

4.0 AN URBANIZING REGION

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York Region's Urban System is composed of Regional Centres and Regional Corridors and the major transit station areas within and supporting them, Local Centres and Corridors, Community Areas and Employment Areas, and a number of Towns and Villages. All of these areas play a part in accommodating forecasted growth while maintaining their character. It is intended that most new growth for both residents and jobs will be accommodated within these areas.

This Chapter provides direction for the key structural elements of York Region's Urban System and establishes the role of each in accommodating forecasted growth as part of the overall urban system hierarchy.

Strategic growth areas will accommodate a significant portion of the planned intensification in York Region. Regional Centres and major transit station areas along Regional Corridors will be prominent locations for the highest levels of intensification balanced by more gentle intensification in local centres and local corridors. Community Areas will support the majority of residential and service job growth while Employment Areas will be protected for employment uses. New Community Areas provide locations for greenfield development. Context appropriate growth will also occur in Towns and Villages throughout York Region.

Regional employment areas will be important in accommodating a significant amount of new business growth, with an emphasis on protecting core employment areas for traditional, or land extensive employment uses.

While the form and character of growth will vary across York Region, all development will be held to high standards. Each community will have a unique sense of place and an integrated and linked natural heritage system, promoting active lifestyles through pedestrian-oriented environments. Creating a sense of place within urban spaces and the provision of amenities adjacent to transit will play an important role in talent attraction and retention.

This Chapter lays the foundation for vibrant cities and complete communities within York Region. The policies set standards to ensure that growth is based on innovation, place making, and decision making that integrates the environment, community and economy. Policies also ensure that the pace, scale and phasing of development is aligned with the timing of infrastructure delivery in a financially sustainable manner particularly as New Community Areas are developed.

➤ *An Urbanizing Region Goal: To enhance York Region's Urban System through city building, intensification, and compact and complete communities including vibrant and attractive employment areas to improve economic vitality.*

4.1 THE URBAN SYSTEM

The Urban System is composed of a hierarchy of areas planned to accommodate the majority of new growth to 2051.

The Plan provides for residential and employment growth throughout York Region, directed to strategic growth areas, small-scale intensification in the form of infill and secondary suites, as well as new greenfield development with a mix of low, medium and high density-built forms. It is planned that the highest densities and the greatest mix of land uses are directed toward the four Regional Centres as well as existing and new subway stations and other major transit station areas while more limited density is directed to Regional Corridors between MTSAs as well as Local Centres and Corridors.

It is important that the urban system creates a high quality of life for residents through complete communities as well having employment areas close to home to reduce the demands on our transportation system. Integrated as part of York Region's city building vision, the Plan has been developed to ensure the integrity, maintenance and enhancement of the urban components of the Regional Structure.

The policies of this section provide a comprehensive approach to growth within the Urban System.

➤ **Objective:** *To achieve a comprehensive, integrated and connected system of urban communities.*

THE URBAN SYSTEM POLICIES:

It is the policy of Council:

4.1.1 That the primary location for growth and *development* within York Region take place within the Urban System which includes the following structural elements:

- a. Urban Area, Towns and Villages, and Centres and Corridors, as shown on *Map 1*;
- b. *Community Area* and *Employment Area* land use designations, as shown on *Map 1A*; and
- c. A series of land use overlays, as shown on *Map 1B*, and described in Section 2.1 of the Plan.

4.1.2 That the policies that guide *development* as set out in policy 4.1.1, *Maps 1, 1A, and 1B* and other sections of the Plan shall be read and applied together. The intent of *Map 1* is to distinguish the Regional Structure as either Urban System, Rural System or *Agricultural System*. The intent of the land use designations shown on *Map 1A* is to distinguish the parts of the Urban System that are to be developed primarily for either community uses or employment uses. The intent of *Map 1B* is to provide further policy direction for where higher levels of *intensification* are to be directed and how growth in the Urban System is to be phased and developed in the long-term.

4.1 THE URBAN SYSTEM

4.1.3 That the forecasts in Table 1 be used as the basis for planning and *development* primarily within the Urban System in accordance with the following per Section 2.2 of the Plan:

- a. Strategic growth areas will attract the majority of *development* and contain a mix of uses, with densities (highest to lowest) based on the following hierarchy:
 - i. Regional Centres
 - ii. Subway station *major transit station areas*
 - iii. Other *major transit station areas*
 - iv. Regional Corridors outside of *major transit station areas*
 - v. Local centres and corridors;
- b. The *built-up area*, outside of strategic growth areas, with small scale *intensification* and infill based on the local context;
- c. The *designated greenfield area*, including *New Community Areas*, as the primary location for new greenfield *development*;
- d. *Employment Areas*, where a significant share of employment growth be directed; and
- e. Limited growth within *Hamlets* and the *Rural Areas* as set out in local municipal official plans.

4.1.4 That the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan designation of Settlement Areas includes portions of the Urban Area (Aurora, Newmarket, Richmond Hill, and Vaughan) and Towns and Villages (Ballantrae, King City, Mount Albert, Nobleton, and Stouffville). In these areas, policies contained in Chapters 4 and 5 of the Plan and local official plans shall guide permitted *development*. Where the local official plan is more restrictive than the Plan, the more restrictive policies shall apply.

4.1.5 That *development* throughout the Urban System shall address all of the policies of the Plan.

Key Provincial Initiatives:

- › The Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan
- › The Greenbelt Plan
- › A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe
- › The Lake Simcoe Protection Plan
- › Metrolinx Regional Transportation Plan: The Big Move
- › The Clean Water Act
- › The Parkway Belt West Plan
- › The Provincial Policy Statement



4.2 COMMUNITY AREAS



Community Areas cover a significant portion of York Region's Urban System and this is where the majority of housing, personal services, retail, institutional, cultural and recreational services will locate. The nature of Community Areas varies based on local context across York Region. The scale of development within Community Areas will continue to be diverse, ranging from high density development within York Region's strategic growth areas to compact lower density, but still transit supportive subdivisions in York Region's new greenfield areas.

An important objective for York Region's Community Areas is to ensure they are walkable, pedestrian-oriented, and amenity rich locations which provide residents with a range of services and open spaces within a 15-minute walk or cycle of their home.

Achieving a balance of residential and employment opportunities in York Region's Community Areas will provide opportunities for living, working and daily activities in close proximity to one another to enhance the quality of life for residents and visitors to York Region.

The policies in this section enhance existing communities and create new communities which integrate greenspaces, pedestrian, transit and active transportation networks in a manner that offers a variety of housing, transportation, human services and employment options.

➤ *Objective: To develop strong, caring and safe complete communities which meet the needs of all residents within close proximity to employment opportunities and amenities.*

COMMUNITY AREAS POLICIES:

It is the policy of Council:

4.2.1 That *Community Areas*, identified on *Map 1A*, are where the majority of residents, personal services, retail, arts, culture, recreational facilities and *human services* needs, will be located. Employment opportunities shall also be encouraged within *Community Areas*.

4.2.2 That *Community Areas* shall contain a wide range and mix of housing types, sizes, tenures that include options that are *affordable* to residents at all stages of life. To require that local municipal official plans implement this mix and range of housing consistent with other Regional forecasts, *intensification* and density targets and the objectives of the Plan.

