2022 YORK REGION OFFICIAL PLAN

Office Consolidation | June 2024

Implementing York Region's Vision of Strong, Caring, Safe Communities.

JUNE 2024

York Region

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We acknowledge York Region is located on the traditional territory of many Indigenous peoples such as the Anishinaabeg, Haudenosaunee, Huron-Wendat and Métis peoples and the treaty territories of the Haudenosaunee, Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation and Williams Treaties First Nations. This land is now home to many diverse Indigenous peoples. York Region is located within the boundaries of the Nanfan Treaty, Treaty 13 and the Williams Treaties. There are also other land claims and treaty rights involving portions of York Region that have not been resolved. The Chippewas of Georgina Island First Nation is a Williams Treaty First Nation and the closest First Nation community to York Region.

> As Planners, we are committed to managing growth in a sustainable manner through the land use planning process, recognizing the importance of protecting water and the natural environment over the long term for future generations. We continue to move forward in partnership with Indigenous peoples by intentionally listening and learning from the past while supporting ongoing, sustained and meaningful relationships.

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MINISTER'S MODIFICATIONS
The 2022 York Regional Official Plan has been approved with *modifications* by the Province of Ontario's Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing. The June 2024 office consolidation also incorporates further changes through *Bill 150, Planning Statute Law Amendment Act, 2023* and *Bill 162, Get it Done Act, 2024*.

1.0 INTRODUCTION and PURPOSE of the OFFICIAL PLAN

1.1 PURPOSE of the PLAN
1.2 PROVINCIAL POLICY DIRECTIONS
1.3 THE REGIONAL VISION and GOALS of the PLAN
1.4 KEY GUIDING PLANNING PRINCIPLES
1.5 ORGANIZATION of the PLAN

York Region

1.0 INTRODUCTION and PURPOSE of the PLAN

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YORK REGION: 50 YEARS in the MAKING

The Regional Official Plan (the Plan) coincides with the marking of York Region's 50th anniversary in 2021. Over the past five decades, York Region has grown more than seven-fold to 1.2 million people, becoming one of Canada's most diverse and fastest-growing communities. This was achieved by planning for complete and inclusive communities and delivery of innovative services and infrastructure for roads, transit, water and wastewater systems, forest trails and bike lanes, senior services and childcare, public health, police and paramedic services.

All of these important accomplishments set the stage for the next 50 years, as York Region matures with vibrant intensified cities and downtowns connected with inter- and intra-Regional transit. The existing Regional structure and supporting infrastructure provides a solid foundation to continue planning for complete communities, a strong economy, walkability, transit, and a recognizable sense of place and identity.

With good planning, York Region will continue to be a destination of choice to live, work and play. The Plan builds on this progressive track record and plans forward into the future to 2051 to find new and better ways to build communities and urbanize areas coinciding with transit, while protecting the environment and preserving agricultural and rural areas.

1.0 INTRODUCTION and PURPOSE of the PLAN

A PLAN FOR YORK REGION'S COMMUNITIES

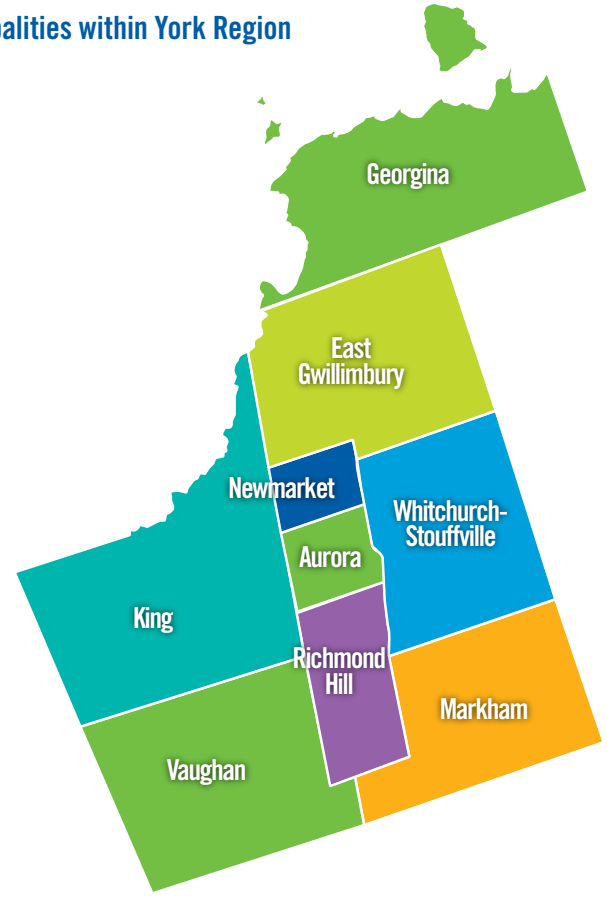
Why the Plan Matters

The Regional Official Plan (the Plan) sets the direction for growth and development across nine local municipalities impacting how your community grows and changes now, and in years to come. It addresses provincially mandated growth for York Region being sensitive to important priorities, key opportunities, and challenges facing our communities and residents. It focuses on sustainability, protection of the natural environment, economic growth, and success, while working to meet the needs of and deliver important human services to residents. It does this through policies that set out planning goals which meet the vision and direction set through Provincial and Regional planning documents.

An Evolving Plan

The past two iterations of the Regional Official Plan have assisted in setting the framework for the Plan. York Region's first Official Plan was approved in 1994, and set the foundation for the urban, agricultural and natural systems identified in the current Plan. In 2010, the Regional Official Plan was updated to reinforce a triple bottom line approach that focuses on maintaining a sustainable natural environment, creating healthy communities and ensuring economic vitality across York Region. Maintaining this legacy, York Region continues to focus on building an intensified urban system, a dynamic economy, providing integrated and responsive human services and protecting and enhancing York Region's agricultural and natural systems.

Map of Municipalities within York Region



1.0 INTRODUCTION and PURPOSE of the PLAN

Building on Regional Objectives

York Region's Vision expresses Council's commitment to strong, caring, safe communities. It guides Regional Council's decision making towards achieving the kinds of communities York Region residents envision now and for the future, in alignment with four areas of focus: Economic Vitality, Healthy Communities, Sustainable Environment and Good Government.

The Regional Official Plan describes how York Region will accommodate 810,000 residents and 325,000 jobs by 2051. A strategic approach to growth management and aligning land use, financial sustainability, infrastructure and phasing has been integrated into the Plan to manage this magnitude of growth.

York Region continues to build strong, caring and safe communities, adopting best practices and reflecting changing responsibilities to the community to plan for complete and inclusive communities.

Planning for Complete and Inclusive Communities

Building complete communities means every person, regardless of age, lifestyle or stage of life and background, can live, work, play and thrive in York Region. We plan so that everyone can bring their unique identities and work together to create the strong, caring, and safe communities that make up York Region. Building complete and inclusive communities is the objective of the Plan.

York Region: Our Heritage

York Region's rich cultural heritage goes back thousands of years and remnants of this heritage have been preserved as archaeological sites, historic village core areas, heritage buildings and cultural landscapes. Traditionally, home to many Indigenous peoples, York Region is now home to diverse populations including many Indigenous peoples. York Region's diversity is a source of strength, vitality and economic opportunity. With its partnering agencies, York Region shares a common commitment to create an inclusive environment for all who work, live and play in York Region.

York Region's rich soils make agriculture a central part of York Region's heritage. Today, York Region has evolved into both an agricultural-based economy as well as a broad-based modern business economy including technology, manufacturing, smart healthcare, retail and personal services.

Main Street, Unionville, City of Markham

Photo credit: City of Markham

1.0 INTRODUCTION and PURPOSE of the PLAN

While growth continues to attract a strong knowledge-based economy, it is essential to maintain agriculture roots, and a vibrant agri-food sector, producing a wide variety of locally grown and made products, and recognize and celebrate York Region's heritage.

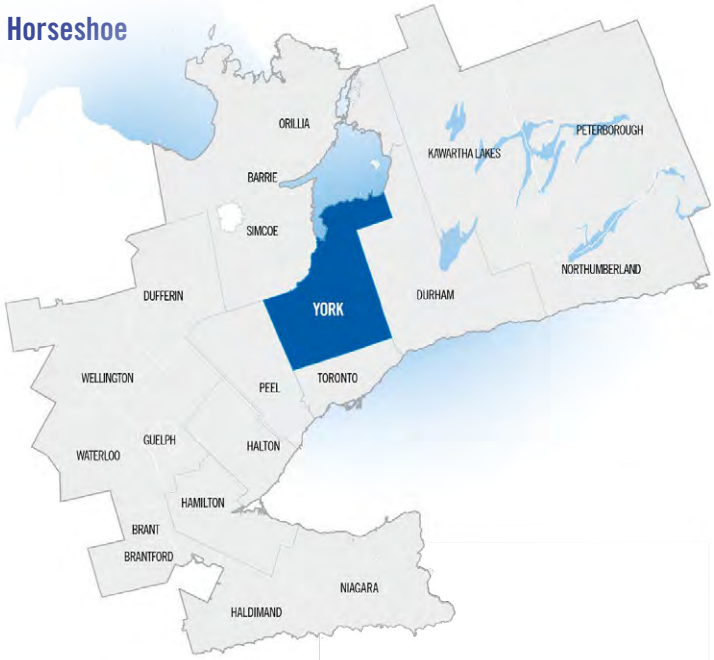
York Region's expansive greenspace includes an integrated Greenlands System that links greenspaces across its nine municipalities. An extensive network of trails and over 50km of Lake Simcoe Shoreline provide for quality and accessible outdoor recreation. This natural beauty is complemented by rich cultural heritage, Indigenous heritage sites and archaeological resources that contribute to York Region's unique, local identity. Indigenous communities continue to be stewards of the land and York Region shares in this commitment to make decisions that benefit future generations.

This Chapter sets the framework for the Plan including the Purpose, Provincial Policy Directions, Regional Vision and Goals, and Key Guiding Planning Principles, as well as the Organization of the Plan.

Key Facts:

- York Region includes nine local municipalities and in 2021 had 1.2 million residents who speak over 120 languages and come from 230 distinct ethnic origins
- York Region is made up of 1,776 square kilometres or 686 square miles
- York Region is strategically located in the Greater Golden Horseshoe
- In 2020 York Region had 655,000 jobs
- The Oak Ridges Moraine and Greenbelt legislation help define York Region by governing 69% of its land base
- Woodlands cover more than 23% of York Region and an extensive network of trails provide quality outdoor recreation for walking and cycling
- York Region has a rich cultural heritage, heritage sites and archaeological resources, as well as art galleries, museums and cultural events
- Indigenous communities have a long history and connection to the lands in York Region
- York Region's agricultural industry and agri-food businesses provide an important role in delivering locally sourced food and other products for our residents and beyond

Map of the Greater Golden Horseshoe



1.1 THE PURPOSE of the PLAN

The Regional Official Plan is adopted by the Council of the Regional Municipality of York to provide clear direction with respect to long-term growth management balancing the protection and enhancement of its agricultural and natural systems. The Plan builds upon the important planning foundations enshrined in previous iterations, while responding to societal, environmental, and economic changes that have occurred and continue to evolve.

The Plan provides a long-term vision for York Region's physical form and community structure. To pursue the vision, it sets goals and objectives, describes a regional structure for accommodating growth, states the policies to be followed, and provides guidance on implementing policies.

Through the policies in the Plan, York Region shall work in partnership with the local municipalities to coordinate and set the stage for more detailed planning through implementation of local municipal official plans and secondary plans. The Plan provides a framework for coordinated planning with adjacent municipalities, as well as with other jurisdictions. These efforts provide certainty on how to approach environmental, economic and community issues when creating sustainable communities. York Region shall work with those that play an integral role in the development of York Region's communities.

All of the policies in the Plan shall be considered together to determine conformity. Individual policies should not be read or interpreted in isolation. The Plan is intended to be read in its entirety and the relevant policies applied to each situation.

For the purpose of the *Planning Act* and the *Municipal Act*, Chapters 1-7 of the Plan, inclusive of Preambles, Goals, Objectives, Policies and Tables 1-7, Definitions, Maps, and Appendices, shall be considered the Official Plan of York Regional Municipality of York.

The Plan has been prepared pursuant to *The Planning Act* and other pertinent Provincial legislation.

1.2 PROVINCIAL POLICY DIRECTIONS

In accordance with Provincial planning direction, the Plan implements the *Provincial Policy Statement* (2020) and all relevant Provincial plans including: *A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe* (2019), the *Greenbelt Plan* (2017), *Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan* (2017)and the *Lake Simcoe Protection Plan* (2009). A brief summary of the broad policy directions includes the following:

- A planning horizon to the year 2051
- An intensification target of 50% phased to 55% that requires a minimum of 50% of residential development to occur annually within existing urban areas to 2041, and 55% from 2041 to 2051
- Development of complete communities
- Identification and protection of employment lands
- An Urban System based on an hierarchy of intensification areas including but not limited to Strategic Growth Areas, Regional Centres, Corridors and major transit station areas
- A phased approach to accommodating growth in New Community Areas
- Protection of the Agricultural System and support for Agricultural and Agricultural-related and On-Farm diversified uses
- Protection of the Regional Greenlands System and water resource system
- Protection of the Oak Ridges Moraine and Greenbelt Plan areas

The Plan includes comprehensive policies in each of the Chapters that are consistent with the Provincial Planning Policy and conform with Provincial plans.

1.3 THE REGIONAL VISION and GOALS of the PLAN

York Region's Vision is to create "Strong, Caring, Safe Communities". The Plan provides for long-term growth and development based on the planned urban structure. The Goals of the Plan represent the ideal or end to which a planned course of action is directed.

The Plan incorporates seven major goals that provide overall high-level direction for specific objectives and policies contained in each Chapter. These Goals include:

1. To provide an overview of the Purpose, Regional Vision, Goals, Objectives, and Key Guiding Principles of the Plan.
2. To enhance York Region's urban structure through a comprehensive integrated growth management process that provides for healthy, sustainable, complete communities with a strong economic base.
3. To protect and enhance the natural environment for current and future generations so that it will sustain life, maintain health and provide a high quality of life.
4. To enhance York Region's urban system through city building, intensification, and compact and complete communities including employment areas.
5. To protect the Agricultural, Rural and Holland Marsh Specialty Crop Areas and support the agricultural industry as essential components of the Regional fabric.
6. To provide the services required to support York Region's residents and businesses to 2051 and beyond, in a financially and environmentally sustainable manner.
7. To ensure resiliency and the ability to adapt to changing economic and environmental conditions and increasing social diversity.

York Region's landscape consists of three principal land use policy areas:

- Urban Areas with identifiable communities,
- An Agricultural System where agriculture is the preferred and predominant activity; and
- A Natural Heritage System that is integrated with the Urban System and Agricultural System, to preserve and enhance the biological diversity and ecological functions of York Region.

1.4 KEY GUIDING PLANNING PRINCIPLES

This Official Plan represents York Region's ongoing engagement efforts to confirm the way communities are designed, serviced and supported as "complete communities". The major elements of the Plan are based on the following Key Guiding Planning Principles:

1. A sustainable approach to managing growth to 2051 that integrates land use planning with infrastructure and financial planning while protecting the Natural and Agricultural system.
2. Development of new community areas based on a logical, organized progression supported by sound infrastructure planning, land need and the objective of planning for complete communities.
3. A minimum of 50% of residential development between 2021 to 2041, and 55% from 2041 to 2051 to occur through intensification within the built-up area as well as a resident to job ratio of 2:1 focusing on Regional Centres and Corridors and major transit station areas.
4. Identification and protection of employment lands for the long-term in a well-designed and intensified built form primarily for goods and services producing business and industrial developments.
5. Enhanced mobility systems using a "people and transit first approach" to connect land use and transportation planning utilizing York Region Master Plans for all modes of transportation including, transit and active transportation.
6. Standards that advance requirements for sustainable communities and buildings, water and energy conservation and management, low- or no-carbon energy systems, waste reduction, compact and mixed-use development, green building, and urban design in order to mitigate and adapt to climate change including striving towards net-zero greenhouse gas emissions.
7. Provision of a full range of housing types with a region-wide target of 25% of all new housing units being affordable to low and middle-income households and in addition, a minimum of 35% of all new housing units within Regional Centres and major transit station areas.
8. Protection of the Agricultural System including protection of specialty crop, agricultural, and rural lands.
9. A natural heritage legacy based on protection, enhancement and restoration of York Region's Natural Systems including the complementary Regional Greenlands System and water resource system.
10. A full cost/benefit accounting approach to land use and infrastructure planning that considers economic, environmental and social costs.

1.5 ORGANIZATION of the PLAN

Building on the key planning principles, the policies of the Plan will guide economic, environmental and community building decisions to manage growth. A series of regional strategies, plans and guidelines will support and implement the policies in the Plan.

The policies in the Plan will help coordinate and set the stage for more detailed planning by the local municipalities. The Plan will also provide the framework for coordinated planning with adjacent municipalities, as well as other jurisdictions. These efforts can provide certainty on how to approach environmental, economic and community issues when creating complete communities.

Chapter 1 sets out the purpose of the Plan, summarizes the major Provincial policy directions and key guiding planning principles as well as the organization of the Plan. Graphics and illustrative content are provided for information only. Italicized terms contained in the Plan are included in the Definition section.

Chapter 2 identifies the Regional structure and establishes an integrated growth management approach. Chapter 2 policies apply broadly across most of York Region and reinforces the concept of complete communities, supporting a multi-faceted robust economy and providing continued support for cultural heritage.

The Natural System policy framework is contained in Chapter 3 and provides direction on protecting and enhancing a Regional Greenlands System and water resource system within and beyond York Region's urbanizing areas.

Chapter 4 provides detailed policy direction to guide the various types of urban communities that comprise the Urban System, phasing of growth and a hierarchical approach to intensification.

Chapter 5 provides policy direction to support the protection of agricultural, rural and specialty crop areas and the viability of the agri-food sector. Chapter 5 also provides policy direction for Hamlets.

