic Development Committee on April 7, 2010, and subsequently adopted by Regional Council on April 22, 2010 (refer to Report No. 3, Clause No. 2 of the Regional Planning and Economic Development Committee).

This Amendment builds on the City Building and Regional Centres policies of the Regional Official Plan (2010), which establish the planning framework for the Provincial Urban Growth Centres within the Region. Specifically, the Amendment identifies and directs those elements identified through the planning coordination process as being of critical Regional and common interest in the planning and implementation of the Richmond Hill/Langstaff Gateway Centre. The policies within the Amendment are to be addressed in the secondary plans for the Richmond Hill/Langstaff Gateway Centre, to ensure that development applications submitted under those plans are consistent.

## Richmond Hill/Langstaff Urban Growth Centre – Planning Coordination

### Goal Statement:

To achieve a complete, diverse, compact, vibrant, integrated, sustainable and well-designed Centre, to serve as a focal point in the Region for housing, employment, cultural/community facilities, and transit connections.

### Shared Principles:

#### 1.0 Land Use and Urban Design

- 1.1 Planning will be comprehensive and achieve the implementation of a cohesive, **integrated and complete** community
- 1.2 The **initial phases of development** will include lands at and adjacent to the planned subway stations
- 1.3 Development densities will be concentrated at the planned **subway stations**, achieve a minimum of **3.5 Floor Space Index (FSI)**, and **decrease with distance** from the subway stations
- 1.4 A diverse mix of uses will be accommodated to create complete and active **precincts or neighbourhoods** within the Regional Centre, which will include the assignment of supportive resident-to-employee ratios
- 1.5 **Built form and design** will set a high standard, and contribute to a sense-of-place and **community identity** for each precinct or neighbourhood, and for the Regional Centre as a whole
- 1.6 Implementation tools, including the use of Section 37 of the Planning Act, will be incorporated into the respective secondary plans to achieve bona fide **community benefits**, which shall be described in the plans, that serve the residents and businesses of the Regional Centre

#### 2.0 Building Complete Communities

- 2.1 Neighbourhoods or precincts will be **complete** and **self-sufficient** communities within an integrated Regional Centre, to the **extent possible** and recognizing **physical constraints**
- 2.2 Land uses will provide **live-work-shop-play** opportunities for all residents within the Regional Centre, taking into account a **wide range of income levels** and demographics
- 2.3 The Regional Centre will be a complete community with on-site community **facilities and essential services**, including emergency medical services (EMS), fire, police, schools, libraries, arenas, playgrounds and others

### Building Complete Communities (cont.)

- 2.4 Community facilities including squares, parks, natural recreation areas, and pedestrian and cycling paths, will be **integrated** into the community and contribute to a **sense of place** for residents and employees within Centre
- 2.5 Facilities and services will **coincide with each phase** of development, and will be provided through the development approvals process, including the application of **Section 37 of the Planning Act**
- 2.6 **Access** to the facilities and services by area residents and employees will be convenient, safe, and available through a **short walk or cycling** trip
- 2.7 Amenity space, including parks and active recreation areas, will be **accessible to the public**, as opposed to being enclosed within privately owned buildings

### 3.0 Community Integration

- 3.1 **Connectivity** and **integration** across the Centre will be **optimized**, working to manage potential constraints posed by physical barriers and multi municipal jurisdictions
- 3.2 **Coordinate**, through agreements and related tools, the **operations** of and **funding** for community services (e.g. libraries, recreation programs, etc.) and infrastructure (e.g. street grid, sidewalks, etc.) across the Regional Centre
- 3.3 Ongoing **liaison** between among the Region, Markham, Richmond Hill and Vaughan to **enhance community integration** and planning, leading up to and following the finalization and approvals of the secondary plans, and continue to the development approvals and implementation stages (e.g. formal **municipal working group** or **planning advisory group**)

### 4.0 Physical Infrastructure

- 4.1 The provincially-designated **Mobility Hub** is the central and most important destination, origin and transfer point for transit trips within the Centre, and has a **Region-wide significance**. Development will therefore serve to enhance access to and support the **efficient functioning** of this facility
- 4.2 Development and related phases will proceed on the basis of **transit-priority** and non-auto travel modes such as **walking** and **cycling**, and the demonstration of sufficient transportation capacity to, from and within the Regional Centre
- 4.3 A **transportation study/master plan** will include a comprehensive review of wide-area (e.g. including lands north to 16th Avenue) transportation facilities, and include current conditions, identify short, medium and long-term transportation improvements, related development thresholds, and triggers