4.2.3 That an adequate supply of housing be maintained by providing:

- a. A minimum 15-year supply of land designated for housing through *intensification*, redevelopment, and in *designated greenfield areas*; and
- b. A minimum 5-year supply of units with servicing capacity to facilitate residential *intensification* and redevelopment, and land in draft approved and registered plans.

4.2 COMMUNITY AREAS

Calculating Designated Greenfield Area (DGA) Density by Local Municipality

$$\begin{array}{l} \text{2051 BUILDOUT} \\ \text{of EXISTING DGA AREAS} \end{array} + \begin{array}{l} \text{2010 URBAN} \\ \text{EXPANSION AREAS} \end{array} + \begin{array}{l} \text{NEW URBAN} \\ \text{EXPANSION AREAS} \end{array} = \begin{array}{l} \text{DGA} \\ \text{DENSITY} \end{array}$$

It is the policy of Council:

4.2.4 That local municipalities shall provide for a balance of residential uses and compatible employment uses that provide services to residents throughout *Community Areas* to provide for working, living and daily activities in close proximity.

4.2.5 That local municipalities encourage and permit live-work *development* opportunities through a combination of flexible zoning permissions and accommodations for combined residential and business or personal services, office uses, and home occupations.

4.2.6 That the *development* of *sensitive land uses*, *major retail* uses or *major office* uses will avoid, or where avoidance is not possible, minimize and mitigate adverse impacts on *Employment Areas* in order to maintain land use compatibility and long-term viability of the planned uses and function of these areas.

4.2.7 That local municipalities shall plan to meet or exceed the *designated greenfield area* minimum density targets in Table 4 by 2051. These density targets are measured in people and jobs per hectare in the *developable area* and shall be implemented through local Official Plans and *secondary plans*.

Table 4 – York Region Designated Greenfield Area (DGA) Targets by Local Municipality

Municipality	2051 DGA Minimum Density Target (People and Jobs per Hectare)
Aurora	55
East Gwillimbury	60
Georgina	35
King	30
Markham	70
Newmarket	40
Richmond Hill	70
Vaughan	70
Whitchurch-Stouffville	55

4.2.8 That *secondary plans* within the *designated greenfield area* that are not approved by the date the Plan is approved shall be developed in accordance with policies 4.2.12, 4.2.13, 4.2.15, 4.2.20 of the Plan. Where existing *secondary plans* are being revisited, opportunities to reflect these policies shall be considered.

4.2 COMMUNITY AREAS

NEW COMMUNITY AREAS

The New Community Areas are intended to be modern, compact, vibrant, inclusive and diverse. Communities are much more than the architecture of buildings and the design of neighbourhoods. Communities are places where people connect, learn, work, play and reside. Excellence in community design is essential to creating a physical place where people have opportunities and choices required to lead rewarding lives. York Region has a history of villages and communities with main streets, commercial areas, community activities, and places to work, live, and play. Some of these proven elements when creating new communities will protect and enhance the character of York Region.

York Region's New Community Areas prioritize people, sustainability and liveability. A Regional Greenlands System that is connected to a network of parks and open spaces is a key component of New Community Areas.

Each complete community has a unique sense of place and identity, and will offer a variety of housing including affordable housing, employment and mobility choices. They will be mixed-use communities with high-quality urban design, attracting residents and workers alike.

➤ **Objective:** *To build cohesive and diverse new communities that maintain York Region's attractiveness to new residents and businesses.*

NEW COMMUNITY AREAS POLICIES:

It is the policy of Council:

4.2.9 That within *New Community Areas* the policies of this section apply in addition to the *Community Area* policies of section 4.2 that govern the existing *designated greenfield areas*.



4.2 COMMUNITY AREAS

4.2.10 That local municipalities, in consultation with York Region, shall prepare comprehensive *secondary plans* for *New Community Areas* that meet or go beyond the policies of Section 4.2 and Chapter 2 of the Plan. *Secondary plan* preparation should include an approach that involves a multidisciplinary team assembled by the local municipality to ensure an integrated and sustainable approach to the planning, design and approval of the *secondary plan*. *Secondary Plans* should be undertaken and completed efficiently and in a timely manner.

4.2.11 That *secondary plans* shall be informed by a *subwatershed plan* or an equivalent comprehensive planning study.

4.2.12 That *New Community Areas* shall be designed to contain community core areas, planned as vibrant, mixed-use, walkable neighbourhoods, that include:

- a. Mixed-use, integrated commercial, and higher density residential;
- b. Adaptable *human service* amenities as local community anchors;
- c. Diverse local retail, grocery and personal services;
- d. Connections to *active transportation* networks and transit for all ages and abilities, to amenities within, and beyond the core area(s);
- e. Public spaces and greenspaces;
- f. Employment opportunities; and
- g. Incorporate elements that promote a sense of place within the community.

4.2.13 That local municipalities shall set residents to jobs ratio targets for each *New Community Area* to maximize live work opportunities and an appropriate balance of jobs to population in these areas.

4.2.14 That *secondary plans* and planning applications in *New Community Areas* shall demonstrate how *development* conforms to local municipal community energy plans, or alternatively includes an area-specific energy plan.

4.2.15 That local municipalities shall prepare and implement comprehensive master environmental servicing plans. These plans will examine all water and natural systems in a comprehensive and integrated manner to:

- a. Understand the integration of all water systems to increase efficiencies;
- b. Maximize water conservation in buildings and municipal *infrastructure* including water-efficient landscaping and water reuse, which may include techniques such as rainwater harvesting, runoff reduction of solids and materials at source, phosphorus reduction, constructed *wetlands*, bioretention swales, green or blue roofs, permeable surfaces, clean water collection systems, and the preservation and enhancement of native vegetation cover;
- c. Identify management needs and areas and opportunities for enhancement and restoration within the systems to maximize the quality of the entire system;
- d. Identify opportunities for locating necessary *infrastructure* that minimizes impacts to the systems;
- e. Identify how *infrastructure* projects within the system, including: stormwater management systems/facilities, streets, water and wastewater systems, can contribute to an overall ecological gain by measures such as increasing natural cover, enhancing *ecological function*, providing recreational access, and *passive recreational uses* or contributing to off-site enhancements;
- f. Identify how the Regional Greenlands *key natural heritage features*, *key hydrologic features*, and *key hydrologic areas* of the system and their functions will be protected, restored and enhanced in an urban context;
- g. Establish planning, design, and construction practices to minimize vegetation removal, grading and soil compaction, sediment erosion, and impervious surfaces; and,
- h. Protect, improve or restore water quality and quantity including hydrologic function of water systems that incorporate best management practices with a goal that water balance and hydrologic function of water systems will be maintained as much as possible.