Chapter 6 provides detailed policies to support a wide range of services including the necessary infrastructure to support the Urban System.

Chapter 7 contains implementation policies for engagement and partnerships, monitoring and measuring success, the planning process and how to interpret the Plan.

HOW TO READ THE PLAN

Functional Part of the Plan. Chapters 1 through 7 (including Preambles, Goals, Objectives, Policies and Tables 1 to 7), Definitions, Maps, and Appendices.

For Illustrative Purposes Only. Graphics and illustrative content (indicated by two vertical bars before and after the content).

2.0 THE FOUNDATION for COMPLETE COMMUNITIES

2.1 REGIONAL STRUCTURE
2.2 INTEGRATED GROWTH MANAGEMENT
2.3 SUPPORTING COMPLETE COMMUNITIES
2.4 CULTURAL HERITAGE
2.5 MANAGING EXCESS SOIL from DEVELOPMENT

York Region

2.0 THE FOUNDATION for COMPLETE COMMUNITIES

2.1 REGIONAL STRUCTURE
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2.5 MANAGING EXCESS SOIL from DEVELOPMENT

York Region will continue to experience a significant portion of the new urban growth anticipated in the Greater Golden Horseshoe (GGH) over the next 30 years. The Plan provides for growth in York Region to a population of 2.06 million people and 989,200 jobs by 2051. The Plan places a high priority on complete communities that support a full range of amenities and housing types for all ages and stages of life, different household formations and incomes. Communities will be planned for healthy and active living and meaningful employment opportunities for local business to thrive. Incorporating green development standards in communities continues the commitment to sustainability and climate change resiliency.

York Region reflects the Canadian cultural mosaic and continues to attract and celebrate a diverse population that contributes to a rich and changing cultural landscape. Growth brings diversity, and York Region offers and benefits from diversity, both culturally and economically. The Plan promotes complete, diverse communities where people can invest in each other. Accessible and responsive human services play an important role in developing this sense of community.

The policies in Chapter 2 set out a planning framework to provide for sustainable, orderly growth over the planning period.

The Foundation for Complete Communities Goal: *To enhance York Region's land use structure through a comprehensive integrated growth management process that provides for sustainable, complete communities, with a strong economic base.*

2.1 REGIONAL STRUCTURE

The Plan provides a foundational framework for where and how population and employment growth is accommodated to 2051, while protecting valuable agricultural, rural and natural heritage areas.

The Plan balances the urban, agricultural and natural systems so that they work together in a compatible way. This requires planning and certainty for the long-term so there are limited urban intrusions into the agricultural and natural areas that may cause adverse impact. The policies in the Plan reinforce the integrity, maintenance and enhancement of the Regional structure ensuring infrastructure plans support growth, complete communities are realized and natural areas are maintained.

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

> ***Objective:*** *To provide a framework for managing growth that protects the natural and agricultural systems, provides for complete communities and ensures economic vitality in a financially sustainable manner.*

REGIONAL STRUCTURE POLICIES:

It is the policy of Council:

2.1.1 That York Region's structure, shown on *Maps 1*, *1A*, *1B* and *1C* to the Plan, display the interrelationships between land use designations, overlays and delineations and provides strategic guidance on land use in York Region.

2.1.2 That the policies of the Plan be based on the Regional Structure on *Map 1* outlining:

- **a.** Areas that provide the focus for growth and *development* including the Urban Area, Towns and Villages, and Regional Centres and Corridors; and
- **b.** A Regional Greenlands System and *Agricultural System* that protect and enhance the natural environment and agricultural land base, where urbanization cannot occur.

2.1.3 That the Regional Structure consists of land use designations on *Map 1A*. The Plan includes specific goals, objectives, policies and permitted uses for each land use designation that govern *development*. Land use designations include:

- **a.** *Community Areas*, where residential, population-related employment and community services are directed to accommodate concentrations of existing and future population and employment growth;
- **b.** *Employment Areas*, where clusters of industrial, business, transportation, warehousing and related economic activities are directed and where residential uses are prohibited;
- **c.** *Hamlets*, smaller communities in *Rural Areas* where growth potential is limited in accordance with the policies in the Plan;
- **d.** *Rural Areas*, lands outside of Urban Areas and prime agricultural areas which support diverse agricultural, economic, tourism and recreational activities and contain valuable natural resources;
- **e.** *Agriculture Areas*, containing a continuous, productive agricultural land base; and
- **f.** *Specialty Crop Areas*, for *agriculture uses* where specialty crops are predominantly grown.

2.1 REGIONAL STRUCTURE

2.1.4 That in addition to the structural elements and designations shown on *Maps 1* and *1A*, the urban system is further guided by land use policy areas shown as overlays on *Map 1B* that provide additional direction, assist in the application of policies and measuring and monitoring efforts. The urban system includes the following components:

- **a.** *Built-up area*, based on the Provincially defined built boundary identified in the report *Built Boundary for the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2006*, where the minimum 50% *intensification* target applies annually;
- **b.** *Designated greenfield area*, where the minimum local municipal density targets in the Plan apply; *New Community Areas*, forming part of the *designated greenfield area* and consisting of new urban expansion areas required to support growth to the planning horizon, where the minimum target of 65 residents and jobs per hectare applies;
- **c.** Regional Cenrtres and Corridors, the focus of York Region's most intensive *development* connected by *transit-supportive intensification* and Regional corridors;
- **d.** *Major transit station areas*, lands surrounding transit stations or stops, where density targets outlined in Appendix 2 apply; and
- **e.** *Future Urban Area*, where future *urban expansion areas* may occur to accommodate growth needs beyond 2051, through a *Municipal Comprehensive Review*.

2.1.5 That the Provincial Plan identifications on *Map 1C* include the Greenbelt Plan and Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan land use designations overlaid with Regional Greenlands. The following Provincial land use designations provide land use and resource management planning direction for the protection of lands:

- **a.** Natural Core Areas, consist of lands with the greatest concentration of *key natural heritage features* that are critical to maintaining the integrity of the Oak Ridges Moraine;
- **b.** Natural Linkage Areas, which protect critical natural and open space linkages between Natural Core Areas and along rivers and streams of the Oak Ridges Moraine;
- **c.** Protected Countryside Area of the Greenbelt Plan and Countryside Area of the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan, made up of agricultural and natural systems; and
- **d.** Urban River Valleys of the Greenbelt Plan.

Mapping Overlay vs. Designation

Official Plan mapping includes land use designations and overlays.
Overlays serve a variety of purposes, including identifying:

1. Where additional policies apply
2. Where further mapping refinements can occur (e.g. Regional Greenlands)
3. Areas for monitoring and implementation purposes
4. Additional information

2.2 INTEGRATED GROWTH MANAGEMENT

York Region establishes population and employment forecasts for the nine local municipalities to 2051. These forecasts are prepared using an integrated and comprehensive approach with infrastructure planning. This approach included an analysis of water and wastewater, transportation, environmental and financial impacts.

To achieve the forecast, new communities will be required in York Region. These areas will develop as complete communities with a variety of services to create healthy, liveable places. These include human services and capital infrastructure, such as roads, transit and water/wastewater systems. While the timing of delivery for services can vary, the phasing policies of the Plan and coordination with local municipalities and agencies will ensure the effective delivery of services and encourage orderly, sustainable growth.

The Plan provides for a comprehensive approach to growth management that considers the economic, environmental and social costs of growth. To achieve financial sustainability, an agile integrated growth management approach is required that fully integrates infrastructure and financial planning with land use planning. This allows York Region to leverage existing infrastructure investments, stage and phase new development and infrastructure, align investments with the ability to recover development charge collections and grow in a financially sustainable manner.

The Plan promotes comprehensive full cost accounting, the equitable distribution of costs, and ensures that the funds required to provide the necessary services for growth are provided by the proponents of growth.

> ***Objective:*** *To align land use, infrastructure and financial planning to ensure growth is sustainable and financially responsible.*

2.2 INTEGRATED GROWTH MANAGEMENT

INTEGRATED GROWTH MANAGEMENT POLICIES:

It is the policy of Council:

2.2.1 That the population and employment forecasts in Table 1 be used as the basis for planning of new *development*.

Table 1 – York Region Population and Employment Forecast by Local Municipality

Municipality		2016	2021	2031	2041	2051
Aurora	Population	57,200	64,000	71,900	79,600	85,800
	Employment	27,300	29,600	34,100	38,300	41,600
East Gwillimbury	Population	24,700	35,700	57,100	88,700	128,600
	Employment	9,500	10,600	16,500	27,500	44,300
Georgina	Population	46,800	49,100	56,500	65,500	70,500
	Employment	9,300	9,400	12,900	17,300	20,700
King	Population	25,300	28,100	36,300	43,500	51,000
	Employment	9,600	10,100	12,200	15,200	17,700
Markham	Population	339,100	349,000	416,300	496,700	610,500
	Employment	182,000	190,300	221,200	258,500	301,600
Newmarket	Population	86,800	90,700	98,900	107,200	118,500
	Employment	45,000	47,500	50,600	53,900	58,100
Richmond Hill	Population	201,000	208,300	251,600	283,800	320,100
	Employment	78,800	83,400	96,600	108,400	122,500
Vaughan	Population	315,700	333,100	398,300	478,900	575,900
	Employment	222,200	243,700	280,600	315,800	354,300
Whitchurch-Stouffville	Population	47,300	51,400	60,800	73,900	103,000
	Employment	15,400	17,000	20,200	24,000	28,300
York Region	Population	**1,143,900**	**1,209,300**	**1,447,600**	**1,717,700**	**2,063,900**
	Employment	**599,100**	**641,700**	**744,700**	**858,900**	**989,200**

Please note forecasts in this table implement the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing approval and modifications to the York Region Official Plan through Bills 150 and 162.

2.2.2 That growth management be integrated such that land use, financial and *infrastructure* planning achieve compact *development* patterns, promote the *development* of *complete communities*, optimize investments, provide for environmental sustainability, and minimize land consumption and servicing costs.

2.2.3 To undertake an agile approach to growth management by ensuring regular review and monitoring of *infrastructure* investments in response to the pace and distribution of growth to maintain financial sustainability.

2.2.4 That Regional *infrastructure* required to support growth to 2051 be phased based on the following principles:

a. *Development* of *complete communities*;

b. Achievement of *intensification* and density targets of the Plan;

c. Enhancement of the existing transportation network and water/wastewater system over those that require extensions to those systems;
d. Prioritization of projects with lower per capita Regional costs, lower risk, and greater potential for return on investment; and
e. Alignment with the principle of financial sustainability.

2.2.5 That *infrastructure* be provided to support growth in York Region's *New Community Areas* and phased in a manner that is financially sustainable and supports the achievement of York Region's *intensification* target and *development* of *complete communities*.

2.2.6 To continue to recognize the role of partners in building communities and to encourage greater coordination and information exchange with local municipalities, the *development* industry, conservation authorities, Indigenous communities and other interested groups to ensure:

a. A comprehensive, integrated and collaborative planning process;
b. The early identification of capital *infrastructure* (roads, , transit, water and wastewater) and *human services* requirements;
c. The coordination of the delivery of capital *infrastructure* and *human services*;
d. Protection and enhancement of the Regional Greenlands System and *Agriculture System*;
e. Continuous improvement for an efficient and timely approvals process; and
f. Greater coordination and information exchange of data standardization and digital information.

2.2.7 That local municipalities, in cooperation with York Region, shall develop and monitor growth management strategies that implement the policies of the Plan.

2.2.8 That local official plans, master plans, capital plans, and *secondary plans* shall phase growth in accordance with the applicable policies of the Plan.

2.2.9 To require local municipalities and school boards to plan their capital expenditures consistent with objectives and policies in Sections 2.2 and 6.2 of the Plan.

2.2.10 That local municipalities in consultation with the *development* industry, shall establish policies and/or strategies that align near term *development* priorities with existing *infrastructure* capacity.

2.2.11 That *development* shall be prioritized in locations with existing Regional *infrastructure* capacity.

2.2.12 That York Region and local municipalities implement a comprehensive approach to financial management that considers the economic, environmental, and social costs.

2.2.13 To ensure that *development* proponents provide the funds required to deliver the additional services and costs related to growth consistent with Regional plans and policies.

2.2.14 To work with *development* proponents on alternative *infrastructure* initiatives to reduce financial risk to York Region.

2.3 SUPPORTING COMPLETE COMMUNITIES

Complete communities are designed as accessible, dense and walkable, where most amenities are in close proximity, and meet people's needs for daily living through their lifetime. They provide for a full range of uses including local community centres, schools, places of worship, greenspaces and other uses to increase greater human interaction and create a sense of community. The policies in this section will help create well-designed communities that have integrated greenspace, trails, pedestrian and transit networks, and that offer a variety of housing, transportation, accessible human services, and employment options.

Human health is strongly related to the built and natural environments. Designing and building communities to encourage active lifestyle choices, protect the natural environment and ensure access to clean air, water, and healthy food can significantly improve overall health and well-being. Community design has an important role to play in increasing levels of physical activity. Reducing automobile dependency helps prevent obesity and other physical and mental health diseases related to physical inactivity, adverse air and environmental quality.

Human services such as healthcare, education, community and social services, have a significant impact on the quality of life for residents and workers. The needs of individuals and families vary with age, ability, background and interests. As a result, expectations for basic needs, learning, recreation, public safety, health, well-being and social supports differ by household and over time.

The policies in this section are intended to help create well-designed complete communities that have integrated greenspace, trails, pedestrian and transit networks, and that offer a variety of housing, transportation, accessible human services, and employment options.

> ***Objective:*** *To create vibrant, complete, sustainable communities where people can live, work, play, learn and enjoy a high quality of life.*

SUPPORTING COMPLETE COMMUNITIES POLICIES:

It is the policy of Council:

2.3.1 That communities shall be planned and designed as sustainable, healthy, vibrant *complete communities* walkable to most local amenities.

2.3.2 That communities shall be planned in a comprehensive and coordinated manner using land efficiently and optimizing *infrastructure* with a compact, mixed-use, pedestrian friendly and *transit-supportive* built form.

2.3 SUPPORTING COMPLETE COMMUNITIES

Measuring the success of complete communities in York Region

It is the policy of Council:

2.3.3 That communities shall be designed in a manner that fosters physical and mental health, facilitates inclusivity and accessibility for people of all ages and abilities, and York Region's diverse population.

2.3.4 To recognize that well-designed communities positively impact human health.

2.3.5 That planning, design and evaluation of existing and new communities shall incorporate:

- **a.** Public health considerations to promote wellness and quality of life; and
- **b.** The provision of *human service* facilities reflecting the demographic and socio-economic needs of York Region.

2.3.6 To support and encourage the delivery of *human services* in a manner that considers the diverse needs of residents, workers and visitors.

2.3.7 That *human services* facilities be accessible and co-located, or within community hubs, where appropriate. Facilities shall be in close proximity to where people live and work and have *active transportation* linkages to public transit.

2.3.8 To provide leadership in *human services* planning that respond to the changing needs of York Region and to support integrated *human services* planning initiatives.

2.3.9 To encourage local municipalities to support and enhance *urban agriculture* and access to healthy and locally grown food and agricultural products.

2.3.10 That communities shall be designed to provide an integrated open space network that contributes to a sense of place and identity, promotes physical activity and social inclusion, to include:

- **a.** A variety of active recreational facilities, programmed parks and passive parks for year round use;
- **b.** Connections by sidewalk and/or trails;
- **c.** Meeting places, informal gathering spaces and central squares that incorporate art, culture and heritage;
- **d.** Opportunities for *urban agriculture*; and
- **e.** Connections to the Regional Greenlands System, where appropriate.

2.3 SUPPORTING COMPLETE COMMUNITIES

Health Supportive Tools for Complete Communities

Health supportive tools, such as a healthy development checklist, scorecard, health development assessment, or integrated sustainable development policy framework or guidelines can advance the development of complete communities. Local municipalities are encouraged to develop and integrate health supportive tools as part of the development review process to reinforce a shift in behaviour towards more active, healthy lifestyles including:

› Improved access to *active transportation infrastructure* › Improved walkability and connectivity
› Housing affordability › Improved health equity › Integration of age-friendly community plans
› Improved access to public spaces, greenspaces and community *infrastructure*
› Integration of climate change mitigation/adaptation plans

2.3.11 That retail, commercial, office, and institutional structures shall be designed in a compact form including multi-storey, mixed use buildings, where appropriate and be pedestrian oriented and *transit-supportive*.

2.3.12 That local municipalities consult with school boards to plan and design schools as part of *complete communities* and to facilitate safe school travelling by:

a. Centrally locating schools in communities and adjacent to parks, where appropriate;
b. Incorporating pedestrian friendly site design; and
c. Incorporating *active transportation* and transit linkages.

2.3.13 That communities shall be designed to the highest urban design and green *development* standards, and support walkable neighbourhoods, which:

a. Provide pedestrian scale, safety, security, comfort, accessibility and connectivity to promote physical activity, wellness and reduce auto dependency;
b. Complement the character of the existing community's unique sense of place to foster social connections and inclusion;
c. Promote sustainable and attractive buildings that minimize energy use and reduce greenhouse gas emissions;
d. Promote landscaping including increasing tree canopy for shaded areas and community greening to promote environmental sustainability;
e. Provide public spaces and attractive streetscapes that encourage *active transportation*, and improve safety;
f. Ensure appropriate transition to surrounding land uses to support land use compatibility;
g. Use strategic building placement and orientation to emphasize walkability, accessibility and pedestrian visibility;
h. Apply best practices and guidelines to implement *transit-supportive development*; and
i. Create well-defined, centrally located public spaces that support physical activity and social interactions.

2.3.14 That public buildings and facilities are designed to be accessible and located in proximity to *active transportation* and transit systems, where appropriate.