**Physical Infrastructure (cont.)**

- 4.4 **Transportation capacity** will be assessed on the basis of **congestion management**
- 4.5 A comprehensive and integrated **mobility plan** and strategy – addressing all modes of transportation with an emphasis on **non-auto modes** – will be prepared by the applicants as a condition of development approvals, consistent with the findings of the wide-area transportation study/master plan
- 4.6 A **fine-grained street grid** network will be planned and implemented through the development approvals and phasing process, including the identification of additional road, pedestrian, cycling and transit linkages
- 4.7 **Transportation Demand Management (TDM)** measures, including ride-sharing programs for residents/employees and transit pass incentives, will be required by the municipalities as a condition of development approvals for each phase
- 4.8 **Parking supply and design** will reflect and support the transit-priority of the Regional Centre, and shall include parking management approaches that include the establishment of consistent and low maximum parking standards, and on-street parking in appropriate areas
- 4.9 Development **triggers** (e.g. opening of subway, TDM measures, etc.) for each phase of development will include **performance-based standards** that are tied to mode shares for transit and other non-auto modes
- 4.10 **Transportation capacity**, including transit mode shares and non-auto measures, will be monitored for and throughout each phase of development
- 4.11 **Traffic congestion will be managed** throughout the build-out of the Regional Centre in a manner that supports transit, walking and cycling as the primary travel modes, and that takes advantage of state-of-the-art technologies
- 4.12 The **“walk-to” catchment areas** for the transit stations will be not be uniform, and will be based on pedestrian and cycling connectivity and associated travel times, generally based on a maximum 15-20 minute walk for the majority of people

**5.0 Implementation of Community and Servicing Requirements**

- 5.1 The Regional Centre will integrate complete and **self-sufficient** neighbourhoods or precincts, that have **on-site community facilities** and essential services, including emergency medical services (EMS), fire, police, schools, libraries, arenas, playgrounds and others
- 5.2 Facilities and services will **coincide with each phase** of development, and will be provided through the development approvals process, based on an inventory of community needs in the short, medium and long term.

## Implementation of Community and Servicing Requirements (cont.)

- 5.3 **Phasing plans** will be developed, which will prescribe the phasing and staging at the **precinct or neighbourhood level**, to ensure the **orderly, sequential** and **integrated** implementation of secondary plans
- 5.4 **Community services and facilities** (e.g. EMS stations, libraries, etc.) will be **integrated** into development sites, projects and buildings within each phase of development. This includes the implementation of shared facilities and related programs among service providers (e.g. school boards) and through developer-municipal agreements
- 5.5 **Phasing and staging** of development within each precinct or neighbourhood will be **tied to triggers related to infrastructure capacity**, including community and social services and facilities, transportation, on-site energy generation (e.g. district energy), and water and waste water
- 5.6 **Equitable distribution** of, and financial contributions to, community facilities and services (e.g. parks, libraries etc.) across the Regional Centre
- 5.7 **Natural features** (e.g. streams, woodlots, etc.), related **linkages**, and **stormwater management** will be planned for and implemented in a comprehensive manner across the Regional Centre

## 6.0 Financial Principles

- 6.1 A **comprehensive fiscal analysis**, funded by development, will be undertaken collaboratively by the municipalities as a condition of phase 1 development approvals, and subsequent phases, to determine the costs of common infrastructure required to service the Centre over the short, medium and long-term.
- 6.2 The **costs of required Infrastructure and services**, as determined by the municipalities to support each development phase, will be **borne by the developers**
- 6.3 Development **charges**, and other development and planning approval-related **fees**, will be **consistent across the Regional Centre** and will be based on the principle of **cost-recovery**
- 6.4 Park land dedication and parking **standards**, including cash in-lieu provisions, will be uniform across the Centre to ensure a **level playing** field in the development application and approvals process
- 6.5 The use of **Section 37** of the Planning Act will be applied only to achieve those bona fide community benefits which would not be required as a condition of development approvals

# Richmond Hill/Langstaff Gateway Development Concept - Provincial Urban Growth Centre and Rail-Based Transit