4.2 COMMUNITY AREAS

- 4.2.16** That Transportation Demand measures shall be completed for *New Community Areas* to ensure that:
- Communities are designed to include an interconnected and shared accessible *active transportation* system for all ages and abilities, linking the community internally and externally, with access to transit systems;
 - A transit plan is completed in consultation with York Region Transit, which identifies transit routes and corridors, coordinates transit with land use patterns and *active transportation*; and ensures the ability to integrate transit into the community;
 - Schools and community centres provide the ability for safe and *active transportation*, transit and carpool to these locations;
 - The street network includes continuous collector streets that run both north-south and east-west and/or a grid system of streets linked to the Regional Street network;
 - New Community Areas* are designed to meet industry, Provincial, and Regional best practices and *guidelines* for transit-oriented *development*;
 - Planned rapid transit corridors, and/or transit terminals that connect to a rapid transit corridor, are included in the community design;
 - Parking standards, consistent with policy 2.3.19, encourage and support transit use and include reduced minimum and maximum parking standards; and,
 - Sustainable Mobility Measures* including trip-reduction strategies consistent with the policies of Section 6.1, or as described in other documents and guidelines, are promoted.
- 4.2.17** That *major transit station areas* and transit corridors identified on *Map 10* shall be the focus for higher densities and *intensification*.
- 4.2.18** That *major transit station areas* shall be subject to the density target in Appendix 2 and excluded from the density calculation for *New Community Areas* of 65 people and jobs per hectare.
- 4.2.19** That a trail system shall be incorporated into the Greenlands System which is integrated as appropriate into the mobility system of the community.
- 4.2.20** That *New Community Areas* shall be designed to meet or exceed a minimum density of 65 residents and jobs per hectare and 18 residential units per hectare in the *developable area*.
- 4.2.21** That where the density target in policy 4.2.20 may not be achievable, in exceptional circumstances, local municipalities may request an alternative lower density target. Approval of these targets will be subject to the following minimum criteria:
- A demonstrated need for an alternative target based on topography and/or configuration of *developable areas*;
 - The alternative target will not compromise the ability to reach the overall local municipal *designated greenfield area* density target;
 - The alternative target will not be considered for *New Community Areas* adjacent to Regional rapid transit corridors (identified on *Map 10*), *major transit station areas*, or Provincial priority transit corridors; and
 - The alternative target is not lower than the Growth Plan minimum density target of 50 residents and jobs per hectare.
- 4.2.22** That *development* within *New Community Areas* shall recognize, contribute to, and enhance the character, cultural heritage, and sense of place when in proximity to historical mainstreets or existing communities.

4.2 COMMUNITY AREAS

4.2.23 To require local municipalities to include policies within local official plans and *secondary plans* for *New Community Areas*, which address the interface between urban and agricultural land uses as well as mitigation measures.

4.2.24 That within *New Community Areas*, until such time as *development* occurs, *normal farm practices* and a full range of *agricultural uses*, *agriculture-related uses* and *on-farm diversified uses* shall be permitted and encouraged.

4.2.25 That the implementation of the policies of the Plan shall be guided by *New Communities Guidelines*.

PHASING in NEW COMMUNITY AREAS

New Community Areas are required to accommodate significant growth to 2051 and as a result phasing of growth is important. Growth must be managed in a financially sustainable manner supported by Regional and local investments in infrastructure.

Phasing will ensure that communities are developed as complete communities for residents to have access to a wide range of services and amenities within the same community such as schools, parks, libraries, transit and jobs in a timely manner. This section provides a strategic approach to planning and phasing for New Community Areas.

➤ **Objective:** *To comprehensively phase the development of New Community Areas in a financially sustainable manner aligned with the ability to provide the appropriate infrastructure.*

PHASING in NEW COMMUNITY AREAS POLICIES:

It is the policy of Council:

4.2.26 That local municipalities shall plan comprehensively for all *New Community Areas* in their municipality as shown on *Map 1B*, through background studies, Master Environmental Servicing Plans, or other equivalent alternative studies.



4.2 COMMUNITY AREAS

- 4.2.27** That local municipal official plans shall identify phasing of *development* and the orderly progression of phases within *New Community Areas*, to the satisfaction of York Region, in accordance with:
- Background studies, Master Environmental Servicing Plans or other equivalent alternative studies referred to in policy 4.2.26;
 - Logical extensions to the existing Urban Area in the initial phase(s);
 - Logical and orderly progression of *development* that is contiguous to existing developed areas;
 - Delivery of *complete communities* supported by community services;
 - Regional and local municipal *infrastructure* master plans that illustrate how *infrastructure* will be phased in *New Community Areas* to be financially sustainable at the Regional and local municipal level;
 - Coordination with adjacent municipalities where Regional and/or local municipal *infrastructure* is shared; and
 - Be contingent on findings of *watershed/subwatershed plans* or equivalent.
- 4.2.28** That local municipal official plans shall form the basis of more detailed *secondary plans* for each phase of a *New Community Area*.
- 4.2.29** That the approval of *secondary plans* for *New Community Areas* shall be contingent on the following:
- Required Regional *infrastructure* committed within the ten-year Capital Plan and additionally, water and wastewater infrastructure shall be supported by a completed *environmental assessment*;
 - The local municipalities achieving their *intensification* target outlined in policy 4.4.10 Table 6 as a minimum average over the last five years;
 - Alignment with the required *watershed/subwatershed plans* which have been completed and approved;
 - Logical progression of growth based on local municipal official plans, provision of local *infrastructure*, and availability of local municipal community services;
 - Development* of *complete communities* in accordance with Section 2.3;
 - Demonstrated coordination with adjacent municipalities in cases where Regional and/or local municipal *infrastructure* is shared; and
 - Approval of a subsequent phase shall be considered at such time as the current phase contributes towards the *development* of a *complete community* by:
 - Incorporating an adequate provision of local municipal community services such as libraries and schools
 - Providing an appropriate balance of jobs as determined by York Region generally in accordance with policy 4.2.13
 - Containing a mix and range of housing types, sizes, tenures and *affordable* options that include but are not limited to, high density *development* along corridors with accessibility to transit.

Service Delivery in New Communities

Prior to Home Occupation:

- > Streets and transit
- > Water and wastewater
- > Energy utilities and cable/communications
- > Natural gas

At an Early Stage:

- > Schools, police, fire and ambulance services
- > Public open space
- > Healthcare facilities and libraries
- > Community centres
- > Preventive health programs
- > Social service support programs



4.3 EMPLOYMENT AREAS

York Region is committed to maintaining and enhancing the long-term viability of employment lands. Employment lands are major drivers of economic activity, and contain over 50% of York Region's jobs. These lands play a significant role in York Region's economy, primarily accommodating industrial, warehouse, logistics, goods and service producing business uses. It is expected that the range of employment uses will continue to diversify, including more knowledge-based industries.

York Region's employment lands provide a broad range of market choice with respect to site location, size, and transportation access/exposure. Protecting a diverse range, size and mix of Employment Areas for employment uses ensures a competitive economic environment and provides employment opportunities close to home for residents working within these sectors. The Plan recognizes the importance of enhancing the long-term viability of employment lands by ensuring their protection and providing efficient and effective land use planning and design. It is important to separate sensitive land uses such as residential uses from industry where there may be heavy truck movement, 24-hour operations, noise and emissions.

It is intended that core employment areas be identified and protected to allow for traditional employment uses with limited opportunity for retail and institutional uses. Supporting Employment Areas are expected to provide for a broader range and mix of employment and have more flexibility.