2.3 SUPPORTING COMPLETE COMMUNITIES

2.3.15 That local municipalities shall review opportunities to enhance areas in existing communities, where appropriate, by:

- **a.** Incorporating and enhancing *active transportation* connections within and to adjacent communities, amenities and transit;
- **b.** Retrofitting streets to address safety needs, and become complete streets by incorporating *active transportation infrastructure*;
- **c.** Incorporating broadband *infrastructure* as required;
- **d.** Incorporating public gathering spaces;
- **e.** Revitalizing and restoring existing buildings, including heritage buildings and conserving existing cultural heritage landscapes;
- **f.** Reviewing existing destinations such as community facilities, retail and personal services to determine if additional services are required;
- **g.** Naturalizing and greening of vacant or underutilized public spaces for public use; and
- **h.** Enhancing connections between *Community Areas* and *Employment Areas*.

What are complete streets?

Complete streets is a policy and design approach for streets to ensure the provision of safe and comfortable movement by all modes of travel and for users of all ages and abilities.

2.3.16 That communities be designed to prioritize *active transportation* through interconnected and accessible mobility systems. These systems shall prioritize movement of people through *development* of appropriate pedestrian and cycling facilities and access to transit.

2.3.17 That *development* shall be supported by a *mobility plan*, prioritizing *active transportation* and transit. The plan shall assess impacts on York Region's transportation system, *infrastructure* and surrounding land uses.

2.3.18 That local municipal official plans and/or *secondary plans* shall require the provision of appropriate facilities to encourage an increase in the mode share of *active transportation* trips, such as covered bicycle storage, lockers, and shower facilities, implemented through *development* approvals.

2.3.19 That local municipalities shall, in consultation with York Region and related agencies, incorporate parking management policies and standards through planning and *development* tools that include:

- **a.** Reduced minimum and maximum parking requirements that reflect the walking distance to transit and complementary uses, where appropriate;
- **b.** Shared parking requirements, where possible, reflecting variances in parking demand between complementary uses on a time-of-day, weekday/weekend, and monthly basis;
- **c.** Site design that orients the main building entrance(s) to face the public street(s), provides a pedestrian friendly urban form, and where appropriate, as determined by the local municipality, does not permit the placement of surface parking spaces between the main building entrance and the major street;
- **d.** An approach that anticipates and plans for the adaptive reuse of surface parking to above grade structured or underground parking as site *development* evolves;
- **e.** Preferential locations for carpooling, car sharing spaces, electric vehicle charging stations and bicycle storage requirements; and
- **f.** Accommodate designated parking for on-demand deliveries and vehicles.

SUSTAINABLE and RESILIENT COMMUNITIES

Climate change occurs when long-term weather patterns are altered through natural or human causes. The release of air pollutants and excessive greenhouse gases into the atmosphere can have significant health and well-being impacts on residents and the environment as well as implications on services York Region provides. Human activities including the use of fossil fuels for transportation, manufacturing, electricity generation, heating, and cooling contribute to climate change.

Decisions on land use planning can impact how new and existing communities will manage and mitigate climate change impacts. Complete communities will be designed to be sustainable by incorporating green building technologies, renewable alternative energy options and climate change mitigation.

Sustainable buildings are a key component of York Region's sustainable and complete communities. The built form plays a major role in supporting the overarching sustainability vision for York Region, by conserving energy and water, efficient use of resources and promoting net-zero carbon emission development.

Climate change and adaptation goals cannot be achieved by York Region alone and will require partnership and efforts from all levels of government, conservation authorities, community stakeholders, businesses, Indigenous communities, the development industry and the public.

Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation through the Regional Official Plan

2.3 SUPPORTING COMPLETE COMMUNITIES

> ***Objective:*** *To mitigate and adapt to climate change, including reducing greenhouse gas emissions and improving air quality*

SUSTAINABLE and RESILIENT COMMUNITIES POLICIES:

It is the policy of Council:

2.3.20 To support low- or no-carbon energy alternatives and a targeted progression toward net-zero emissions by 2050.

2.3.21 To require local municipalities to incorporate policies in their official plans that support low- or no-carbon energy alternatives and net-zero emissions by 2050.

The York Region Climate Change Action Plan

The York Region Climate Change Action Plan is based on principles of sustainable urban development and addresses climate mitigation and adaptation from a corporate and community perspective.

The Action Plan is centred around three priority action areas:

- Resilient Communities and *Infrastructure*
- Low Carbon Living
- Supporting an Equitable Transition

York Region aims to increase its resilience and capacity to withstand and respond to current and future climate events and reduce greenhouse gas emissions with a long-term goal of becoming a net-zero Region by 2051.

It is the policy of Council:

2.3.22 To mitigate and adapt to climate change by implementing actions identified in a Regional *Climate Change Action Plan* and Community Energy and Emissions Plan.

2.3.23 To establish greenhouse gas reduction targets and implement a reduction strategy in partnership with community stakeholders, Indigenous communities and local municipalities.

2.3.24 To require local municipalities to undertake municipal-wide Community Energy Plans with the overall goal of reducing energy use and increasing the use of renewable and low-carbon energy sources. These plans will align with the Regional Community Energy and Emissions Plan, detail the municipality's energy use requirements, establish a plan to reduce energy demand and consider the use of alternative and renewable energy generation options and district energy systems.

2.3.25 To encourage and work with local municipalities, Indigenous communities, agencies, and stakeholders to integrate climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies into municipal, planning and *development* tools including but not limited to pilot programs, bylaws, *development* guidelines and incentive programs.

2.3.26 To reduce vehicle emissions by ensuring that communities are designed to prioritize *active transportation*, *transit-supportive development* and *intensification* in appropriate locations.

2.3.27 To work with local municipalities, agencies, Indigenous communities and stakeholders in providing *infrastructure* for electric and low-emissions vehicles.

2.3.28 To require health, environmental and air quality impact studies that assess the impact on human health for *development* with significant known or potential air pollutant emission levels near *sensitive land uses*.

2.3.29 That appropriate mitigation measures to reduce and prevent exposure to air pollutants will be incorporated in community, building and site design near significant known air emission sources such as 400-series highways.

2.3.30 That local municipalities shall include policies requiring *major facilities* and sensitive uses to be planned and developed to avoid, or if avoidance is not possible, minimize and mitigate any potential adverse effects from odour, noise and other contaminants, minimize risk to public health and safety, and to ensure the long-term operational and economic viability of *major facilities* in accordance with provincial guidelines, standards and procedures.

2.3.31 To work with local municipalities and the building industry to develop and adopt best practices in construction to mitigate climate change impacts and to reduce airborne pollutants.

2.3.32 To work with local municipalities and agencies to develop tools and strategies to mitigate and prevent potential impacts of climate change that may increase risks associated with natural hazards.

2.3.33 To work with local municipalities and agencies to ensure that stormwater management plans address the impacts of climate change by:

- **a.** Minimizing the disruption of natural drainage patterns, wherever possible;
- **b.** Addressing potential flood risk and erosion associated with projected precipitation; and
- **c.** Increasing York Region and local municipal capacity to adapt to climate change.

2.3.34 To work with local municipalities and agencies to support *development* of programs and initiatives that facilitate energy efficiency retrofits for existing buildings.

2.3.35 To encourage new *developments* to achieve water efficiency and conservation targets that exceed Ontario Building Code requirements.

2.3.36 That York Region and local municipalities develop, implement and periodically update sustainable *development* programs to achieve:

- **a.** Climate change mitigation and adaptation;
- **b.** Energy efficiency and water conservation levels beyond the Ontario Building Code;
- **c.** Mitigation of heat island effects, including but not limited to green/white roofs, light coloured paving material, locating trees or other landscaping to provide shading;
- **d.** Increases in the use of renewable energy;
- **e.** Low impact *development* and green *infrastructure*;
- **f.** Dark sky or light pollution abatement;
- **g.** Reduction of construction waste;
- **h.** Recycling and adaptive reuse of construction materials;
- **i.** Enhanced indoor air quality; and
- **j.** Other sustainability measures.

What are the climate change risks for York Region?

2.3 SUPPORTING COMPLETE COMMUNITIES

2.3.37 That local municipalities shall develop official plan policies and associated procedures for *development* on contaminated or potentially contaminated sites, including the use of community improvement plans where appropriate to promote *brownfield site* redevelopment.

2.3.38 To work with local municipalities, private sector partners and agencies to engage the public on water and energy conservation, pollution prevention and awareness of lifestyle decisions that can reduce carbon footprints and impacts to a changing climate.

HOUSING OUR RESIDENTS

A strong housing market delivers housing types, sizes and price points to meet the diverse range of needs of York Region's residents and workers. Meeting these needs allows people to live and work in their communities as they progress through the stages of life. The provision of affordable housing options also helps create a diverse labour pool and increase the attractiveness to serve and expand various employment sectors. The Plan provides for housing opportunities at optimal locations that support the planned urban system, transportation networks and the environment.

In addition to traditional housing, the provision of a full mix and range of housing includes emergency shelters, housing affordable to low and moderate income families, and special needs accommodations. York Region promotes affordable options through the use of targets, incentives, partnerships, community education and monitoring. York Region continues to monitor affordable and purpose-built rental targets to ensure there are adequate options for all residents. Meeting housing needs can only be addressed through partnerships with other levels of government, the development industry, community partners and stakeholders.

The policies in this section are intended to address housing needs throughout the various communities in York Region.

> ***Objective:*** *To promote an appropriate mix and range of housing options that meet the needs of residents and workers of all income levels, ages, abilities and stages of their lives.*

Housing Options

Housing Options is a defined term and refers to:

- Types such as single-detached, rowhouses, *additional residential units* and multi-residential buildings
- Forms such as co-ownership housing, life lease housing and co-operative housing
- Costs such as housing that is *affordable* to low and moderate income residents and workers
- Functions such as special needs housing and student housing
- A full mix and range of housing options also includes both ownership and rental tenure
- Conversion of existing housing to provide additional housing units such as secondary suites

2.3 SUPPORTING COMPLETE COMMUNITIES

HOUSING OUR RESIDENTS POLICIES:

It is the policy of Council:

2.3.39 To provide for a mix and range of *housing options* suitable for all ages, household sizes and abilities, in partnership with local municipalities, senior levels of government, the *development* industry, community partners and other stakeholders including:

- **a.** *Affordable* housing to address need throughout the income spectrum, including market and *community housing*;
- **b.** Emergency and transitional housing;
- **c.** Co-housing; group, rooming, and special needs housing; and
- **d.** Purpose-built rental housing.

2.3.40 That a minimum 25% of new housing outside of Regional Centres and *major transit station areas* be *affordable* in each local municipality.

2.3.41 That a minimum 35% of new housing in Regional Centres and *major transit station areas* be *affordable* in each local municipality.

2.3.42 That a minimum of 1,000 new purpose-built rental units be built Region-wide per year, with local municipal targets provided in Table 2.

Table 2 – Purpose Built Minimum Rental Target by Municipality

Municipality	2021 to 2031 Total Unit Target	2031 to 2041 Total Unit Target	2041 to 2051 Total Unit Target	2021 to 2051 Total Unit Target
Aurora	500	250	250	1,000
East Gwillimbury	750	750	750	2,250
Georgina	250	250	250	750
King	250	250	250	750
Markham	3,000	3,250	3,750	10,000
Newmarket	500	250	250	1,000
Richmond Hill	1,500	1,250	1,250	4,000
Vaughan	2,750	3,250	2,500	8,500
Whitchurch-Stouffville	500	500	750	1,750
Total	**10,000**	**10,000**	**10,000**	**30,000**

2.3.43 To promote *housing options*, including those identified in 2.3.39 through the use of land use planning, financial and other tools, including:

- **a.** Prioritizing the use of public lands for *affordable* housing, and emergency and transitional housing, including areas well serviced by transit;
- **b.** Encouraging the *development* industry to:
  - **i.** show flexibility in design and construction choices for new *developments*; and
  - **ii.** identify approaches and locations for *affordable* housing early in the *development* process.
- **c.** Working with local municipalities and other key stakeholders to explore opportunities to deliver housing in a timely manner.

2.3 SUPPORTING COMPLETE COMMUNITIES

Non-traditional building types

Flexibility in design and construction choices includes the consideration of non-traditional building types. Non-traditional building types include built forms designed to develop, intensify and bridge the gap between traditional housing options and high density developments, aimed at bringing more affordable options to market. Examples may include tiny homes, multi-generational housing and laneway housing.

Innovative design and construction works to decrease construction costs. Examples may include modular housing, 3-D printing and building multi-residential developments using timber framing.

2.3.44 To require that local municipal official plan and zoning by-laws permit a range of *housing options*, unit sizes, tenure and levels of affordability within each community, including:

- **a.** Consideration of *inclusionary zoning*;
- **b.** Incorporation of *additional residential unit* policies;
- **c.** Prohibition of demolition or conversion of purpose-built rental buildings if the rental vacancy rate is less than 3% for a period of more than three consecutive years in the local municipality;
- **d.** Permitting, facilitating and appropriately distributing *housing options* throughout communities, including those identified in policy 2.3.39; and
- **e.** Implementation of municipal housing strategies through local planning processes.

2.3.45 To develop a plan, in collaboration with local municipalities, senior levels of government, the *development* industry, community partners and other stakeholders to increase *housing options*, including *affordable* and purpose-built rental options.

Margaret Mitchell Place, City of Vancouver, an example of modular construction.

2.3 SUPPORTING COMPLETE COMMUNITIES

SUPPORTING and GROWING the YORK REGION ECONOMY

York Region is a top destination for businesses and talent across a number of industries. York Region is well positioned to continue to compete for new business investment with forecasted employment growth and also to attract a talented and skilled workforce. Employment areas are a part of complete communities and assist in providing job opportunities close to residential communities. New economic growth is seen as a driver of complete communities and assists in facilitating creativity, fostering innovation and creating a vibrant York Region. The rural economy, including agriculture and agri-food sector, as well as the tourism sector also provide a range of employment uses for the benefit of York Region.

Retail trade is one component of a healthy economy and York Region is home to a significant number of retail uses that are continually evolving. Local retail areas are key components of mixed-use communities and these retail areas should incorporate effective urban design to ensure the integration of retail uses within the community.

The policies in this section are intended to provide guidance to support and grow the York Region economy throughout the various identified sectors.

> ***Objective:*** *To attract and retain a diverse range of employers and invest in infrastructure that diversifies and strengthens York Region's economy and supports equal employment opportunities for residents.*

SUPPORTING and GROWING the YORK REGION ECONOMY POLICIES:

It is the policy of Council:

2.3.46 To integrate and align land use planning and economic *development* goals and strategies to retain and attract investment and employment.

2.3.47 To create high quality employment opportunities for residents with the goal of 1 job for every 2 residents.

2.3 SUPPORTING COMPLETE COMMUNITIES

2.3.48 To support access to employment opportunities for all York Region residents.

2.3.49 To create vibrant and healthy communities that attract and retain talent, a highly skilled labour force, and quality employers.

2.3.50 To encourage local municipalities to foster an economic environment that supports businesses, grows employment and volunteer opportunities, and attracts and retains talent by developing policies in their official plans, strategies and programs, which may include:

- **a.** Implementing *York Region's Economic Development Action Plan*;
- **b.** Ensuring a diverse range, size and mix of available employment lands;
- **c.** Securing advanced *infrastructure*, communications, and network facilities, including broadband, to support a knowledge economy;
- **d.** Supporting the diverse workforce by providing a mix and range of *housing options* and tenures, including *affordable* housing; and
- **e.** Provision of *human services* and temporary meeting or office space, to support businesses.

2.3.51 To work with local municipalities and the business community to support and strengthen York Region's economic clusters by connecting with employers and establishing and strengthening partnerships with Boards of Trade, Chambers of Commerce, post-secondary and research institutions and companies.

2.3.52 To recognize York Region's role in the broader Greater Golden Horseshoe economy and to work with municipalities, the Province and other stakeholders in taking a coordinated approach to planning for large areas with high concentrations of employment that cross municipal boundaries and are major trip generators, on matters such as transportation demand management and economic *development*.

2.3.53 To work with local municipalities to identify, protect and enhance main streets including historic main streets, in York Region.

2.3.54 To encourage retrofitting, *intensification* and revitalization, in accordance with policy 2.3.13, when redeveloping existing retail, including *major retail sites*.

2.4 CULTURAL HERITAGE

York Region has a rich cultural heritage. It is believed that aboriginal hunting bands first arrived in the area approximately 11,000 years ago. The vibrant history of these and subsequent Indigenous communities, including First Nations and the Métis Nation are found in York Region's significant archaeological resources. York Region is located on treaty territories of the Haudenosaunee, Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation and Williams Treaties First Nations. Today, the Chippewas of Georgina Island First Nation is located both on and off the shores of Lake Simcoe on Snake, Fox and Georgina islands.

York Region's more recent European influenced cultural heritage is evident in buildings like the Sharon Temple in East Gwillimbury, Hillary House in Aurora, Newmarket's Quaker Meeting House and the Village of Maple's octagonal Jacob Rupert House. This legacy is also reflected in heritage streetscapes like Main Street in Old Unionville, Yonge Street in downtown Richmond Hill and in Thornhill (Markham/Vaughan) as well as other resources such as waterways and rail lines. A number of festivals celebrate York Region's heritage and culture and elements of York Region's cultural heritage, including archaeology, are documented in local museums.

This diverse cultural heritage enhances quality of life and helps make York Region unique. The policies of this section are designed to promote and celebrate the cultural heritage activities and to conserve cultural heritage resources, including those of Indigenous cultural heritage and archaeological sites.

> ***Objective:*** *To recognize, conserve and promote cultural heritage resources, cultural landscapes and built heritage of York Region and preserve their value and benefit to the community for present and future residents.*

CULTURAL HERITAGE POLICIES:

It is the policy of Council:

2.4.1 That *cultural heritage resources* shall be *conserved* to foster a sense of place and benefit communities.

2.4.2 To promote well-designed built form and cultural heritage planning, and to *conserve* features that help define character, including *built heritage resources* and *cultural heritage landscapes*.

2.4.3 To ensure that *cultural heritage resources* under York Region's ownership are *conserved*.

2.4.4 To require that *cultural heritage resources* within *secondary plan* study areas be identified, and any significant resources be *conserved*.