Access to transit and amenities as well as a sense of place is important to enhance the success of employment areas and increase their desirability for talent attraction and retention. This section provides the policy framework for the identification and protection of Employment Areas throughout York Region.

➤ *Objective: To maintain and protect employment areas for the long-term promoting innovation and leading business opportunities.*

EMPLOYMENT AREAS POLICIES:

It is the policy of Council:

4.3.1 To recognize that *Employment Areas* are strategic and vital to the Regional economy and are major drivers of economic activity in York Region.

4.3.2 That *Employment Areas* identified on *Map 1A* be maintained and protected to meet York Region's forecast and land need requirements for *Employment Areas*.

4.3.3 That *Employment Areas*, as shown on *Map 1A*, shall be designated in local official plans for employment uses for clusters of business and economic activities including, manufacturing, warehousing, industrial, offices, and associated retail and ancillary facilities.

4.3 EMPLOYMENT AREAS

- 4.3.4** That *Employment Areas* be protected from the encroachment of *sensitive uses* to ensure their success in attracting future business and job opportunities.
- 4.3.5** To protect, maintain and enhance the long-term supply and viability of all employment lands designated in local municipal official plans to meet demand and locational requirements for a diverse range of employment uses.
- 4.3.6** That local municipalities protect and plan for a diverse mix of lot sizes in *Employment Areas*.
- 4.3.7** To protect *Employment Areas* located adjacent to, or in proximity of, goods movement facilities and corridors, including existing and future major highways and interchanges, for manufacturing, warehousing, logistics, and appropriate associated uses.
- 4.3.8** That local municipalities shall make efficient use of existing employment lands, including vacant and underutilized employment lands, by increasing employment densities where appropriate.
- 4.3.9** To recognize the importance of transit in talent and business attraction by aligning current and planned transit service investments with current and planned *Employment Areas*.
- 4.3.10** To work with the local municipalities and the Province to recognize and promote employment megazones in York Region for their contribution to the economy of the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area and beyond.

What are Employment Megazones?

Megazones are large, contiguous multijurisdictional areas focused on core employment.

There are three megazones identified in the Greater Golden Horseshoe Region:

- › Pearson airport megazone,
- › Tor-York West around Highways 400 and 407, and
- › Tor-York East around Highways 404 and 407

York Region is home to two of the three employment megazones that have the highest concentration of jobs outside Toronto's downtown core.

It is the policy of Council:

- 4.3.11** To work with the Town of East Gwillimbury to protect the lands in proximity to the proposed Highway 400-404 link (Bradford By-pass) identified on *Map 10*, in the *Future Urban Area*, identified on *Map 1B*, for future employment land employment opportunities beyond the horizon of the Plan.
- 4.3.12** That local municipalities shall identify *core employment areas* and *supporting employment areas* in local official plans, within the *Employment Areas* as shown on *Map 1A*.
- 4.3.13** That local municipalities shall identify the majority of their *Employment Areas* as *core employment areas* and that *supporting employment areas* shall generally be limited to the periphery of *Employment Areas* adjacent to arterial roads.
- 4.3.14** That the following uses shall not be permitted in *Employment Areas* identified on *Map 1A*:
- a. Residential;
 - b. Long-term care homes;
 - c. Retirement homes;
 - d. Boarding schools; and
 - e. Other uses where individuals reside on a temporary or permanent basis, excluding hotels.

4.3 EMPLOYMENT AREAS

4.3.15 That, in addition to the uses listed in policy 4.3.14, the following uses shall not be permitted in *core employment areas*:

- a. *Major retail*;
- b. Institutional uses; and
- c. Retail uses that are not *accessory*.

4.3.16 That expansions to existing uses in *Employment Areas* established prior to the date the Plan came into effect and that do not conform with policies 4.3.14 and 4.3.15 are discouraged, and if they do occur shall have regard for existing adjacent *Employment Areas*.

4.3.17 That where permitted in local official plans, local municipalities shall determine the location, threshold, amount and size of *major retail* and *ancillary* retail uses in *supporting employment areas* that is commensurate with the planned function and size of the overall *Employment Area*.

4.3.18 To support and encourage local municipalities in identifying employment lands within Urban Areas and towns and villages identified on *Map 1* beyond those identified as *Employment Areas* in *Map 1A* and in protecting these lands for employment uses over the long-term. These areas should be planned and developed in accordance with the policies in Section 4.3 of the Plan, as appropriate.

4.3.19 That for employment lands outside of *Employment Areas* on *Map 1A* identified as per policy 4.3.18, local municipalities shall establish criteria to ensure that the redevelopment of any employment lands will retain a comparable or greater number of jobs and redesignation shall require Regional approval.

4.3.20 That the conversion of lands within *Employment Areas* identified in *Map 1A* to non-employment uses shall only be considered through a *municipal comprehensive review*. The change of *core employment area* to supporting *Employment Area* through a local official plan amendment shall require Regional approval.

4.3.21 That *development* in *Employment Areas* be planned to achieve the minimum density targets (measured as jobs per hectare in the *developable area*) in Table 5 and Appendix 1 of the Plan.

Table 5 – Employment Zone Density Targets (developable area)

Employment Zone	Minimum Density Target (Jobs per hectare)
East Markham	50
Highway 400 North	55
Highway 400 and 407	70
Highway 404 North	55
Highway 404 and 407	100
Schomberg, Nobleton, Mount Albert, Holland Landing, Pefferlaw	25
Stouffville	35
West Vaughan	30

Note: That employment densities apply on an average basis as set out in Table 5, not on an employment area by employment area or parcel by parcel basis.

4.3 EMPLOYMENT AREAS

- 4.3.22** That local municipalities, in consultation with York Region, prepare *secondary plans* or equivalent comprehensive planning studies for new *Employment Areas* that meet or exceed the minimum density targets in Table 5 and in accordance with applicable policies of the Plan.
- 4.3.23** To encourage local municipalities to update existing *secondary plans* and/or redevelopment plans to meet or exceed the minimum density targets in Table 5, where possible given the local context and in accordance with other applicable policies of the Plan.
- 4.3.24** To encourage employment *intensification* and higher density employment uses in strategic growth areas and adjacent to existing and future rapid transit corridors.
- 4.3.25** That *development* within existing and new *Employment Areas* be designed to maximize walkability, provide for a mix of amenities and open space and enhance access and connectivity to a range of transportation modes including transit and *active transportation* where appropriate.
- 4.3.26** To require flexible and adaptable *Employment Areas* that include street patterns and building design and siting that allow for redevelopment and *intensification*.
- 4.3.27** To support the *development* of a safe, desirable, and sustainable built environment in *Employment Areas*.
- 4.3.28** To require local municipalities to develop urban design guidelines as part of *secondary plans* or alternative comprehensive plans for new *Employment Areas*. Local municipalities are encouraged to refer to York Region's *New Communities Guidelines* and policy 2.3.13 of the Plan when developing urban design guidelines.
- 4.3.29** To encourage local municipalities to use tools such as Business Improvement Areas or Community Improvement Plans to promote redevelopment and improvements to built form and accessibility in *Employment Areas*.
- 4.3.30** To require local municipalities to include policies within local official plans and *secondary plans* for new *Employment Areas*, which address the interface between urban and agricultural land uses. Impacts to agricultural operations are to be mitigated to the extent feasible through future planning approvals.

4.4 INTENSIFICATION



York Region’s urban structure is evolving as intensification continues to support sustainable and quality compact communities with a focus on York Region’s Centres, Regional Corridors including existing and proposed subways as well as other major transit station areas. These areas provide a diverse and compatible mix of land uses, including residential and employment uses, to support vibrant neighbourhoods.

Intensification will occur in strategic locations to maximize efficiencies in infrastructure delivery, human services and transit ridership. These strategic locations are based on an intensification framework that recognizes that the highest density and scale of development will occur in the Regional Centres and around subway stations followed by major transit station areas and sections of Regional Corridors between MTSA’s. It is important to maintain this intensification hierarchy as it is these areas where water, wastewater and rapid transit infrastructure commitments have been made.

Local municipalities may identify additional intensification areas based on their local context to accommodate future higher density residential and employment growth. Local municipalities will also identify areas where the “missing middle” can be accommodated to provide more affordable medium density options for York Region residents in proximity to transit. Planning effectively for intensification ensures clarity and certainty as to where development should occur. It is also essential that human services and affordable housing locate in intensification areas. In this way, the services themselves become part of the urban community. Intensification further enhances this hierarchy of development within the planned urban structure and advances York Region’s city building initiatives.

Planning and design in strategic growth areas provides well-designed public open spaces that create attractive and vibrant places; support walking, cycling and transit for everyday activities; and achieve an appropriate transition of built form to adjacent areas. This section provides policies for an intensification strategy based on the above-noted hierarchy.

Strategic Growth Areas

For the purposes of the Plan, strategic growth areas consist of Regional Centres, subway stations, major transit station areas, Regional Corridors, and local Centres and Corridors.

➤ **Objective:** To direct significant growth to existing Built Up Areas to promote complete and vibrant cities through transit oriented development.

INTENSIFICATION POLICIES:

It is the policy of Council:

4.4.1 That *intensification* be directed in accordance with the Regional hierarchy outlined in policy 4.4.2 to utilize land efficiently and sustainably that is commensurate with available hard and soft services and existing *infrastructure*, while having regard for the local context.

4.4 INTENSIFICATION

4.4.2 That a minimum of 50% of all residential *development* between 2021 to 2041, and 55% from 2041 to 2051 occur annually within the *built-up area* identified on *Map 1B*.

Regional Intensification Hierarchy

- › Provides clarity and certainty for intensification development aligned with regional infrastructure commitments
- › Local municipalities are to plan for growth consistent with York Region's hierarchy applied based on local context
- › Subway MTSAs are distinct from other MTSAs to reflect the level of planned rapid transit investment and higher density development these locations will attract.
- › Local Official Plans can identify strategic growth areas on local corridors in proximity to transit, in addition to MTSAs identified on Map 1
- › Previously approved strategic growth areas may not align with York Region's hierarchy (i.e. Carville centre in the City of Vaughan) and can continue to be planned based on local approvals.
- › Some strategic growth areas may have development constraints preventing alignment with the Regional intensification hierarchy (i.e. Highway 407 subway station)



It is the policy of Council:

4.4.3 That strategic growth areas be the primary locations for concentrations of high density and mixed-use *development* in York Region.

4.4.4 To prioritize *intensification* in strategic growth areas and establish a scale of *development* that reflects the Regional *intensification* hierarchy as set out in policy 4.1.3 of the Plan as implemented through local official plans.

4.4.5 That local municipal official plans, *secondary plans*, or other comprehensive plans, and *development* contemplated within strategic growth areas shall plan for growth consistent with:

- a. The Regional *intensification* hierarchy outlined in policy 4.1.3;
- b. Existing and/or planned transit identified on *Map 10* of the Plan,
- c. Water, water-wastewater and road *infrastructure* capacities;
- d. The provision of/access to local parks, schools, and other social, cultural, and commercial services.

4.4 INTENSIFICATION

4.4.6 That within the planned strategic growth areas, the minimum density targets may be achieved beyond the planning horizon of the Plan.

4.4.7 That the majority of residential *intensification* shall be directed to locations which provide access to human, educational and social services, retail, employment, arts, culture, parks, recreational facilities and transit within a 15 minute walk and in a manner that is consistent with the policies in Section 2.3 the Plan.

4.4.8 That *intensification* shall include a variety of medium and high density dwelling unit types and sizes to provide housing choice. Larger family type units shall be encouraged to accommodate York Region’s forecast.

4.4.9 To direct a significant amount of mixed-uses, including street-related commercial, to strategic growth areas.

4.4.10 That local municipalities shall complete and adopt *intensification* strategies based on the policies of the Plan. The local municipal *intensification* strategies, developed in cooperation with York Region, shall:

a. Plan to meet or exceed *intensification* targets identified in Table 6

Table 6 – York Region Residential Intensification Targets by Local Municipality 2016-2051

Municipality	Residential Units	Intensification Rate
Aurora	4,600	45%
East Gwillimbury	700	2%
Georgina	2,700	32%
King	4,700	52%
Markham	52,400	55%
Newmarket	11,400	89%
Richmond Hill	34,500	78%
Vaughan	51,300	57%
Whitchurch-Stouffville	4,200	25%
York Region	166,500	52%

Please note intensification units in this table reflect the motions adopted by Council on October 21, 2021. Should the Province refuse requested settlement area boundary expansions within the ORM, minor updates to this table would be required to reintroduce urban expansion on the whitebelt lands in Whitchurch-Stouffville in accordance with Council direction of November 25, 2021.

b. Identify the role and planned function of each strategic growth area in conformity with the Regional *intensification* hierarchy in policy 4.1.3;

c. Identify the planned residents and jobs target for each strategic growth area;

d. Identify the role for other locations in *Community Areas* in accommodating additional residential units through *gentle density* along other major streets and in local infill:

e. Plan for a range and mix of housing that is commensurate with the planned density and local context, considering *affordable* housing needs; and,

f. identify implementation policies and strategies to prioritize, phase in and achieve local municipal *intensification* targets in local official plans.

4.4 INTENSIFICATION

The Missing Middle and Gentle Density

The terms Missing Middle and Gentle Density are planning concepts that encourage residential intensification within existing neighbourhoods that is devised for minimal impact on a neighborhood and its' character. Additional housing may be provided that is often connected to existing single-family homes by means of accessory units and/or by adding new ground-oriented, small-scale attached infill housing such as semi-detached, duplex and townhouses where it is appropriate.