2.4.5 To require local municipalities to adopt official plan policies to *conserve cultural heritage resources*, including *significant built heritage resources* and *significant cultural heritage landscapes*, to ensure that *development* and *site alteration* on *adjacent lands* to *protected heritage properties* will *conserve* the heritage attributes of the *protected heritage property*.

2.4 CULTURAL HERITAGE

A Brief History of York Region

It is believed that people first inhabited a tundra-like York Region about 11,000 years ago, hunting caribou and large animals, such as mastodon, at the end of the last ice age. When the climate warmed 9,000 years ago people began to make use of the rich plant and animal resources native to York Region today. Their camps, hunting and trapping territories, and long portage routes linking the lower and upper Great Lakes, through the Schomberg and Black Rivers to the Humber and Don Rivers, are reflected in York Region's rich cultural heritage.

Approximately 2,000 years ago, corn and other crops were introduced from the Mississippi valley to Great Lakes region by Algonquian (Anishnabek) speaking peoples.

In York Region, large communities of Iroquoian-speaking ancestors of the Huron-Wendat formed, surrounded by hundreds of acres of cornfields.

The dispersal of the Huron-Wendat to Wendake (Huronia) at the end of the 16th century led to occupation of the north shore of Lake Ontario by Seneca and Cayuga peoples in the mid-17th century for a half century. They were then replaced by Anishnabek Mississauga people who had migrated southward from northern Ontario.

European settlers began arriving in the late 1600s and 1700s (including French, Pennsylvania Germans, United Empire Loyalists and Quakers), settling along the river and trail systems that followed the ancient Aboriginal settlement patterns. In 1792, Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe established the original limits of York County. York Region's early pattern of community development was influenced by the river and trail systems which followed ancient Aboriginal patterns.

Also during the 17th and 18th centuries, the growth of the fur trade led to an increase in offspring of mixed ancestry between Indigenous women and European fur traders. This population established communities along the fur trade routes, and a new Aboriginal people emerged – the Métis.

Euro-Canadian communities grew around saw and grist mills situated along York Region's rivers. Yonge Street was cleared by 1800, linking communities between Lake Simcoe and Lake Ontario. And three rail lines built in the mid-1800s encouraged significant growth in the communities through which they passed.

In the twentieth century, mechanization, which increased manufacturing, encouraged the rural population to migrate to urban centres in search of work. The car replaced the railway as the major mover of people, encouraged growth throughout York Region and gave rise to suburban development. In the years following the Second World War, natural population growth and immigration from around the world gained momentum.

Today there is a rich tapestry of cultures found throughout York Region, including the descendants of early Indigenous inhabitants and settlers, as well as more recent new Canadians from every corner of the globe.

It is the policy of Council:

2.4.6 To support local municipal efforts in promoting heritage awareness, establishing heritage conservation districts and integrating identified *cultural heritage landscapes* into official plans and engaging with Indigenous communities in these efforts, where appropriate.

2.4 CULTURAL HERITAGE

2.4.7 That local municipalities shall compile and maintain a register of *significant cultural heritage resources* protected under the *Ontario Heritage Act* and other *significant heritage resources*, in consultation with heritage experts, local heritage committees, and other levels of government.

2.4.8 To ensure that identified *cultural heritage resources* are evaluated and *conserved* in capital public works projects.

2.4.9 To encourage local municipalities to use community improvement plans and programs to *conserve cultural heritage resources.*

2.4.10 To encourage local municipalities to consider urban design standards or guidelines in core historic areas that reflect the areas' heritage, character and streetscape.

2.4.11 To encourage access to core historic areas by walking, cycling and transit, and to ensure that the design of roads, vehicular access and parking complements the historic built form.

2.4.12 To recognize and celebrate the rich cultural heritage of York Region's ethnic and cultural groups.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Indigenous and European archaeological resources contribute to York Region's unique identity. They include sites that may contain scatters of artifacts, the remains of structures, cultural deposits or subsurface strata of human origin. Archaeological sites are both highly fragile and non-renewable.

This section includes policies that recognize the importance of conserving archaeological resources and the potential to commemorate significant archaeological discoveries in recognition of their contribution to community identity.

> ***Objective:*** *To ensure conservation of archaeological resources occurs in situ or in an alternate location by proper excavation, documentation and preservation of recovered cultural materials and site documentation.*

2.4 CULTURAL HERITAGE

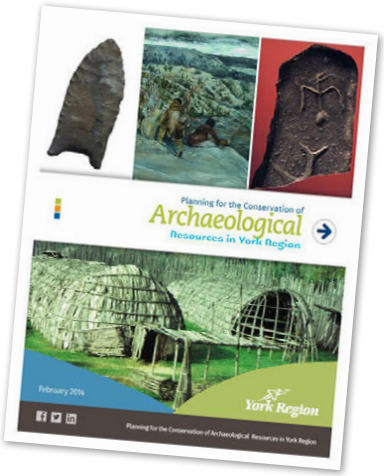
ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES POLICIES:

It is the policy of Council:

2.4.13 To require local municipal official plans to contain policies consistent with Provincial direction dealing with *archaeological resources* that require their identification, appropriate documentation and/or protection in accordance with the following:

- **a.** That upon receiving information that land proposed for *development* may include *archaeological resources* or contain an area of archaeological potential, the proponent of the *development* shall undertake studies by a provincially licensed archaeologist to:
  - **i.** Complete the applicable level of *archaeological assessment* of the land in compliance with current Provincial requirements, standards and guidelines for consultant archaeologists; and
  - **ii.** Assess the impact of the proposed *development* on any *archaeological resources* identified.
- **b.** That Indigenous *significant archaeological resources* shall be considered resources that are preferably to be protected in place unless it is demonstrated that preservation *in situ* is not reasonable in the circumstances. The consultant archaeologist shall engage those Indigenous communities with the closest cultural affiliation and in whose *traditional territories* the *significant archaeological resource* is situated to identify commemorative approaches to assist in maintaining the heritage integrity of the site;
- **c.** That where *archaeological resources* are documented during a Stage 2 *archaeological assessment* and found to be Indigenous in origin, the proponent is encouraged, through their consultant archaeologist, to ensure those Indigenous communities with the closest cultural affiliation and in whose *traditional territories* the *archaeological resources* were found receive a copy of the Stage 2 *archaeological assessment* report prior to the *development* proceeding;
- **d.** That where Indigenous *significant archaeological resources* are identified during a Stage 2 *archaeological assessment*, and preservation in their current location is not possible, the proponent should engage with Indigenous communities with the closest cultural affiliation and in whose *traditional territories* the *significant archaeological resource* is situated to address their interest in the resource and define interpretive and commemorative opportunities related to the resource;
- **e.** The proponent is encouraged, through their consultant archaeologist, to ensure that where a Stage 3 *archaeological assessment* of such an archaeological resource is being undertaken to define the nature and extent of the resource, those Indigenous communities with the closest cultural affiliation and in whose *traditional territories* the *archaeological resource* is located, be notified in advance of onsite assessment work;
- **f.** The proponent shall provide the municipality with a copy of reports and Provincial letters confirming that reports have been filed into the Provincial Register;
- **g.** That where *significant archaeological resources* are preserved *in situ* the area subject to on-site preservation shall be excluded from the land *development* and the municipality shall consider regulatory tools such as zoning restrictions, designation and heritage easements or open space land dedications to protect the resources; and
- **h.** Where human burial sites are encountered during any land disturbing activity, all work must immediately cease and the site be secured, in accordance with legislated requirements. The appropriate provincial and municipal authorities must be notified and the required provisions under the *Funeral, Burial and Cremation Services Act,* along with other applicable protocol or policy must be followed.

2.4 CULTURAL HERITAGE



2.4.14 That local municipalities celebrate archaeological discoveries and/or cultural narratives in *development* proposals through innovative architectural and/or landscape architectural design, public art, or other public realm projects, as appropriate.

2.4.15 To encourage local municipalities, with the advice of a provincially licensed archaeologist and the Province, to develop a contingency plan for the protection of *archaeological resources* in urgent situations, this may include a funding resource to be accessed in emergency situations to protect *archaeological resources* that are discovered by chance or are under imminent threat.

2.4.16 That should previously undocumented *archaeological resources* be discovered during undertaking of Regional public works, including but not limited to the construction of streets and ancillary structures, sewer and water mains and associated structures, it may be an *archaeological site* and therefore subject to Section 48 (1) of the *Ontario Heritage Act*. The proponent or person discovering the *archaeological resources* must cease alteration of the site immediately and engage a licensed consultant archaeologist to carry out *archaeological fieldwork* in compliance with Section 48 (1) of the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

2.4.17 To investigate the potential for a secure re-interment site for human remains where preservation in their current location is not possible and an interpretation centre for Indigenous *artifacts* recovered from archaeological investigations in York Region.

2.4.18 To work in partnership with Indigenous communities, local municipalities and stakeholders to review the *York Region Archaeological Management Plan* on the same review schedule as the Plan to ensure that *archaeological resources* information is kept up-to date.

2.4.19 That the *York Region Archaeological Management Plan* and Archaeological Potential Map provide guidance on addressing the policies of this Section. New *development* and *site alteration* shall be screened for archaeological potential using *York Region Archaeological Management Plan* and Archaeological Potential mapping to meet all policies required by the Plan, and shall strive to achieve all policies encouraged in the Plan.

2.5 MANAGING EXCESS SOIL from DEVELOPMENT

Excess soil is soil that has been removed from a project area, typically as a result of development related construction activities and cannot be reused at the same site it was excavated. It is a renewable resource and some of its components can safely be reused and recycled, rather than being treated as waste. Managing excess soil will protect environmentally sensitive areas and prevent the illegal placement of excess soil, while protecting human health and the environment.

The policies in this section provide strategies to deal with excess soil.

Objective: *To work with conservation authorities and local municipalities to protect human health and the environment through the management of excess soil.*

Excess soil includes naturally occurring materials or any combination of materials commonly known as:

- Earth
- Loam
- Subsoil
- Topsoil
- Clay
- Sand
- Gravel

Excess soil does not refer to materials such as:

- Compost
- Engineered fill products
- Asphalt
- Concrete
- Re-used or recycled aggregate product and/or mine tailing
- Soil mixed with debris such as garbage, shingles, painted wood, ashes, or other refuse

2.5 MANAGING EXCESS SOIL from DEVELOPMENT

MANAGING EXCESS SOIL from DEVELOPMENT POLICIES:

It is the policy of Council:

2.5.1 That local municipalities should develop excess soil reuse strategies and/or guidance document as part of planning for growth and *development*.

2.5.2 That local municipalities incorporate best practices for the management of excess soil generated and fill received during *development* or *site alteration*, including *infrastructure development*, within their official plan policies and require measures when assessing *development* proposals, to ensure that:

- **a.** Excess soil is reused on-site or locally to the maximum extent possible;
- **b.** Excess soil reuse planning is undertaken concurrently with *development* planning and design where feasible;
- **c.** Appropriate sites for excess soil storage and processing are permitted close to areas where proposed *development* is concentrated or areas of potential soil reuse; and
- **d.** The placement of excess soil is located outside of *Key Natural Heritage Features* and *Key Hydrologic Features* and fill quality received and fill placement at a site will not cause an adverse effect with regard to the current or proposed use of the property, the natural environment, and is compatible with adjacent land uses; and for lands within the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan; and,
- **e.** In addition to policy 2.5.2 d., fill quality received and fill placement at a site will not cause an adverse effect with regard to *cultural heritage resources*.

2.5.3 That local municipalities regulate excess soil through their local by-laws, as required by applicable Provincial legislation, to mitigate potential negative environmental and community impacts and include best practices for the management of excess soil generated and fill received during *development* and *site alteration*.

3.0 A SUSTAINABLE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

3.1 PLANNING for NATURAL SYSTEMS
3.2 REGIONAL GREENLANDS SYSTEM
3.3 WATER RESOURCE SYSTEM
3.4 NATURAL FEATURES
3.5 MANAGING HAZARDS

3.0 A SUSTAINABLE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

3.1 PLANNING for NATURAL SYSTEMS
3.2 REGIONAL GREENLANDS SYSTEM
3.3 WATER RESOURCE SYSTEM
3.4 NATURAL FEATURES
3.5 MANAGING HAZARDS

York Region contains some of the most significant and environmentally sensitive geological landforms in Ontario, of which the most predominant is the Oak Ridges Moraine.

York Region is also rich in natural features, from the shores of Lake Simcoe to the valleys of the Humber, Don, Rouge, Black, Holland and Maskinonge rivers; to the extensive woodlands, wetlands and rolling hills of the Oak Ridges Moraine.

Many of York Region's natural areas are dependent upon and contribute to a system of surface and sub-surface water that goes beyond local municipal and Regional boundaries. Water is of central importance, including in the culture and lives of Indigenous peoples. For many, water is more than a valuable resource, it is recognized as sacred and the lifeblood of the earth that connects all living things.

Urbanization introduces stresses on native plants and animals, and many species, which could breed and move freely through a natural or agricultural landscape. The ability for plants and animals to migrate, disperse and forage among multiple habitats is critical. A connected system of features and linkages provided by the Regional Greenlands System and water resource system is essential.

The Plan recognizes the importance of York Region's Natural Systems, which include the Regional Greenlands and water resource system and how together they assist in defining the overall Regional Structure. The policies in Chapter 3 are fundamental to ensuring the protection and enhancement of York Region's unique Natural Systems.

Sustainable Natural Environment Goal: *To protect, restore, and enhance the natural environment for current and future generations so that it will sustain life, maintain health, safeguard from natural hazards and provide a high quality of life.*

SUSTAINABILITY BENEFITS of the REGIONAL GREENLANDS SYSTEM

SUSTAINABLE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT
- » Provides habitat and connectivity for plant and animal species
- » Maintains native biodiversity
- » Supports species richness and ecosystem complexity
- » Improves air quality
- » Contributes to water management
- » Mitigates the impacts of climate change

ECONOMIC VITALITY
- » Encourages eco- and agri-tourism and a green economy
- » Enhances property values, creating desirable communities for investment
- » Helps to prevent disease, resulting in reduced healthcare costs
- » Reduces infrastructure costs; reduces peak flows and flooding
- » Helps make York Region an attractive place for businesses
- » Prevents costly non-natural mitigation measures

HEALTHY COMMUNITIES
- » Contributes to equitable and liveable neighbourhoods, feeling of well-being, health and quality of life, community identity and sense of place
- » Provides educational and research opportunities
- » Provides active and passive recreation for healthier lifestyles
- » Heat Management

CULTURAL ECOSYSTEM SERVICES
- » Use of plants for traditional customs and medicines
- » Contributes to sense of place, belonging and social cohension

3.1 PLANNING for NATURAL SYSTEMS

York Region's Natural Systems are made up of features from the Regional Greenlands System and water resource system. These systems and features are complementary and function together to provide habitat for a variety of species and play an important role in York Region's ecology and native biodiversity.

The policies in Chapter 3 are fundamental to ensuring York Region retains its distinct identity; remains an attractive place to invest; ensures economic prosperity; enhances liveability in communities; provides opportunities for active and passive recreation; and contributes to health and a high-quality of life for residents and workers.

> ***Objective:*** *To identify, protect, restore and enhance natural systems and their functions across the Regional Greenlands System and water resource system.*

PLANNING for NATURAL SYSTEMS POLICIES:

It is the policy of Council:

3.1.1 To protect, restore and enhance the Regional Greenlands System and *water resource system*, features and functions shown on *Maps 1C*, *2*, *4*, *7*, *12A* and *12B* and to control new *development* and *site alteration* within the vicinity of the System in accordance with the policies of the Plan.

3.1.2 That the Regional Greenlands System and *water resource system* shown on *Maps 2*, *4*, *7*, *12A* and *12B* are overlays and should be read in conjunction with other policies in the Plan relevant to the underlying land use designation.

3.1.3 That local official plans shall delineate and include policies to protect the Regional Greenlands System and *water resource system* from *development* and *site alteration*. These systems shall incorporate, complement, and build on the systems identified in the Plan, and include policies for the identification and restoration of enhancement areas and linkages, as appropriate.

3.1.4 That in Urban Areas and Towns and Villages, the Regional Greenlands System and *water resource system* shall be designated more specifically in local official plans and secondary plans and integrated into community design using best available scientific information in consultation with conservation authorities. These plans shall contain mapping, policies and detail initiatives that identify remedial works, restoration and enhancement opportunities within and around the system to build its resilience over the long term.

3.1.5 That enhancements to the Regional Greenlands System shall be the responsibility of all stakeholders and may include Regional and local greening initiatives, public and private sector partnerships, partnerships with Indigenous communities, land securement initiatives, ecosystem compensation/off-setting programs, education, stewardship promotion, remedial work, *infrastructure* projects and urban *development* to achieve ecological gains for the systems.

3.1.6 To restore, enhance and maintain linkages and related functions among natural features and areas, *surface water features*, *groundwater features*, including *key natural heritage features* and *key hydrologic features*.

3.1.7 To coordinate planning efforts with conservation authorities and surrounding municipalities so that natural heritage systems and corridors are linked across Regional boundaries.

3.1 PLANNING for NATURAL SYSTEMS

WATERSHED PLANNING

Watershed plans emphasize the importance of managing both ground and surface water systems in a comprehensive way that support sustainable land use planning decisions. This is particularly important in new and intensifying areas of growth. York Region works closely with the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority and the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority in the preparation and implementation of watershed plans for York Region.

The Plan recognizes the watershed as the basic ecological unit upon which planning should be based. The Oak Ridges Moraine is the origin of headwaters for the watersheds in York Region, and is also a significant source of groundwater recharge and discharge. Water balance must be managed to maintain the ecological integrity of key hydrologic features/areas and function. Changes in land use must take into account immediate impacts and cumulative changes to watersheds, and off-site impacts, such as increased stormwater runoff or water contamination.

The Oak Ridges Moraine is one of Ontario's most significant landforms.
Located north of and parallel to Lake Ontario, the Moraine in York Region divides the watersheds draining south into Lake Ontario from those draining north into Lake Simcoe.

The Moraine shapes the present and future form and structure of the Greater Toronto Region. The Moraine's ecological and hydrological features and functions are critical to the Region's continuing health.