- 4.4.11** That local municipalities shall develop local municipal *intensification* hierarchies and identify minimum and maximum density and height targets for strategic growth areas in a manner that is consistent with the Regional *intensification* hierarchy.
- 4.4.12** That strategic growth area density targets apply to the entirety of the area within the boundary delineation, not individual parcels.
- 4.4.13** That *development* within strategic growth areas shall be prioritized along existing rapid transit corridors on *Map 10* and in locations with existing water and wastewater capacity.
- 4.4.14** That rapid transit corridors identified in *Map 10* be planned to support higher density *development* and improve access to multi-modal transit facilities over the long-term.
- 4.4.15** That local municipalities shall, in consultation with York Region, identify locations along Regional arterial roads and other major streets where the *missing middle* can be accommodated.
- 4.4.16** To work with local municipalities to encourage integration of *gentle density* and a mix and range of *housing options* within the built boundary, where locally appropriate, through redevelopment of existing neighbourhoods.
- 4.4.17** That *development* within strategic growth areas be of an urban form and design that is compact, accessible, mixed-use, oriented to the street, pedestrian- and cyclist-friendly, and *transit supportive*.
- 4.4.18** That a wide range of residential, commercial and institutional uses, including retail uses, offices, mixed-use and *human services* be provided in strategic growth areas.
- 4.4.19** That strategic growth areas be planned and designed to achieve an appropriate transition of built form to adjacent areas.
- 4.4.20** To recognize strategic growth areas as:
- The preferred location for *major office* uses; and
 - Hubs of commerce, business, and entertainment activities
- 4.4.21** That *secondary plans* or equivalent comprehensive planning studies within strategic growth areas specify that a minimum of 35% of new housing units within Regional Centres and *major transit station areas* (MTSAs) be *affordable*, offering a range of compact housing forms and tenures, and intrinsically *affordable* units for low and moderate income households.
- 4.4.22** That local municipalities shall prepare an implementation strategy to address the requirement that a minimum 35% of new housing units in Regional Centres and MTSAs be *affordable*.
- 4.4.23** To encourage tools such as Community Improvement Plans to encourage office and *affordable* housing including purpose-built rental housing within strategic growth areas and to help improve economic activity and vitality.

4.4 INTENSIFICATION

4.4.24 That *secondary plans* or other equivalent comprehensive planning studies and/or *development* contemplated within strategic growth areas address the following criteria, as appropriate, to the satisfaction of York Region:

- a. Minimum density requirements and targets established by York Region;
- b. Minimum and maximum height and densities established by local municipalities;
- c. The planned population and jobs, as identified by local municipalities through local *intensification* strategies, *secondary plans*, and/or other comprehensive studies;
- d. A range of residential and commercial land uses, including retail uses, office, mixed-use, *human services* and other amenities;
- e. A range of unit sizes and housing and tenure options;
- f. Employment uses in cases where strategic growth areas are within an *Employment Area*;
- g. The establishment or continuation and implementation of a fine-grained street grid that incorporates sidewalks and cycling facilities;
- h. Vehicular and *active transportation* connections between sites and shared access;
- i. An urban built form that is massed, designed and oriented to people, and creates active and attractive streets for all seasons with ground-floor uses such as retail, human and personal services;
- j. Staging and phasing policies and/or plans that sequence *development* in an orderly way, coordinated with water, wastewater, and transportation capacity, residential/non-residential *development* thresholds, the provision of *human services*, community facilities, and other *infrastructure*;
- k. Excellence in urban design in accordance with policy 2.3.13 of the Plan and sustainable construction methods, as identified in section 2.3.1 of the Plan;
- l. Best practices and guidelines for *transit-supportive development*;
- m. Encourage the inclusion of public benefits (*affordable* housing, art, etc) in all significant private sector *developments* and require the dedication of 1% of the capital budget of all major Regional and local municipal buildings to public benefits;
- n. Ensure natural and recreational connections and enhancements to and within local and Regional Greenlands Systems;
- o. Requirements for community facilities, new school sites, to be constructed to an urban standard, including the consideration of alternative site size and design standards, multi-storey buildings, shared facilities, proximity to transit, and measures to support *active transportation*;
- p. Provisions for *human services* that meet local community and Region-wide needs;
- q. York Region's implementation guidelines for Regional Centres and Corridors;
- r. The policies of Section 2.3 of the Plan;
- s. Provisions for stormwater management in accordance with Section 6.5 of the Plan;
- t. Ensure *development* conforms to local municipal energy plans; and
- u. The interface between *major facilities* and *sensitive land uses* to ensure matters of land use compatibility are appropriately addressed in accordance with the PPS.

4.4.25 That approval of *secondary plans* and/or *development* within strategic growth areas shall be contingent on the availability of existing or planned *infrastructure* and other services and be consistent with the Regional *intensification* hierarchy outlined in policy 4.1.3. York Region may require phasing of *development* on the basis of the capacity of water, wastewater and/or transportation and transit systems, and/or the timing of required *infrastructure*. York Region may also require the coordination of *development* applications to ensure an orderly, coordinated and phased approach to *development* and the provision of transportation, transit, water, wastewater and other *infrastructure*.

4.4.26 That local municipalities consider a full range of implementation strategies for strategic growth areas that include as-of-right zoning, streamlined *development* approvals, *development* permits and other applicable tools.

4.4 INTENSIFICATION

REGIONAL CENTRES

York Region's evolution into a diverse and robust Urban System within the Greater Toronto Golden Horseshoe is rooted in the planning and implementation of the Regional Centres, which are the focus of York Region's city building model of development.

A forward-looking and coordinated planning approach for the Regional Centres is necessary to realize the vision of vibrant and liveable urban communities. This approach combines York Region's significant investments in rapid transit with a land use planning system that creates compact, sustainable, and people-oriented places, integrates community needs with effective services, bolsters York Region's economic competitiveness, and preserves natural heritage and agricultural areas.

The Plan supports the creation of vibrant urban communities that are served by subways and rapid transit, and provide exciting opportunities to live, work and play. Together with the areas surrounding subway stations, Regional Centres are planned as the most important and intense concentrations of development within York Region and will provide Regional "downtowns" that will include shopping, entertainment, cultural identity and human services.

The four Regional Centres are strategically located in Markham Centre, Newmarket Centre, Richmond Hill/Langstaff Gateway Centre and Vaughan Metropolitan Centre, and are connected along the Regional Corridors to enhance the mobility of people and goods to, from and within these places.

York Region advances this vision by strategically focusing growth within the Regional Centres to achieve intensification and affordable housing targets of the Plan as they continue to evolve throughout the horizon of the Plan. This section provides policies to further develop Regional Centres that are the focus of city building approach to sustainable growth and place making and are the foundation of York Region's urban structure.

Objective: *To achieve complete, diverse, compact, vibrant, integrated and well-designed Regional Centres that serve as focal points for housing, employment, cultural and community facilities, and transit connections.*



4.4 INTENSIFICATION

Regional Centres

Regional Centres meet and expand on the urban growth centre and anchor hub concepts, as detailed in *A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe and the Metrolinx Regional Transportation Plan: The Big Move*, by including:

- › Minimum density requirements
- › Multimodal mobility planning
- › Resident-to-employee ratio targets
- › Co-ordinated development sequencing
- › Transitions in built form to adjacent communities
- › Environmental sustainability requirements
- › Community services planning

REGIONAL CENTRES POLICIES:

It is the policy of Council:

4.4.27 That the Regional Centres, as shown on *Map 1*, are the primary locations for the most intensive and greatest mix of *development* within York Region.