The Plan promotes the importance of watershed planning to support sustainable land use planning. Watershed plans have and continue to inform coordinated land use and infrastructure planning decisions to sustainably accommodate growth. Furthermore, watershed plans form the basis for a comprehensive, integrated and long-term assessment of the hydrological and ecological impacts of cross-jurisdictional growth-related decisions. Specifically, these plans assist in measuring potential impacts of stormwater runoff, loss of natural cover, habitat degradation and climate change.

Watershed planning protects the water resource and natural heritage systems that traverse local watersheds. Protection of these systems will help protect property and infrastructure from natural hazard risks, safeguard water quality and quantity, maintain or improve ecological and hydrological functions and improve climate resiliency while accommodating long-term growth. This will help ensure that development and growth will be implemented in an environmentally responsible manner, which is ultimately critical to the health of watersheds as well as to the residents of York Region.

> ***Objective:*** *To protect, restore and enhance water resources for the long-term in a comprehensive and integrated manner through the implementation of watershed plans.*

WATERSHED PLANNING POLICIES:

It is the policy of Council:

3.1.8 To support the updating of *watershed plans* at appropriate intervals, in accordance with Provincial plans, and that the information be used to guide and inform activities of York Region and local municipalities including decisions on the designation of land for growth and planning for water, wastewater, and stormwater *infrastructure*.

3.1.9 To coordinate *watershed* planning initiatives and implement *watershed plan* objectives in partnership with local municipalities, conservation authorities, adjacent municipalities and agencies that:

- **a.** Protect, improve or restore hydrologic system features, functions and linkages;
- **b.** Achieve water quality and quantity objectives for the *watershed*;
- **c.** Address the long-term cumulative impact of *development* on the *watershed* through regional monitoring, reporting and adaptive management as necessary;
- **d.** Protect, enhance and restore *key natural heritage features*, *key hydrologic features*, *key hydrologic areas* and their functions;
- **e.** Provide guidance for sustainable *development*, design and construction;
- **f.** Identify retrofits of existing neighbourhoods to ensure better hydrologic function; and,
- **g.** Evaluate the impacts of a changing climate and identify strategies to minimize impacts.

3.2 REGIONAL GREENLANDS SYSTEM

The primary function and vision of the Regional Greenlands System, as implemented by the policies of the Plan, is the protection of natural heritage features in a system of cores connected by corridors and linkages. Linkage areas are the focus of land securement and enhancement activities. The Regional Greenlands System also provides opportunities for passive recreation such as hiking and nature appreciation. Urban uses and infrastructure projects should contribute ecological gains to greenlands systems through enhancement and restoration, and the creation of natural habitat. The policies in this section provide direction for the protection of the Regional Greenlands System.

Regional Greenlands System ecological services include:

- Climate Regulation
- Recreation
- Genetic Resources
- Soil Retention
- Flood Mitigation
- Food Production
- Habitat for Flora and Fauna
- Nutrient Cycling

Objective: *To identify, protect, restore and enhance the Regional Greenlands System and its features and functions to ensure a healthy system rich in biodiversity.*

REGIONAL GREENLAND SYSTEMS POLICIES:

It is the policy of Council:

3.2.1 That the Regional Greenlands System (as shown on *Map 2*) consists of cores, corridors, and linkages. These include the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan's Natural Core Area and Natural Linkage Area designations, the Natural Heritage System within the Protected Countryside of the Greenbelt Plan, the *Natural Heritage System for the Growth Plan*, approved local natural heritage systems, *key natural heritage features*, *key hydrologic features* and functions, and the lands necessary to maintain these features within a system.

3.2.2 That within Urban Areas and Town and Villages as identified on *Map 1*, refinements to the boundaries of the Regional Greenlands System may occur through approved planning applications supported by appropriate technical studies including subwatershed studies, master environmental servicing plans and *environmental impact studies* in accordance with the applicable Provincial plans and policies of the Plan. These refinements will be incorporated into the Plan through periodic updates by York Region and will not require an amendment to the Plan.

3.2.3 That *development* and *site alteration* be prohibited within the Regional Greenlands System.

3.2.4 That *development* and *site alteration* applications within 120 metres of the Regional Greenlands System shall be accompanied by an *environmental impact study*.

The requirement for, content and scope of the *environmental impact study* will be determined through the pre-consultation meeting. The *environmental impact study* shall also address any requirements of the local municipality and all applicable Provincial plans.

3.2.5 That notwithstanding policy 3.2.3, within the Regional Greenlands System, some uses may be permitted subject to meeting requirements of the applicable Provincial plans such as:

- **a.** Legally existing or permitted land uses, that conform with in-force local official plans, zoning by-laws and *Ministerial Zoning Orders*, at the time the Plan is approved, may be permitted to continue to the extent provided for in local official plans, zoning by-laws and *Ministerial Zoning Orders*;
- **b.** New buildings or structures and the full range of uses for existing and new *agricultural*, *agricultural-related* and *on-farm diversified uses* and *normal farm practices*, subject to Section 3.4 of the Plan, are permitted;
- **c.** *Passive recreational uses*, such as trails in accordance with an approved *environmental impact study* which demonstrates that they can be constructed without negative impact;
- **d.** New *infrastructure* required to service the community including water and wastewater systems, stormwater management systems/facilities and streets if:
  - **i.** no other reasonable alternative location exists and if an approved *environmental impact study* demonstrates that it can be constructed without negative impact, and shall be subject to the policies of the relevant Provincial plan, where applicable; or
  - **ii.** authorized through an *Environmental Assessment*;
- **e.** *Urban agriculture*, recreational and parkland uses on rural lands within the linear river valleys identified in policy 5.3.5, which may include serviced playing field and golf courses. The location, range and types of parkland and recreational uses permitted will be determined by the local municipality through its official plan and/or *secondary plans*.

3.2.6 That *infrastructure* planning, design and construction be sensitive to the features and functions of the Regional Greenlands System and include context sensitive design and innovative technologies to minimize impacts and enhance the system. *Infrastructure* within the system should avoid *key natural heritage features* and *key hydrologic features* where possible and shall be subject to the policies of applicable Provincial plans, including providing *passive recreational* amenities and environmental restoration where appropriate.

3.2.7 That where lands within the Regional Greenlands System are held in private ownership, nothing in the Plan requires that these lands be free and available for public use. Similarly, there is no obligation for a public agency to purchase lands identified as part of the Regional Greenlands System.

3.2.8 To work with local municipalities, conservation authorities and trail organizations on initiatives that contribute to, or complement, the creation of a regional trails network and where appropriate, include pedestrian accessible green spaces, *passive recreational uses* and connections to the Regional Cycling network shown on *Maps 9A* and *9B*.

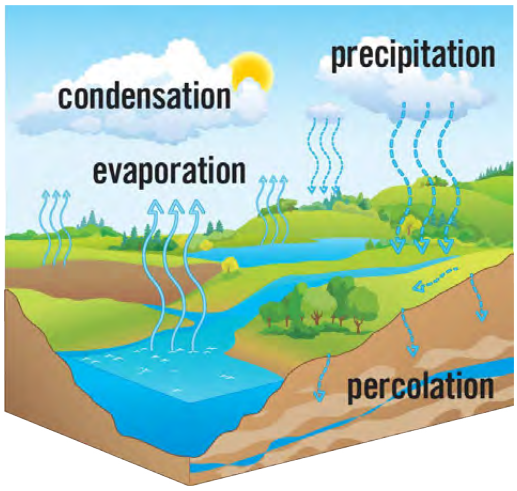
3.3 WATER RESOURCE SYSTEM

York Region's water systems include underground aquifers as well as rivers, streams, ponds, wetlands and lakes, including Lake Simcoe. Although Lake Ontario is not located in York Region, rivers and drinking and wastewater systems connect York Region to the lake. These systems are part of the hydrological cycle and interact through rain, runoff, percolation and evaporation. These systems are not static, but are constantly evolving and changing elements of a broader ecosystem and can continue to be a sustainable, renewable resource for York Region if protected, conserved and enhanced.

York Region's water resource system consists of key hydrologic features, key hydrologic areas, and their functions. Key hydrologic areas maintain ground and surface water quality and quantity by collecting, storing, and filtering rainwater and overland flow, recharging aquifers and feeding downstream tributaries, lakes and wetlands through discharge areas. These areas are sensitive to contamination and feed key hydrologic features and drinking water sources. Groundwater is important as a supply of drinking water and cool water to the Region's streams and rivers as base flow. Water resource systems play a crucial role in ecological function and are also important for recreation, agriculture and industrial purposes.

In 2006, the Province approved the *Clean Water Act* to help protect ground and surface water quality and quantity. As a result, source protection plans were developed to protect these drinking water sources from contamination and overuse. The South Georgian Bay Lake Simcoe and Credit Valley, Toronto Region and Central Lake Source Protection Plans apply in York Region. The policies of the Plan should be read in conjunction with policies of the applicable Source Water Protection Plan.

The policies of this section are intended to provide protection for the key elements of the overall water resource system.



The Hydrological Cycle

The hydrological cycle is the continuous circulation of water within the ecosystem, driven by solar radiation.

The cycle includes the atmosphere, rivers, streams, ponds, wetlands, lakes and underground aquifers.

Water moves through the cycle by the physical processes of evaporation, precipitation, percolation, runoff and subsurface flow.

3.3 WATER RESOURCE SYSTEM

The York, Peel, Durham, Toronto (YPDT) and Conservation Authorities Moraine Coalition (CAMC) Oak Ridges Moraine Groundwater Program

Established in 2001, the YPDT and CAMC program is focused on compiling and managing groundwater resource information, including the long-term management of groundwater-related data, maps, reports and resource knowledge for the purposes of effective resource stewardship and management. The program builds, maintains and provides partner agencies with the regional geological and hydrogeological context for ongoing groundwater studies and management initiatives within the partnership area.

Objective: *To maintain, restore and enhance water system health to ensure water quality and quantity, and to maintain the natural hydrologic function of water systems.*

WATER RESOURCE SYSTEM POLICIES:

It is the policy of Council:

3.3.1 To protect, restore and enhance the *water resource system* as shown on *Maps 4*, *7* and *12A* and *12B*.

3.3.2 That *key hydrologic areas* within York Region are shown on *Maps 7*, *12A* and *12B* and include:

- **a.** *significant groundwater recharge areas*;
- **b.** *Ecologically Significant Groundwater Recharge Areas*;
- **c.** *highly vulnerable aquifers*; and
- **c.** *significant surface water contribution areas.*

3.3.3 That *key hydrologic areas* shown on *Maps 7*, *12A* and *12B* shall be updated periodically through updates to the Plan and shall not require an amendment to the Plan.

3.3.4 To require local municipalities to establish policies and programs to protect, improve or restore *water resources system*.

3.3.5 That *major development* on the Oak Ridges Moraine is prohibited unless a water budget and water conservation plan is prepared consistent with the applicable *watershed plan*.

3.3.6 That *development* and *site alteration* in the *water resource system* be designed with the goal to protect, improve or restore ground and surface water quality and quantity and ecological and hydrological characteristics of *key hydrologic features* and *key hydrologic areas*. Efforts to maintain these characteristics and functions shall be demonstrated through master environmental servicing plans, or other appropriate technical studies, which include strategies and techniques to address the goal.

3.3.7 That in *recharge management areas* (as shown on *Map 12A*) *development* and *site alteration* will maintain pre-development recharge rates to the fullest extent possible.

3.3.8 That in *significant groundwater recharge areas* (as shown on *Maps 12A* and *12B*), *highly vulnerable aquifers* (as shown on *Map 7*) and *significant surface water contribution areas* (as shown on *Map 12B*) best management practices are encouraged for all *development* proposals that involve:

- **a.** Manufacturing, handling, and/or storage of organic solvents and dense non-aqueous phase liquids; and
- **b.** Application, storage, and/or handling of road salt on private roadways, parking lots, and pedestrian walkways while recognizing that maintaining public safety is paramount.

3.3.9 That *major development* may be permitted within *key hydrologic areas* of the Protected Countryside where it has been demonstrated that the hydrologic functions, including groundwater and surface water quality and quantity, of these areas shall be protected and, where possible, improved or restored through:

- **a.** The identification of planning, design and construction practices and techniques;
- **b.** Meeting other criteria and direction set out in the applicable *watershed* planning or *subwatershed plan*; and
- **c.** Meeting any applicable provincial standards, guidelines and procedures.

3.3.10 That *major development* may be permitted within *key hydrologic areas* of the Protected Countryside when *major development* is a new or expanding building or structure for *agricultural uses*, *agriculture-related uses* or *on-farm diversified uses* where the total impervious surface does not exceed 10% of the lot.

3.3.11 To work with the Province, local municipalities, conservation authorities, Indigenous communities and other relevant agencies within the Permit to Take Water process to ensure the conservation, protection and wise use and management of the water resources in the Region.

AQUIFER VULNERABILITY

Aquifer Vulnerability refers to the shallow groundwater aquifer's susceptibility to contamination from both human and natural sources. This section contains policies that apply to lands located within the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan area and lands under the *Clean Water Act*. *Map 7* identifies the location of areas of high and low Aquifer Vulnerability in the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Area and Highly Vulnerability Aquifer areas of the *Clean Water Act*.

Objective: *To protect areas of aquifer vulnerability to ensure water quality.*

AQUIFER VULNERABILITY POLICIES:

It is the policy of Council:

3.3.12 That *Map 7* shall be consulted in determining whether the Aquifer Vulnerability provisions of the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan, *Clean Water Act*, and the Plan apply to applications for *development* and *site alteration*.

3.3.13 To prohibit the generation and storage of the following, in areas of High Aquifer Vulnerability within the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan area:

- **a.** Hazardous waste or liquid industrial waste;
- **b.** Waste disposal sites and facilities;
- **c.** Organic soil conditioning sites and snow storage and disposal facilities;
- **d.** Underground and above ground storage tanks that are not equipped with an approved secondary containment device; and,
- **e.** Storage of a contaminant listed in Schedules to Ontario regulations.

3.3.14 That the restrictions in 3.3.13 do not apply to agricultural lands if the owner or operator of the agricultural operation is carrying out operations that are regulated under the *Nutrient Management Act*, and complies with all the standards established under that Act.

3.3.15 To require that local municipal official plans contain mapping and policies that prohibit or restrict uses in areas of Aquifer Vulnerability in accordance with the requirements of the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan.

3.3.16 That an application for *major development* within *Highly Vulnerable Aquifers* as identified on *Map 7* involving the manufacturing, handling and/or storage of bulk fuel or chemicals as activities prescribed under the *Clean Water Act*, shall be accompanied by a *Contaminant Management Plan*, as deemed necessary by York Region.

3.3.17 To consider restrictions on the haulage of chemicals and volatile materials in *Wellhead Protection Areas*, shown on *Map 6*, and Areas of High Aquifer Vulnerability, shown on *Map 7*.

3.4 NATURAL FEATURES

Key natural heritage features and key hydrologic features are the building blocks of York Region's natural systems. Many of these features are cores and corridors and can function as potential linkages.

Key natural heritage features and key hydrologic features within York Region are subject to five policy regimes: the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan, the Greenbelt Plan, the Growth Plan, the Lake Simcoe Protection Plan and the Provincial Policy Statement. The five policy regimes contain minor differences in terminology. For consistency in terminology, natural features within York Region are identified as key natural heritage features and key hydrologic features and these features can exist within the Regional Greenlands System or outside of the System.

The policies of this section identify and protect key natural heritage features and key hydrologic features within York Region.

> ***Objective:*** *To ensure that key natural heritage features and, key hydrologic features and their functions are protected, restored and enhanced.*

NATURAL FEATURES POLICIES:

It is the policy of Council:

3.4.1 That *key natural heritage features* and *key hydrologic features* within York Region include:

- **a.** *Habitat of endangered and threatened species*;
- **b.** *Fish habitat*;
- **c.** *Wetlands*;
- **d.** *Life Science Areas and Earth Science Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest* (ANSI's);
- **e.** *Significant valleylands*;
- **f.** *Significant woodlands*;
- **g.** *Significant wildlife habitat* (including habitat of special concern species);
- **h.** *Sand barrens*, *savannahs* and *tallgrass prairies*;
- **i.** *Lakes and their littoral zones*;
- **j.** *Permanent* and *intermittent streams*;
- **k.** *Kettle lakes*;
- **l.** *Seepage areas and springs*; and
- **m.** Lake Simcoe Shoreline.

3.4.2 That maps for *key natural heritage features* and *key hydrologic features* are provided for features where data is available for the purposes of implementing the policies of the Plan. These maps are meant to be informative and may be further refined subject to policies of the Plan.

3.4 NATURAL FEATURES

The following table identifies which features are considered key natural heritage features, or key hydrologic features in the Greenbelt Plan, Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan, Lake Simcoe Protection Plan and the Growth Plan.

Feature	Greenbelt Plan	Oak Ridges Moraine	Lake Simcoe Protection Plan	Growth Plan
Habitat of endangered and threatened species	•	•		•
Fish habitat	•	•		•
Areas of natural and scientific interest (ANSI)	• (Life Science)	• (Life Science)		• (Life Science)
Significant valleylands	•	•	•	•
Significant woodlands	•	•	•	•
Significant wildlife habitat (including significant habitat of special concern species)	•	•		•
Sand Barrens, Savannahs, Tallgrass Prairies	•	•		•
Alvars	•			•
Wetlands	•	•	•	•
Permanent and Intermittent Streams	•	•	•	•
Lakes (and their littoral zones)	•		•	•
Kettle Lakes		•		
Seepage Areas and Springs	•	•		•
Lake Simcoe Shoreline			•	
Natural areas abutting Lake Simcoe			•	

It is the policy of Council:

3.4.3 That *key natural heritage features* and *key hydrologic features* in policy 3.4.1 shall be identified and confirmed in accordance with criteria contained within the Plan or, where Regional criteria are not provided, using procedures established by the Province, where applicable.