4.4.28 That Urban Growth Centres, identified on Appendix 3, will be planned to achieve a minimum density target of 200 residents and jobs combined per hectare by 2031 or earlier.

4.4.29 To recognize and support a hierarchy within the system of Regional Centres and Corridors shown on *Map 1*, in keeping with the York Region *intensification* hierarchy in policy 4.1.3, wherein Regional Centres are focal points for the highest densities and mix of uses.

4.4.30 To recognize that the Regional Centres linked by Regional Corridors form part of a larger regional system of Urban Growth Centres and *intensification* corridors, which are vital to the long-term prosperity and identity of communities within the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area.

4.4.31 That Regional Centres shall be the primary locations for public facilities and services such as government offices, post-secondary educational institutions, and health-care facilities.

4.4.32 To encourage the Province and Federal government to provide incentives to attract *major office*, institutional, educational, health-care facilities, cultural and entertainment facilities to Regional Centres.

4.4.33 That Regional Centres, identified on *Map 1*, be planned to contain a wide range of uses and activities, and be the primary focal points for intensive *development*, that concentrates residential, employment, live-work, mobility, investment, and cultural and government functions. The planning and implementation of Regional Centres will provide:

- a. The highest *development* densities and greatest mix of uses in York Region;
- b. A diverse mix of uses and built form, to create vibrant and *complete communities* including living, working, shopping, recreation and entertainment opportunities;
- c. Mobility choices and associated facilities for all residents and employees for walking, cycling, transit, and carpooling, which shall be supported through the preparation of a Transportation Demand Management strategy;
- d. The protection and construction of a continuous fine-grained street grid that facilitates the flexible and efficient movement of people and goods;
- e. Accessible *human services* and related facilities, identified by and delivered through a community and *human services* plan to ensure integration with *development*;
- f. Sequencing of *development* that is coordinated with *infrastructure* availability, including transportation, water and wastewater, and *human services*;
- g. A long-term resident-to-employee target ratio of 2:1; and
- h. High-density employment centres to attract provincially, nationally, or internationally significant employment uses.

4.4 INTENSIFICATION

REGIONAL CORRIDORS and MAJOR TRANSIT STATION AREAS

Major transit station areas (MTSA) are planned and designed to support existing and planned transit infrastructure and to accommodate a range and mix of land uses, housing types, employment, active transportation amenities and activities.

Regional Corridors are the primary location for connect Regional transportation corridors to enhance the mobility of people and goods, to, from and within York Region. Regional Corridors are more than just the main arteries for moving people and goods between neighbourhoods and the Regional Centres. They are diverse places serviced by rapid transit that support a range and mix of activities that enrich the character and meet the needs of the communities located along the Regional Corridors.

The character and pace of development along Regional Corridors, particularly between MTSA, may be different along various stretches, and include segments that are historical main streets, protected natural areas, or higher-density nodes; they all play an important role in providing some level of intensification.

MTSAs are a key component of York Region's Intensification and Growth Management Strategy, delineating locations along Regional corridors that are within walking distance of a higher order transit stop or station, suitable for higher density, mixed-use transit-oriented development and locations for higher density employment development within employment areas. Prioritizing development in major transit station areas will provide fiscal benefits to York Region and local municipalities by aligning growth and infrastructure investment to support the building of complete communities.

Each MTSA is unique with its own growth potential and will be planned based on local context and conditions to support and enhance the Regional intensification hierarchy. Areas should be planned to accommodate a mix of high-density land uses and amenities to ensure that transit-oriented development acts as both an origin and destination for transit riders.

This section provides policies that MTSA be planned to support rapid transit investments and accommodate an appropriate scale of development based on the assigned minimum density targets and local municipal intensification strategies.



4.4 INTENSIFICATION

➤ **Objective:** To achieve attractive and vibrant urban Regional Corridors based on intensified development particularly within MTSAs that link the Regional Centres.

REGIONAL CORRIDORS and MAJOR TRANSIT STATION AREAS POLICIES:

It is the policy of Council:

4.4.34 That the boundaries of the Regional Corridors shown on *Map 1* be identified and designated in local official plans, *secondary plans*, and in consultation with York Region based on:

- Reasonable and direct walking distances between the Regional Corridor street frontage and *adjacent lands*;
- Contiguous parcels that are desirable and appropriate locations for *intensification* and mixed-use *development*;
- Compatibility with and transition to adjacent and/or adjoining lands; and having regard for *major transit station areas* delineated on Appendix 2.

4.4.35 That Regional Corridors along transit routes function as urban mainstreets that have a compact, mixed-use, well-designed, pedestrian-friendly and *transit-supportive* built form and allow for *active transportation*.

4.4.36 That the most intensive and widest range of uses within Regional Corridors be directed to *major transit station areas* and in accordance with policies 4.4.38 to 4.4.46.

4.4.37 That all *major transit station areas* identified on *Map 1B*, with the exception of those identified in policy 4.4.43, are protected under the *Planning Act* and that policies 4.4.38 to 4.4.46 provide additional direction for *development* within protected *major transit station areas* identified on *Map 1B*, and should be read together with other similar policies regarding *major transit station areas* in the Plan.

4.4.38 That the built form and scale of *development* within *major transit station areas* shall further support and implement the Regional *intensification* hierarchy outlined in policy 4.1.3 in accordance with the *intensification* level determined by the minimum density targets in Appendix 2.

4.4.39 That in cases where a *major transit station area* and a designated Urban Growth Centre or Regional Centre overlap, the higher density requirements shall apply.

4.4.40 That new *major transit station areas* will only be approved as of part of a Regional *municipal comprehensive review*.

Major Transit Station Area Visualization



4.4 INTENSIFICATION

It is the policy of Council:

4.4.41 To direct local municipalities to delineate *major transit station areas* identified on *Map 1B* and Appendix 2 and identify minimum density targets in number of residents and jobs per hectare as shown in Appendix 2.

4.4.42 That local municipalities shall establish policies in their official plan, other implementation documents and appropriate zoning, for *major transit station areas* shown on *Map 1B* and Appendix 2 that address the following:

- a. Land use designations with minimum and maximum heights and densities that will achieve the minimum density target in each *major transit station area* based on local context and conditions;
- b. The role and planned function of each *major transit station area* within the municipality;
- c. Policies to achieve the objectives of *transit supportive development* including the planning for *transit supportive* densities, uses, multimodal access and *active transportation* connections in support of the Region's transit *infrastructure* investments;
- d. Strategies to promote the *development* of safe, attractive and compact mixed-use pedestrian environments aimed to attract and retain jobs and employment uses including in *Employment Areas* within *major transit station areas*.
- e. Policies to enhance connectivity and customer experience including design elements to assist with wayfinding and defining gateways/entrances to station stops;
- f. Planning for commuter pick-up/drop-off areas within *major transit station areas* integrated into *development*, where appropriate;
- g. Connections to local and regional transit services within *major transit station areas* to support transit service integration, where appropriate;
- h. Policies that prohibit the establishment of land uses and built forms that would adversely affect the achievement of the minimum density targets prescribed in Appendix 2;
- i. Residents to jobs ratio targets to ensure live work opportunities and an appropriate balance of jobs to population;
- j. *Affordable* housing targets with a minimum requirement that 35% of new housing units in *major transit station areas* be *affordable*, to offer a range of compact housing forms and tenures, and intrinsically *affordable* units for low- and moderate-income households; and
- k. Policies that support implementation of *inclusionary zoning*.

4.4.43 Other future *major transit station areas* have been identified on Map 1B. These station areas require further planning and consultation to finalize their location and delineation.

4.4 INTENSIFICATION

4.4.44 To collaborate between public and private sectors, where possible, such as joint *development* projects within *major transit station areas*.

4.4.45 That *development* applications along Regional Corridors outside of MTSA shall have regard to local context and impact on achieving the Regional *intensification* hierarchy outlined in policy 4.1.3.

4.4.46 That the scale and form of *development* along the Yonge Street Regional Corridor where it traverses the Oak Ridges Moraine address the local context, features and functions of the Oak Ridges Moraine to the satisfaction of the local municipality.

4.4 INTENSIFICATION

LOCAL CENTRES and CORRIDORS

Local Centres and Corridors are important components of the local urban structure and are focal points for residential, human services, commercial and office activities for the surrounding community. Furthermore, these areas play a supporting role to Regional Centres and Corridors and enhance connectivity throughout York Region.

Local Centres are smaller in scale and scope compared to Regional Centres and Corridors, many of which are centred around historic downtowns such as Woodbridge, Downtown Newmarket, Old Unionville, Downtown Richmond Hill, and include smaller centres such as Keswick. Given the diversity of communities across York Region, Local Centres can vary greatly in size, nature and character. Local Centres play an important role in a community's sense of place, reflecting the culture and history of the municipality and have the potential to play important roles in achieving York Region's gentle intensification objectives through a range of housing opportunities.

Local Corridors can play a role linking Regional and Local Centres and should be identified along future rapid transit corridors within York Region. This section provides policies to the local municipalities that support a level of intensification reflective of local context.

➤ **Objective:** *To establish Local Centres as focal points of activity and culture for surrounding communities and to enhance Local Corridors as part of the network of connectivity within the urban structure.*

LOCAL CENTRES and CORRIDORS POLICIES:

It is the policy of Council:

4.4.47 That Local Centres and Corridors serve as important neighbourhood focal points and mainstreets that provide a range of working, shopping, recreation, *human services* and housing opportunities with appropriate forms and scale that complement the surrounding community.

4.4.48 To support local municipal identification and *development* of Local Centres and Corridors within the Urban System.



4.4 INTENSIFICATION

4.4.49 That the planning and implementation of Local Centres and Corridors shall be consistent with the relevant policies of Section 4.4 of this Plan.

4.4.50 That in *secondary plans* or other appropriate studies, local municipalities shall address the following criteria for Local Centres:

- a. That Local Centres connect efficiently with and contribute to the vitality of the surrounding area;
- b. That focal points for community activity and civic pride are created;
- c. That specific employment targets that contribute to live/work opportunities be identified;
- d. The revitalization and preservation of *cultural heritage resources* within core historic areas through urban design standards which reflect local heritage, character, and streetscape; and
- e. Minimum criteria for strategic growth areas in policy 4.4.24, as appropriate.

4.4.51 That local municipalities shall identify locations within Local Corridors where the *missing middle* can be accommodated.

4.4.52 To encourage municipalities to permit as of right zoning for the *missing middle* in local corridors.

4.4.53 That *development, secondary plans*, or other appropriate studies in the Local Corridors address the following criteria:

- a. The historic function and preservation and revitalization of historic mainstreet areas;
- b. The establishment of consistent setback and frontage provisions to encourage a continuous building form adjacent to the street right-of-way;
- c. Regional streetscaping policies;
- d. Limiting vehicle access from *developments* adjacent to Regional streets to maximize the efficiency of the Regional street system through techniques such as suitable local street access, shared driveways and interconnected properties; and
- e. Be consistent with the minimum criteria for strategic growth areas policy 4.4.24, as appropriate.



Secondary Suite in the basement of a private home.

4.5 TOWNS and VILLAGES



York Region has a tradition of tightly knit villages that each have their own unique sense of place and identity, with mainstreets and places to work, live and play. Each Town and Village in York Region has a role to play in accommodating growth including both residential and employment areas where appropriate and the policies of this subsection apply.

Some Towns and Villages act as Local Centres that serve the needs of the surrounding rural settlements, the Agricultural Area and the Rural Area. Historic streetscapes and mainstreet areas within Towns and Villages should be retained and enhanced. This section provides policies that provide some level of intensification as may be supported by appropriate infrastructure and other criteria.

➤ **Objective:** *To ensure the continued vitality of Towns and Villages throughout York Region.*

TOWNS and VILLAGES POLICIES:

It is the policy of Council:

4.5.1 That the boundaries of Towns and Villages identified on [Map 1](#) shall be defined within local official plans.

4.5.2 That the local community plans for Towns and Villages may also include rural and agricultural designations within their boundaries. Any redesignation of *agricultural* and rural uses within the local community plan boundary to urban uses requires an expansion to the urban boundary through a [Regional municipal comprehensive review](#).

4.5.3 That notwithstanding policy 4.5.2, the redesignation of lands from agricultural and rural uses to urban uses within the Village of Nobleton in King Township may be considered through a local municipal initiated official plan amendment approved by the Region and subject to the following:

- a. An approved Class Environmental Assessment for a technical, environmental and financially feasible servicing option, and
- b. If necessary approved policy modification(s) to the relevant Provincial plans that currently prohibit extension of Great Lake sourced water and wastewater servicing to rural communities located within the Protected Countryside Area designation of the Greenbelt Plan and/or the Countryside Area designation of the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan.

4.5.4 That where Towns or Villages do not currently have Great Lake based water and wastewater services, extensions to or expansions of existing lake-based services is prohibited by the Growth Plan, unless the servicing is required by the designated authority to address failed individual on-site sewage or water services or to ensure protection of public health. The capacity of water and wastewater services in this case will be limited to the servicing requirements for the existing settlement plus capacity for potential *development* within the approved settlement boundary.

4.5 TOWNS and VILLAGES

4.5.5 That *secondary plans* within Towns and Villages, be subject to the following considerations:

- a. Availability of water and wastewater services;
- b. *Development* that respects the context and scale of the entire Town or Village and is integrated into the existing community;
- c. Best efforts to achieve the minimum density requirement of 50 residents and jobs combined per hectare, or 14 units per hectare, in the *developable area*;
- d. Best efforts are made to incorporate policies 4.2.9 to 4.2.25 of the Plan; and,
- e. To encourage *development* within the *built-up area* of the Towns and Villages that is consistent with the appropriate policies in Section 4.4 of the Plan.

4.5.6 That Local Centres located within Towns and Villages should meet the following criteria, in addition to the policies 4.4.47 to 4.4.53 of the Plan:

- a. Identify the area of the commercial core;
- b. Recognize the potential for commercial and tourist activity; and
- c. Provide *human services* for surrounding rural and agricultural areas.