3.4 NATURAL FEATURES

3.4.4 To require local municipalities to implement a natural heritage systems-based approach to identify *key natural heritage features* and *key hydrologic features* in local official plans and zoning by-laws using most current environmental mapping and information available; and to provide appropriate policies for their protection, including: requirements for *environmental impact studies*, minimum *vegetation protection zones*, and the definition of permitted uses.

3.4.5 To prohibit *development* and *site alteration* within *key natural heritage features*, *key hydrologic features*, *vegetation protection zones* and *adjacent lands*, unless:

- **a.** The use is permitted by the Plan, the applicable Provincial Plan and it is demonstrated through an *environmental impact study* that the *development* or *site alteration* will not result in a negative impact on the natural feature or its ecological functions; or,
- **b.** As authorized through an *Environmental Assessment*; or
- **c.** For *agricultural*, *agriculture-related* and *on-farm diversified uses*, subject to the applicable Provincial plan.

3.4.6 That notwithstanding policy 3.4.5, applications for *development* or *site alteration* within *fish habitat* and *habitat of endangered and threatened species* are not permitted except in accordance with Provincial and Federal requirements.

3.4.7 That *key natural heritage features* and *key hydrologic features* shall be precisely delineated on a site-by-site basis using procedures established by the Province or other authorities, where applicable. Such delineation shall occur through the approval of *Planning Act* applications supported by appropriate technical studies such as master environmental servicing plans or *environmental impact study(ies)*. Where such delineation refines boundaries shown on related maps within the Plan, updates to these maps can occur without an amendment to the Plan.

3.4.8 To prohibit removal, in whole or in part, of a *key natural heritage feature* or a *key hydrologic feature* by unauthorized *development* or *site alteration*. Areas where an unauthorized removal has occurred shall continue to be subject to the policies of the Plan as if the feature was still in place. Impacted areas shall be restored to the previous condition or better.

3.4.9 That an application for *development* and *site alteration* within 120 metres of a *key natural heritage feature* or *key hydrological feature* shall be accompanied by an *environmental impact study*. The requirement for, content and scope of the study will be determined through the pre-consultation meeting and a terms of reference shall be submitted to the approval authority early in the application process. The *environmental impact study* shall also address the requirements of any applicable Provincial plan.

3.4.10 That notwithstanding policies 3.4.5 c., 3.4.9, 3.4.12 and 3.4.13, new buildings and structures for *agricultural*, *agriculture-related* or *on-farm diversified uses* are not required to undertake an *environmental impact study* if a minimum 30 metre *vegetation protection zone* is provided from a *key natural heritage feature* or *key hydrologic feature*.

3.4.11 That outside existing settlement areas a proposal for *development* or *site alteration* within 240 metres of the Lake Simcoe Shoreline must demonstrate that it will maintain, enhance or restore functional wildlife movement corridors between *key natural heritage features* or *key hydrologic features*.

3.4.12 That *passive recreational uses*, such as trails, may be permitted within *key natural heritage features* and *key hydrologic features* and their associated *vegetation protection zones* if it is demonstrated through an *environmental impact study* that the uses will not result in a *negative impact* on the natural feature or its ecological functions.

3.4 NATURAL FEATURES

3.4.13 That the *vegetation protection zone* and *adjacent land* to *key natural heritage features* and *key hydrologic features* shall be determined through *environmental impact study* and meet the minimum widths identified in Table 3 below:

Table 3: Minimum Buffer/Vegetation Protection Zone (VPZ)

Feature	Minimum Buffer/Vegetation Protection Zone (VPZ)					
	Protected Countryside of the Greenbelt Plan (outside the Regional Greenlands System)	**Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan** (applies to Natural Core, Natural Linkage, Countryside and Settlement Areas*)	**Lake Simcoe Protection Plan**	**Regional Greenlands System** (within the Greenbelt Plan and Future Urban Area)	**Urban Areas, Towns and Villages, Hamlets, New Community Areas** (outside Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan area)	**Minimum Area of Influence/ Adjacent Lands**
Habitat of endangered and threatened species	Determined in accordance with Provincial and Federal requirements	Determined in accordance with Provincial and Federal requirements	Determined in accordance with Provincial and Federal requirements	Determined by an *Environmental Impact Study***	Determined in accordance with Provincial and Federal requirements	120m
Fish habitat	Determined by an *Environmental Impact Study*	30m	Determined by an *Environmental Impact Study*	30m	Determined by an *Environmental Impact Study*	120m
Areas of natural and scientific interest (ANSI)	Determined by an *Environmental Impact Study*	Determined by an *Environmental Impact Study* (earth science heritage evaluation for Earth Science ANSI)	Determined by an *Environmental Impact Study*	Determined by an *Environmental Impact Study*	Determined by an *Environmental Impact Study*	120m (50m for Earth Science ANSI in the ORMCP)
Significant valleylands	Determined by an *Environmental Impact Study*	30m	30m	Determined by an *Environmental Impact Study*	Determined by an *Environmental Impact Study*	120m
Significant woodlands	10m	30m	30m	30m	10m	120m

Table 3: Minimum Buffer/Vegetation Protection Zone (VPZ) (continued)

Feature	Minimum Buffer/Vegetation Protection Zone (VPZ)					
	Protected Countryside of the Greenbelt Plan (outside the Regional Greenlands System)	**Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan** (applies to Natural Core, Natural Linkage, Countryside and Settlement Areas*)	**Lake Simcoe Protection Plan**	**Regional Greenlands System** (within the Greenbelt Plan and Future Urban Area)	**Urban Areas, Towns and Villages, Hamlets, New Community Areas** (outside Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan area)	**Minimum Area of Influence/ Adjacent Lands**
Significant wildlife habitat (including significant habitat of special concern species)	Determined by an *Environmental Impact Study*	Determined by an *Environmental Impact Study*	Determined by an *Environmental Impact Study*	Determined by an *Environmental Impact Study*	Determined by an *Environmental Impact Study*	120m
Sand Barrens, Savannahs, Tallgrass Prairies	Determined by an *Environmental Impact Study*	30m	Determined by an *Environmental Impact Study*	Determined by an *Environmental Impact Study*	Determined by an *Environmental Impact Study*	120m
Provincially Significant and Provincial Plan area Wetlands	30m	30m	30m	30m	30m	120m
Other Evaluated Wetlands (outside Provincial Plan area)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	15m	N/A
Permanent and Intermittent Streams	30m	30m	30m	30m	Determined by an *Environmental Impact Study*	120m
Lakes (and their littoral zones), Kettle lakes	30m	30m**	30m	30m	Determined by an *Environmental Impact Study*	120m

Table 3: Minimum Buffer/Vegetation Protection Zone (VPZ) (continued)

Feature	Minimum Buffer/Vegetation Protection Zone (VPZ)					
	Protected Countryside of the Greenbelt Plan (outside the Regional Greenlands System)	**Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan** (applies to Natural Core, Natural Linkage, Countryside and Settlement Areas*)	**Lake Simcoe Protection Plan**	**Regional Greenlands System** (within the Greenbelt Plan and Future Urban Area)	**Urban Areas, Towns and Villages, Hamlets, New Community Areas** (outside Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan area)	**Minimum Area of Influence/ Adjacent Lands**
Seepage Areas and Springs	30m	30m	Determined by an *Environmental Impact Study*	30m	Determined by an *Environmental Impact Study*	120m
Lake Simcoe Shoreline	N/A	N/A	30m (within shoreline built-up area, as defined in the Lake Simcoe Protection Plan) 100m (outside existing settlement areas and shoreline built-up area, as defined in the Lake Simcoe Protection Plan)	N/A	30m	120m (within shoreline built-up area, as defined in the Lake Simcoe Protection Plan) 240m (outside existing settlement areas, as defined in the Lake Simcoe Protection Plan)
Natural areas abutting Lake Simcoe	N/A	N/A	30m	N/A	N/A	120m

* In the Urban Area and Towns and Villages, as designated on April 22, 2002, where secondary plans, official plans or zoning by-laws, or Master Environmental Servicing, or Functional Servicing Plans are approved based on environmental studies that have identified minimum vegetation protective zones that are different from those identified in the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan, then the standards established within those plans shall prevail.
** Minimum vegetation protection zone for Kettle Lakes within Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan area is greater of all land within the surface catchment area or within 30 metres of any part of feature.
*** Evaluation will not be required for a proposal for new development or site alteration on a site where the only key natural heritage feature is the habitat of endangered species and threatened species.
Note: Where features overlap, the VPZ and *adjacent lands* should extend from the furthest extent.

3.4 NATURAL FEATURES

3.4.14 That where a *woodland*, *wetland*, or *Life Science Area of Natural and Scientific Interest* identified for protection which is located both within and outside the boundary (i.e. straddles the boundary) of the Oak Ridges Moraine, the *Lake Simcoe watershed*, the Natural Heritage System of the Protected Countryside in the Greenbelt, or the *Natural Heritage System for the Growth Plan* and more than 50% of the feature is located within that boundary, the *vegetation protection zone* that is most protective of the feature shall generally apply to the portion outside of the Provincial plan area unless an *environmental impact study* demonstrates that a lesser buffer is appropriate. The *vegetation protection zone* outside of the Provincial plan area shall not be less than that required by policy 3.4.13 of the Plan.

3.4.15 That local municipalities may undertake minor rounding out of shoreline *built-up area* in accordance with Lake Simcoe Protection Plan, Provincial Policy Statement and other Provincial plans.

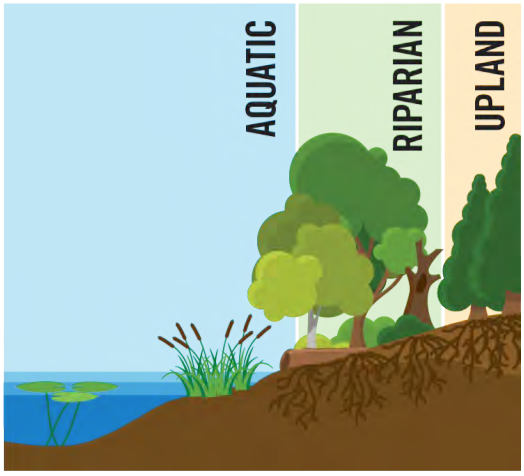
3.4.16 That significant alteration of the Lake Simcoe Shoreline, or the shore of a freshwater estuary of a stream connected to Lake Simcoe, is not permitted except as provided in the Lake Simcoe Protection Plan.

3.4.17 That within the *Lake Simcoe watershed*, an application for *development* or *site alteration* within settlement and rural settlement areas, as defined by the Lake Simcoe Protection Plan, where applicable, shall:

- **a.** Increase or improve *fish habitat* in streams, lakes and *wetlands*, and any adjacent riparian areas;
- **b.** Include landscaping and habitat restoration that increases the ability of native plants and animals to use valleylands or riparian areas as wildlife habitat and movement corridors;
- **c.** Seek to avoid, minimize and/or mitigate impacts associated with the quality and quantity of urban run-off into receiving streams, lakes and *wetlands*; and,
- **d.** Establish or increase the extent and width of a self-sustaining *vegetation protection zone* adjacent to Lake Simcoe to a minimum of 30 metres where feasible.

3.4.18 That applications for *development* or *site alteration* on the Oak Ridges Moraine shall identify planning, design and construction practices that ensure that no buildings or other *site alterations* impede the movement of plants and animals between *key natural heritage features*, *key hydrologic features* and *adjacent lands* within the Natural Core Area and the Natural Linkage Area as identified on *Map 1C*.

Typical Wetland



For development in and around key natural heritage features, other environmental approvals and engaging with Indigenous communities may be required in conjunction with *Planning Act* approvals, or if works are proposed prior to receipt of Planning approvals. Examples include:

- Forest Conservation By-law Permits (Regional)
- Tree By-law Permits (Local Municipal)
- Development, Interference with Wetlands and Alterations to Shorelines and Watercourses Permits (Conservation Authority)
- Site Alteration or Fill Permits (Local Municipal)

WETLANDS

Wetlands are essential natural elements of the Regional ecosystem, providing environmental, economic and social benefits. These lands, which are seasonally or permanently covered by shallow water or where the water table is close to or at the surface, are characterized by hydric soils and hydrophytic or water-tolerant plants. Among other functions, wetlands control and store surface water to assist in flood control and groundwater recharge. Wetlands also act as sediment traps to improve water quality and act as habitat for a wide variety of plant and animal species.

Provincial policy prohibits development in provincially significant wetlands, as well as within identified wetlands within the Oak Ridges Moraine Plan Area, and the Natural Heritage Systems of the Greenbelt Plan and Growth Plan. Other wetlands outside of these areas that have not been identified as provincially significant, but which have been formally evaluated by the Ministry of Natural Resources, also exist in York Region. *Map 4 – Key Hydrologic Features* shows the general location of all evaluated wetlands, as well as identified wetlands within the Oak Ridges Moraine, Greenbelt, Growth Plan and Lake Simcoe watershed.

Objective: *To protect and enhance wetlands and their ecological functions and ensure no loss of wetland function or area in York Region.*

WETLANDS POLICIES:

It is the policy of Council:

3.4.19 That notwithstanding policy 3.4.5 of the Plan, *development* and *site alteration* is prohibited within Provincially Significant and Provincial Plan Area *wetlands* as shown on *Map 4* of the Plan. Due to the scale of the mapping in the Plan, smaller *wetlands* may not be visible. More detailed mapping is available from York Region.

3.4.20 To permit *development* and *site alteration* within 120 metres of *wetlands* identified on *Map 4*, but not within the *vegetation protection zone*, subject to an approved *environmental impact study* that demonstrates no negative impacts to the *wetland* feature or its ecological functions. Notwithstanding the aforementioned, within the *vegetation protection zone*, *development* and *site alteration* may be permitted in accordance with policies 3.2.5.c and 3.2.5.d of the Plan.

3.4.21 That applications for *development* and *site alteration* within 120 metres of *wetlands* not evaluated per the Ontario Wetland Evaluation System, or *wetlands* not shown on *Map 4* of the Plan shall be accompanied by an *environmental impact study* that determines their importance, functions and means of protection and/or maintenance of function, as appropriate, to the satisfaction of the approval authority.

3.4.22 That where newly identified *wetlands* are:

a. Determined as Provincially Significant Wetlands, or are outside of urban areas and towns and villages, they will be subject to policies 3.4.13, 3.4.19 and 3.4.20 of the Plan and subject to the requirements of the applicable Provincial plan.

b. Not captured in policy 3.4.22, they will be subject to policies 3.4.13 and 3.4.21 of the Plan.

3.4.23 That Provincial boundary refinements or reclassification of *wetlands* as shown on *Map 4* will not require an amendment to the Plan.

3.4.24 That where new *wetlands* are evaluated and/or approved by the Province, York Region may amend this Plan to include updated information.

WOODLANDS

Trees and woodlands are significant components of York Region's natural systems and provide a variety of important environmental, social and economic benefits within and beyond its borders. These benefits include greenhouse gas absorption, pollution reduction, erosion prevention, water retention, provision of wildlife habitat, recreation and the sustainable harvest of wood.

Over the years agricultural uses, development and urbanization have impacted tree cover and much of the remaining woodland cover is fragmented with limited interior habitat. Maintaining and enhancing significant woodlands and integrating them into the Region's communities is extremely important.

> **York Region Forest Conservation Bylaw**
> York Region has a Forest Conservation Bylaw that restricts and regulates the removal of trees on private lands through the issuance of permits. There are many tools available to private landowners to assist in the sustainable management of woodlands, including the Managed Forest Tax Incentive Program.

The policies of this section provide for the identification, management and improvement of significant woodlands and canopy cover to ensure that York Region will maintain or increase current levels of canopy and woodland cover to support biodiversity, increase ecological resilience and minimize the impacts of climate change. These policies are further implemented by the York Region Forest Management Plan.

> ***Objective:*** *To protect significant woodlands and their biodiversity and encourage reforestation to provide environmental, social and economic benefits for the residents of York Region.*

WOODLANDS POLICIES:

It is the policy of Council:

3.4.25 To increase *woodland* cover to a minimum of 25% of York Region's total land area.

3.4.26 To increase canopy cover to a minimum of 40% of York Region's total land area.

Woodland and Canopy cover

Woodland cover is the total area covered by the Region's woodlands sometimes referred to as forest cover. A woodland is treed land of at least 0.2 hectare, or about half an acre, in area.

Canopy cover is the total area covered by all trees and shrubs in the Region. It includes woodland canopy and the canopy provided by trees and shrubs along streets, in parks, yards, cemeteries, on farms, around businesses, and in all other locations.

It is the policy of Council:

3.4.27 That notwithstanding policy 3.4.5.a of the Plan, *development* and *site alteration* is prohibited within *significant woodlands* and their associated *vegetation protection zone* except as provided for elsewhere within the Plan.

3.4.28 That *Map 5* identifies *woodlands* in York Region based on best available information and data. The determination of *woodland* significance will rely on site-specific studies per policies 3.4.30 and 3.4.31 of the Plan. Due to the scale of the mapping in the Plan, not all *woodlands* are visible. More detailed mapping is available from York Region.

3.4.29 That local municipalities shall develop an Urban Forest Management Plan, together with York Region, that may include additional local *woodlands* for protection.

3.4.30 That *significant woodlands* be verified on a site-by-site basis and shall include those *woodlands* meeting one of the following criteria:

- **a.** Is 0.5 hectares or larger and:
  - **i.** directly supports *globally or provincially rare plants, animals or communities* as assigned by the Natural Heritage Information Centre; or,
  - **ii.** directly supports *threatened or endangered species*, with the exception of specimens deemed not requiring protection by the Province (e.g. as is sometimes the case with Butternut); or,
  - **iii.** is within 30 metres of a provincially significant *wetland* or *wetland* including those identified on *Map 4*, *waterbody*, *permanent stream* or *intermittent stream*;
- **b.** Is 2 hectares or larger and:
  - **i.** is located outside of the Urban Area, Towns and Villages, or *Hamlets* and is within 100 metres of a *Life Science Area of Natural and Scientific Interest*, a provincially significant *wetland* or *wetland* including those identified on *Map 4*, *significant valleyland*, or *fish habitat*; or,
  - **ii.** occurs within the Regional Greenlands System;
- **c.** Is south of the Oak Ridges Moraine and is 4 hectares or larger in size;
- **d.** Is north of the Oak Ridges Moraine and is 10 hectares or larger in size;
- **e.** On the Oak Ridges Moraine the *woodland* will be evaluated for significance based on the requirements of the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan and associated technical papers; or,
- **f.** On lands in the Greenbelt Natural Heritage System, the *woodland* will be evaluated for significance based on the requirements of the Greenbelt Plan and associated technical papers; or,
- **g.** On lands in the *Lake Simcoe watershed*, outside of the Greenbelt, the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan, and existing settlement areas, the *woodland* will be evaluated for significance based on the requirements of the Lake Simcoe Protection Plan and associated technical papers.

Evaluation of "Directly Supports"

When determining whether a woodland **directly supports** a species, the following may be considered:

- Is the species dependent on the woodland for a portion of its life cycle?
- Does the species occurrence depend on the woodland?
- Will the species occurrence persist in the context of a change in the surrounding land use?
- Does habitat for the species exist within the woodland?

It is the policy of Council:

3.4.31 That within the Urban Area or within the existing settlement areas as defined in the Lake Simcoe Protection Plan, and outside of the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan and Greenbelt Plan areas, a *woodland*, or portions thereof, which would be defined as *significant woodland* in accordance with policy 3.4.30 of the Plan, is not considered significant if all of the following are met:

a. The *woodland* is located outside of the Regional Greenlands System as shown on *Map 2* of the Plan;

b. The *woodland* is located in an area strategic to the achievement of the community objectives of Section 2.3 and 4.2 of the Plan or is identified within an *intensification* area detailed in a local municipal *intensification* strategy, and is evaluated through an official plan amendment process, or other appropriate study;

c. The *woodland* does not meet the criteria in policy 3.4.30 a. of the Plan; and,

d. The *woodland* is a *cultural and regenerating woodland* to the satisfaction of York Region, in consultation with the conservation authority and local municipality.

3.4.32 That should policy 3.4.31 apply, *development* and *site alteration* may be permitted within all or part of the *woodland* if the *development* or *site alteration* does not affect the ability of the retained portion of the *woodland* to remain significant in accordance with the criteria in policy 3.4.30 of the Plan. A *woodland* compensation plan shall be required for removed *woodland* deemed not significant, that would otherwise have been significant in accordance with policy 3.4.30 of the Plan. The *woodland* compensation plan shall be prepared to the satisfaction of York Region in consultation with the conservation authority and the local municipality and shall demonstrate a net gain in *woodland* area.

Considerations for Developing a Woodland Compensation Plan

1. Achieve a net gain in woodland area through woodland restoration
2. Preference is for compensation to be located in proximity to removal area; the order of priority for locating compensation initiatives will be within development area, the subwatershed/local municipality, watershed, Region
3. Landscape ecology principles including size, patch shape, connectivity, edge to area ratio should be considered
4. Compensation sites may include:
   - Tableland linkages within a planned Natural Heritage System
   - Tableland enhancement areas within a planned Natural Heritage System
   - Expansions to existing woodlands (excluding buffers)
   - Rural land
   - Woodland additions adjacent to publicly owned woodlands
5. Mechanisms for implementation may include:
   - Conservation Easements on rural/agricultural land
   - Conveyance of land
   - Woodland compensation implementation plan and securities
   - Cash in lieu based on the cost to create a compensation woodland (including land)

It is the policy of Council:

3.4.33 That York Regional Forests shall be sustainably managed in a manner that enhances their ecological, educational and recreational functions to ensure their health in perpetuity.

3.4.34 To require local municipal official plans to include appropriate policies to prepare and enact tree-cutting by-laws in accordance with provisions in the *Municipal Act*.

LANDFORM CONSERVATION

Significant landscapes exist throughout York Region, providing scenic views and vistas, and a sense of place. Such significant landscapes include portions of the Oak Ridges Moraine, the former Lake Algonquin shoreline, major river valleys, Earth Science Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest and the Lake Simcoe shoreline.

Landform features help define York Region's character and play a vital role in surface and groundwater hydrology, biodiversity, and micro climate. The policies of the Plan encourage appropriate treatment of these areas during development and incorporate these features into the Regional Greenlands System.

> ***Objective:*** *To encourage and support the conservation, protection and enhancement of significant landscapes, views and vistas.*

LANDFORM CONSERVATION POLICIES:

It is the policy of Council:

3.4.35 To prohibit *site alteration* prior to the approval of *development* applications, and to require local municipalities to adopt *site alteration* by-laws in conformity with the *Municipal Act* and the Lake Simcoe Protection Plan to prevent runoff, sedimentation, and the removal of topsoil or vegetation, and to control erosion.

3.4.36 That within the Oak Ridges Moraine, applications for *development* or *site alteration* in a landform conservation area as identified in *Map 13* shall be accompanied by the appropriate study as required by the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan. Planning, design and construction practices for any *development* or *site alteration* are required to satisfy the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan.

3.4.37 To require local municipalities to incorporate the Oak Ridges Moraine landform conservation mapping and policies into local official plans in applicable areas. Policies in the local plans shall require that applications for *development* or *site alteration* in a landform conservation area identify planning, design and construction practices that will keep disturbance to landform character to a minimum, subject to the requirements established in the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan.

3.4.38 That in considering *development* and *site alteration* applications in the Urban Area, Towns and Villages, and *Hamlets* on the Oak Ridges Moraine, local municipalities shall consider the importance of adopting planning, design and construction practices that will keep disturbance of landform character to a minimum, so as to satisfy the requirements of the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan.

3.5 MANAGING HAZARDS

Natural hazards such as flooding, wildland fire, erosion, unstable soils, geotechnical concerns and slope failures pose a risk to human health and safety, as well as property. It is important to reduce the potential risks and costs associated with naturally occurring and human-made hazards by ensuring that development is directed away from hazards. The policies in this section provide direction to reduce the risk to human health and safety through the land use planning process.

Objective: *To minimize risks to human health and safety, and property associated with natural hazards.*

MANAGING HAZARDS POLICIES:

It is the policy of Council:

3.5.1 To direct *development* and *site alteration* in accordance with guidance developed by the Province, outside of *hazardous lands* and *hazardous sites*.

3.5.2 That *development* be planned and designed to demonstrate no negative flooding and erosion impacts.

3.5.3 That *development* and *site alteration* are generally prohibited within defined portions of the floodplain, subject to conservation authority regulations.

3.5.4 To prohibit new lot creation in *hazardous lands* and *hazardous sites*.

3.5.5 To require local official plans and zoning by-laws to contain policies, provisions and/or mapping to:

- **a.** Address floodplains, *hazardous lands*, *hazardous sites* and regulated lands;
- **b.** Identify permitted uses and the requirement for setbacks or buffers;
- **c.** Address land use within and adjacent to *hazardous lands* and *hazardous sites*;
- **d.** Identify approved *Special Policy Areas*; and
- **e.** Address wildland fire hazard.

Approved Floodplain Special Policy Areas in York Region

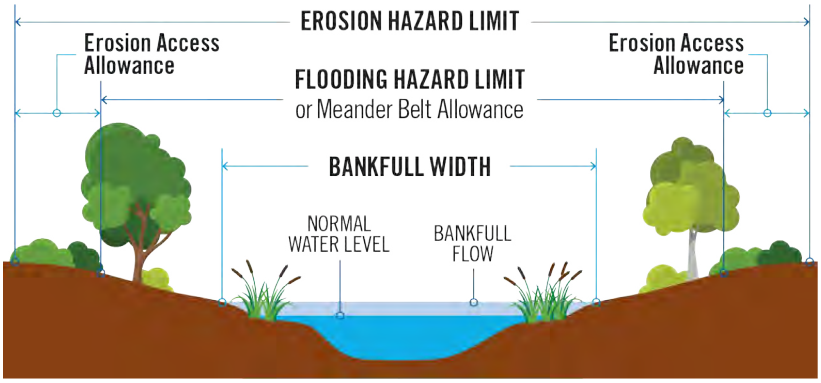
- Woodbridge Special Policy Area
- Lake Wilcox Special Policy Area
- Unionville Special Policy Area
- Schomberg Special Policy Area

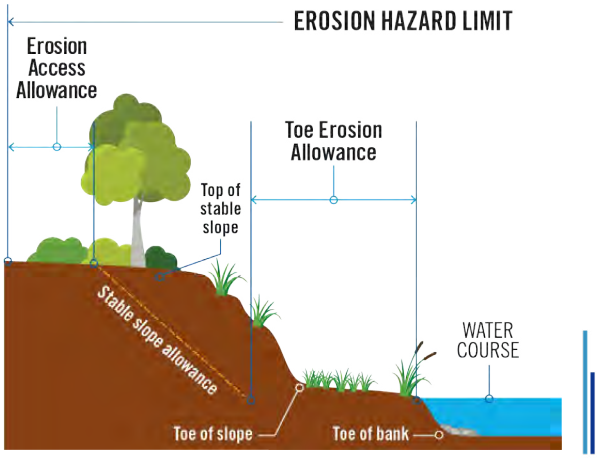
It is the policy of Council:

3.5.6 To require setbacks, buffers and/or access allowance from *hazardous lands* and *hazardous sites* based on a minimum buffer where defined by the local municipality in consultation with the conservation authority, or such distance as may be determined through technical studies or to conform to Provincial regulations. Where *hazardous lands* and *hazardous sites* have been defined to include setbacks, buffers and/or access allowance, the Plan shall not require additional lands.

3.5 MANAGING HAZARDS

Hazard Plan Cross-Sections





It is the policy of Council:

3.5.7 To support conservation authorities and local municipalities in the management of floodplain areas and *Special Policy Areas*. The identification of a new *Special Policy Area* and any change or modification to official plan policies, land use designations or boundaries applying to existing *Special Policy Area* lands shall be approved by the Province, prior to the approval authority issuing its approval.

3.5.8 That local municipalities partner with conservation authorities to identify remediation and mitigation opportunities for *hazardous lands* and *hazardous sites*.

3.5.9 That the dedication of *hazardous lands* and *hazardous sites* to public agencies through the *development* approvals process be encouraged. Where *hazardous lands* and *hazardous sites* are held in private ownership, nothing in the Plan requires that these lands be free and available for public use.

4.0 AN URBANIZING REGION

4.1 THE URBAN SYSTEM
4.2 COMMUNITY AREAS
4.3 EMPLOYMENT AREAS
4.4 INTENSIFICATION
4.5 TOWNS and VILLAGES

York Region

4.0 AN URBANIZING REGION

4.1 THE URBAN SYSTEM
4.2 COMMUNITY AREAS
4.3 EMPLOYMENT AREAS
4.4 INTENSIFICATION
4.5 TOWNS and VILLAGES

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

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*.

4.2.10 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.

4.2.16 That Transportation Demand measures shall be completed for *New Community Areas* to ensure that:

- **a.** 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;
- **b.** 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;
- **c.** Schools and community centres provide the ability for safe and *active transportation*, transit and carpool to these locations;
- **d.** 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;
- **e.** *New Community Areas* are designed to meet industry, Provincial, and Regional best practices and *guidelines* for transit-oriented *development*;
- **f.** Planned rapid transit corridors, and/or transit terminals that connect to a rapid transit corridor, are included in the community design;
- **g.** Parking standards, consistent with policy 2.3.19, encourage and support transit use and include reduced minimum and maximum parking standards; and,
- **h.** *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.** A demonstrated need for an alternative target based on topography and/or configuration of *developable areas*;
- **b.** The alternative target will not compromise the ability to reach the overall local municipal *designated greenfield area* density target;
- **c.** 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
- **d.** 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.

4.2.23 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.

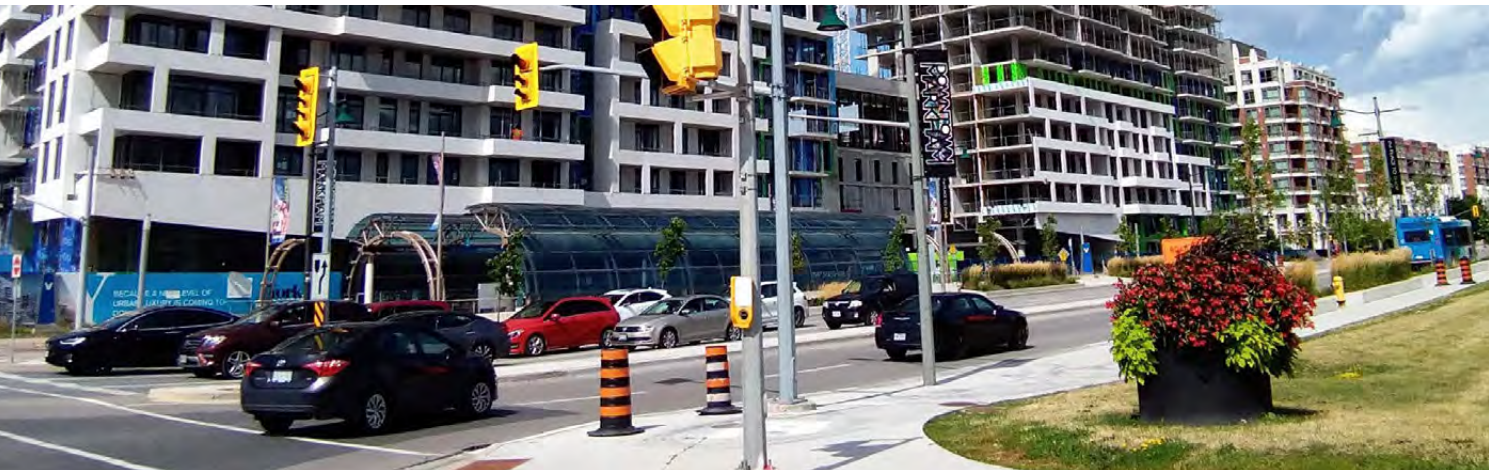
Phasing will ensure that communities are developed as complete communities for residents to have access to a wide range of services and amenities within the same community such as schools, parks, libraries, transit and jobs in a timely manner. This section provides a strategic approach to planning and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



4.2.27 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:

- **a.** Background studies, Master Environmental Servicing Plans or other equivalent alternative studies referred to in policy 4.2.26;
- **b.** Logical extensions to the existing Urban Area in the initial phase(s);
- **c.** Logical and orderly progression of *development* that is contiguous to existing developed areas;
- **d.** Delivery of *complete communities* supported by community services;
- **e.** 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;
- **f.** Coordination with adjacent municipalities where Regional and/or local municipal *infrastructure* is shared; and
- **g.** 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:

- **a.** Required Regional *infrastructure* committed within the ten-year Capital Plan and additionally, water and wastewater infrastructure shall be supported by a completed *environmental assessment*;
- **b.** The local municipalities achieving their *intensification* target outlined in policy 4.4.10 Table 6 as a minimum average over the last five years;
- **c.** Alignment with the required *watershed*/*subwatershed plans* which have been completed and approved;
- **d.** Logical progression of growth based on local municipal official plans, provision of local *infrastructure*, and availability of local municipal community services;
- **e.** *Development* of *complete communities* in accordance with Section 2.3;
- **f.** Demonstrated coordination with adjacent municipalities in cases where Regional and/or local municipal *infrastructure* is shared; and
- **g.** Approval of a subsequent phase shall be considered at such time as the current phase contributes towards the *development* of a *complete community* by:
  - **i.** Incorporating an adequate provision of local municipal community services such as libraries and schools
  - **ii.** Providing an appropriate balance of jobs as determined by York Region generally in accordance with policy 4.2.13
  - **iii.** 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 signification growth to existing Built Up Areas to promote complete and vibrant cities through transit oriented development.*

INTENSIFICATION POLICIES:

It is the policy of Council:

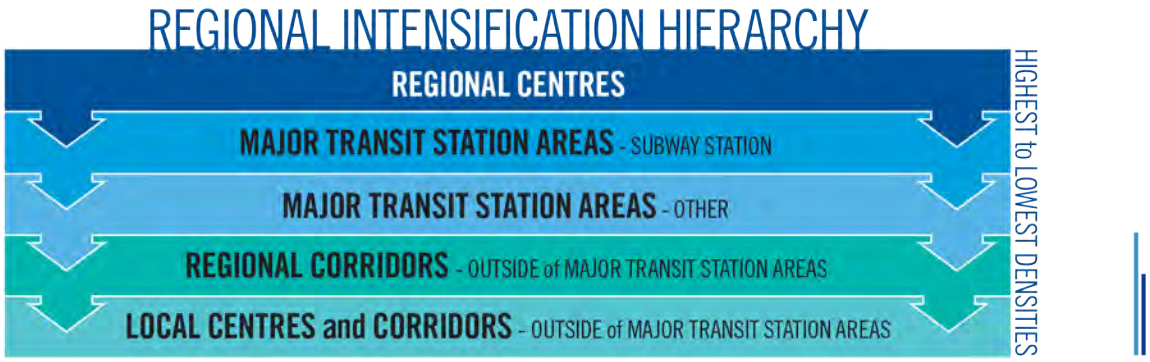
4.4.1 That *intensification* be directed in accordance with the Regional hierarchy outlined in policy 4.4.2 to utilize land efficiently and sustainably that is commensurate with available hard and soft services and existing *infrastructure*, while having regard for the local context.

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:

a. The preferred location for *major office* uses; and

b. 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.

4.4.24 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 MTSAs, 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 MTSAs 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:

- **a.** Reasonable and direct walking distances between the Regional Corridor street frontage and *adjacent lands*;
- **b.** Contiguous parcels that are desirable and appropriate locations for *intensification* and mixed-use *development*;
- **c.** 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 MTSAs 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.

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

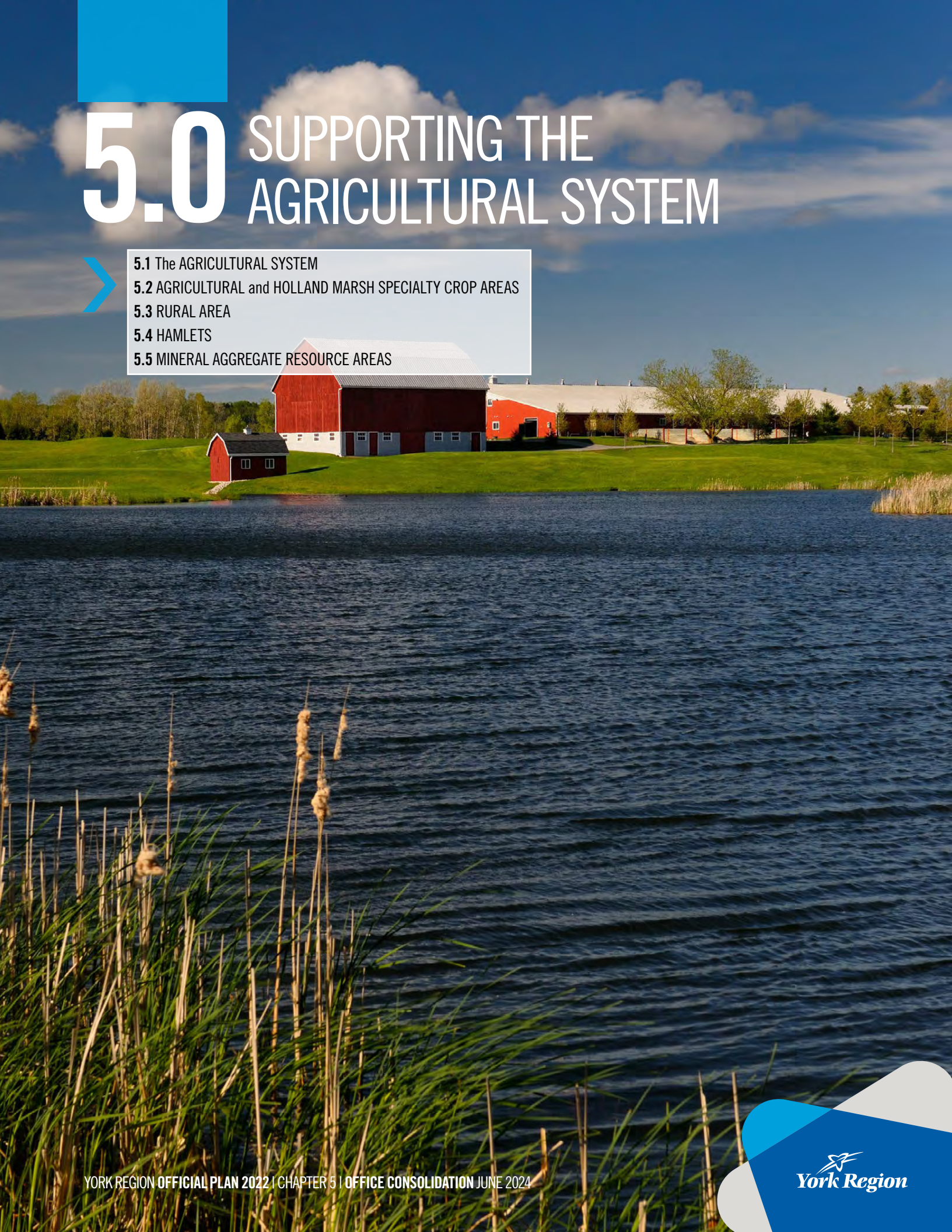
- **a.** Availability of water and wastewater services;
- **b.** *Development* that respects the context and scale of the entire Town or Village and is integrated into the existing community;
- **c.** Best efforts to achieve the minimum density requirement of 50 residents and jobs combined per hectare, 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.

5.0 SUPPORTING THE AGRICULTURAL SYSTEM

5.1 The AGRICULTURAL SYSTEM
5.2 AGRICULTURAL and HOLLAND MARSH SPECIALTY CROP AREAS
5.3 RURAL AREA
5.4 HAMLETS
5.5 MINERAL AGGREGATE RESOURCE AREAS



5.0 SUPPORTING the AGRICULTURAL SYSTEM

5.1 The AGRICULTURAL SYSTEM
5.2 AGRICULTURAL and HOLLAND MARSH SPECIALTY CROP AREAS
5.3 RURAL AREA
5.4 HAMLETS
5.5 MINERAL AGGREGATE RESOURCE AREAS

The Agricultural System is an important part of the fabric of York Region, supporting a vibrant agricultural community and contributing to the economy, quality of life and natural heritage legacy. With almost half of York Region's land protected for agricultural uses, York Region has some of the most productive agricultural lands in Canada. From the rich organic soils of the Holland Marsh to a diverse mix of food and beverage manufacturers, the agriculture and agri-food sector plays an important role in York Region's economy. The diverse landscape makes York Region attractive to citizens and business.

Protecting the agricultural land base comprised of agricultural areas as well as specialty crop areas and rural areas creates a robust productive land base for agriculture supporting a sustainable agri-food network. This, along with enabling infrastructure, services and assets, is important to the viability of the sector, ensuring access to a safe and secure food supply. It is important to recognize the relationship and mutual benefits that exist between the Agricultural and Natural Systems. Agricultural best management practices support protection and long-term viability of both.

The policies in this Chapter are intended to protect and enhance the Agricultural System and provide guidance for long-term agricultural production and jobs. The Chapter also provides policy direction to protect Aggregate Resources and recognizes the rural character of Hamlets and the role they play in supporting the vitality of the Agricultural Area.

Supporting the Agricultural System Goal: *To protect and support the viability of the Agricultural System and agri-food sector in York Region.*

5.1 THE AGRICULTURAL SYSTEM

The Agricultural System supports a productive agricultural and rural land base and agri-food network that together contribute to ensure a viable agri-food sector. The agri-food network is comprised of infrastructure as well as services and assets important to the viability of the agri-food sector including input suppliers, farms, food processors, retailers, distributers, food service companies etc. located throughout York Region and beyond. The Growth Plan, Greenbelt Plan and Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan outline this Agricultural System in order to support the viability of the agricultural sector in York Region. The Plan provides policy direction for the Agriculture System through three land use designations shown as Holland Marsh Specialty Crop Area, Agricultural Area, and the Rural Area on *Map 1A – Land Use Designations*.

The local agri-food value chain

The local agri-food value chain includes farmers, processors, distributors, input suppliers, retailers, restaurants and other food service organizations working to provide quality products to residents and businesses.

Eating locally grown and produced food supports the Agri-Food sector.

The York Farm Fresh map can be used to find local farm fresh products on farms and in farmers markets within York Region. York Region's Agriculture and Agri-Food Strategy guides long-term growth with policy and programming for the agricultural sector, ensuring food sources and agricultural production are accessible and continue to be made available locally. It ensures that farmland, clusters of agri-food infrastructure and services and opportunities for urban agriculture co-exist alongside and within our growing communities.

Eating Locally:

- › Sustains small farms
- › Reduces greenhouse gas emissions
- › Supports the local economy
- › Improves air quality and pollution
- › Keeps us in touch with the seasons
- › Provides fresher food choices

5.1 THE AGRICULTURAL SYSTEM

> ***Objective:*** *To protect the Agricultural System by supporting a productive and sustainable agricultural and rural land base, and the agri-food network.*

AGRICULTURAL SYSTEM POLICIES:

It is the policy of Council:

5.1.1 That the policies of Section 5.1 apply to the *Agricultural System* and the following land use designations as identified on *Map 1A*:

- *Agricultural Area* designation
- Holland Marsh Specialty Crop Area designation
- *Rural Area* designation

5.1.2 That the geographic continuity of the agricultural land base and the functional and economic connections to the *agri-food network* shall be maintained and enhanced.

5.1.3 That lands deemed to constitute prime *agricultural areas* and *specialty crop areas* within the Greenbelt Plan in York Region are designated as *Agricultural Area* and Holland Marsh Specialty Crop Area respectively on *Map 1A*.

5.1.4 That within the *Agricultural Area*, Holland Marsh Specialty Crop Area and *Rural Area*, *normal farm practices* and a full range of *agricultural uses*, *agriculture-related uses* and *on-farm diversified uses* are supported and permitted.

5.1.5 That *agricultural uses*, *agriculture-related uses* and *on-farm diversified uses* shall be permitted in accordance with Provincial guidelines, as further defined through local official plan policies. Proposed *agriculture-related uses* and *on-farm diversified uses* shall be compatible with, and shall not hinder, surrounding agricultural operations.

5.1.6 To promote sustainable agricultural practices and implement best management practices, which minimize impacts on the environment, such as:

- **a.** Integrated pest management;
- **b.** Phosphorus reduction;
- **c.** Nutrient management;
- **d.** Soil and water conservation; and,
- **e.** Tree planting along hedgerows and marginal farmland.

5.1.7 That limited new non-agricultural uses may be permitted in the *Agricultural System* subject to the following criteria:

- **a.** Complies with applicable Provincial plans and policies;
- **b.** Submission of an *Agricultural Impact Assessment* addressing the following elements to the satisfaction of the municipality in consultation with York Region:
  - **i.** Proposed use is appropriate in size and scale to the area, including to the existing and/or planned *infrastructure*;
  - **ii.** Proposed use shall not adversely affect the ecological integrity of the Regional Greenlands System;
  - **iii.** Complies with Province's *Minimum Distance Separation Formulae*;
- **c.** If within the *Agricultural Area* designation:
  - **i.** Demonstrates a need within the planning horizon for additional land to accommodate the proposed use;
  - **ii.** Alternative locations be evaluated, with confirmation that no reasonable alternative locations are available;
  - **iii.** Lands will remain in the *Agricultural Area* designation;
- **d.** If within the *Future Urban Area*, demonstrates compatibility with the area in a future urban context.

5.1 THE AGRICULTURAL SYSTEM

The Agricultural System
The Agricultural System in York Region geographically is covered by three specific Provincial plans: Greenbelt Plan, Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan and Growth Plan as identified on Map 1.

It is the policy of Council:

5.1.8 To require local municipalities to include policies within local official plans and *secondary plans* which address edge planning measures to avoid, minimize or mitigate impacts of non-agricultural *development* on agricultural operations and the *Agricultural System*.

5.1.9 That redevelopment of existing non-agricultural uses in the *Agricultural System*, excluding the Holland Marsh Specialty Crop Area, is permitted subject to the following criteria:

- **a.** Demonstrate that the use on site is a legally existing use;
- **b.** Proposed redevelopment will be more in conformity with applicable Provincial plans;
- **c.** There is no change to the Regional Designation outlined on *Map 1A*;
- **d.** No new parcels will be created;
- **e.** Redevelopment does not hinder surrounding agricultural operations, complies with the *Minimum Distance Separation Formulae* and;
- **f.** An *Agricultural Impact Assessment* is submitted to the satisfaction of the local municipality in consultation with York Region, in accordance with Provincial and municipal guidelines, demonstrating:
  - **i.** Adverse impacts on agricultural operations are avoided, minimized or mitigated. Where mitigation is required, the mitigation measures should be incorporated as part of the non-agricultural uses, as appropriate, within the area being developed;
  - **ii.** The proposed use would be of the appropriate size and scale to the area, including to the existing and/or planned *infrastructure*;
  - **iii.** There is a need for the proposed use in terms of demand for the product or service; and
  - **iv.** The proposed use shall not adversely affect the ecological integrity of the Regional Greenlands System.

5.1.10 That an application for the *development* of new or expanding *infrastructure* in the *Agricultural System* shall:

- **a.** Demonstrate the need for the project;
- **b.** Demonstrate that there is no reasonable alternative that could avoid or minimize impact on lands designated Agriculture; and
- **c.** Undertake an *Agricultural Impact Assessment* or equivalent analysis as part of an *Environmental Assessment*.

5.1.11 That, within the Oak Ridges Moraine Plan area, existing institutional uses and expansions are permitted subject to the Existing Use provisions of the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan and local official plans and zoning bylaws. When expansion of such uses is applied for, the applicant shall demonstrate that the expansion will not adversely affect the ecological integrity of the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan Area. Additional studies as identified in Parts III and IV of the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan may be required.

5.1.12 That consents will only be permitted in accordance with Provincial plans, local official plans and zoning by-laws in the following instances:

- **a.** Acquisition of land for *infrastructure* projects;
- **b.** Conveyances to public bodies or non-profit agencies for natural heritage or conservation purposes, providing no separate residential lot is created;
- **c.** Minor lot adjustments or boundary additions, provided they do not create a separate lot for a residential dwelling in specialty crop or prime *agricultural areas* and there is no increased fragmentation of a *key natural heritage feature* or *key hydrologic feature*;
- **d.** *Agricultural uses* where both the subject and retained lands are a minimum size of 16 hectares (40 acres) in the Holland Marsh Specialty Crop Area and 40 hectares (100 acres) in the *Agricultural Area*;
- **e.** Existing or new *agriculture-related uses*, such as farm-related commercial and farm-related industrial uses that are small in scale and directly related to the farm operation and required to be located in close proximity to the farm operation. In these cases, the new lot will be limited to the minimum size required for the use and appropriate individual private on-site water and wastewater systems will be required; or,
- **f.** Severance of an existing residence that is surplus to a farming operation as a result of a farm consolidation, providing no additional residence can be constructed on the retained farmland.

5.1.13 That new multiple lots or units for residential *development* (e.g. estate residential subdivisions and adult lifestyle or retirement communities), whether by plan of subdivision, condominium or severance, shall not be permitted, except in the Serviced Lakeshore Residential Area in the Town of Georgina existing at the date of approval of this Plan or otherwise permitted by applicable Provincial plans and the local official plan.

5.1.14 That any proposed expansions or alterations to existing buildings and structures for *agricultural uses*, *agriculture-related uses* or *on-farm diversified uses* within *key natural heritage features* and/or *key hydrologic features* and their associated *vegetation protection zones* are required to meet the policies in Section 3.4.

5.1.15 That new land uses, consents, and new and expanding livestock operations shall comply with the Province's *Minimum Distance Separation Formulae*.

5.1.16 That within *Wellhead Protection Areas*, *Intake Protection Zones* and Areas of High Aquifer Vulnerability some land use activities have restrictions related to *agricultural uses*, *agriculture-related uses* or *on-farm diversified uses* and are required to meet the policies in Section 6.4 of the Plan.

5.1.17 To permit a single dwelling unit on existing lots of record, provided they were zoned for such as of the date the Plan came into force.

5.1.18 That refinements to either the *Agricultural Area* or the *Rural Area*, shown on *Map 1A*, are not permitted unless undertaken through a Regional *municipal comprehensive review*.

5.1 THE AGRICULTURAL SYSTEM

5.1.19 To work with local municipalities to support implementation of York Region's Agriculture and Agri-Food Strategy, by:

- **a.** Promoting the flow of goods and services in the value chain to drive growth and productivity and support job creation in the agri-food sector;
- **b.** Encouraging the provision of community driven local food programs and initiatives such as community gardens and other *urban agriculture* practices as appropriate;
- **c.** Fostering collaboration between York Region, the Province, the industry and other stakeholders to sustain and develop local markets for locally grown food; and
- **d.** Providing support for food and farming organizations including local farm groups, *agri-tourism*, start-up businesses, farm-gate sales, food incubators and accelerator hubs to strengthen the agriculture and agri-food cluster in the Greater Toronto Area.

5.1.20 To encourage local municipalities to support and promote the long-term economic prosperity and viability of the agri-food sector, including the maintenance and improvement of the *agri-food network* by developing policies in their official plans, strategies and programs which may include:

- **a.** Implementing the York Region Agriculture and Agri-Food Strategy;
- **b.** Improving access to healthy, local and affordable food;
- **c.** Promoting urban and near *urban agriculture*;
- **d.** Implementing food systems planning;
- **e.** Fostering the sustainability of agriculture, agri-food, agri-food processing and agri-product businesses;
- **f.** Protecting agricultural resources while minimizing land use conflicts;
- **g.** Reducing food waste and promoting circular food economy;
- **h.** Advocating for *agri-tourism*, *on-farm diversified uses* and value-added operations; and
- **i.** Supporting the *development* of agri-food innovation network and hubs.

5.2 AGRICULTURAL and HOLLAND MARSH SPECIALTY CROP AREAS

Harvesting onions in the Holland Marsh

York Region has some of the most productive agricultural lands in Canada that provide jobs and significant economic benefits. The highly favourable soil conditions throughout York Region, particularly in the Holland Marsh Special Crop Area result in a broad range of agricultural production opportunities for the sector.

The Holland Marsh is one of two highly productive specialty crop areas in the Province and stands out as a key agricultural asset for York Region. Greater than half of the Holland Marsh is located within York Region. As the largest area of organic (muck) soil developed for agriculture in the Province, the Holland Marsh is one of the most intensive areas of agricultural production in the country. The Holland Marsh, dominant in King Township, Town of East Gwillimbury and Town of Georgina, is a significant driver of agricultural production in York Region.

The policies of this section provide policies for the long-term protection and enhancement of Agricultural and Specialty Crop Areas.

On-farm diversified uses:
On-farm diversified uses are defined as uses that are secondary to the principal agricultural use of the property, and are limited in area. On-farm diversified uses include, but are not limited to, home occupations, home industries, *agri-tourism uses*, and uses that produce value-added agricultural products. To find out more about these uses, go to the provincial Guidelines on Permitted Uses in Ontario's Prime Agricultural Areas.

Objective: *To protect, support and enhance the Agricultural System including the Agricultural Area and the Holland Marsh Specialty Crop Area to ensure a sustainable agriculture sector in York Region.*

AGRICULTURAL AND HOLLAND MARSH SPECIALTY CROP AREAS POLICIES:

It is the policy of Council:

5.2.1 To recognize and protect the *Agricultural Area* and the Holland Marsh Specialty Crop Area, designated on *Map 1A*, for long-term use as natural resources of major importance to the economic and social viability of York Region.

5.2.2 That in addition to the policies of this section, the policies of Section 5.1 also apply to the *Agricultural Area* and the Holland Marsh Specialty Crop Area.

5.2.3 That the *Agricultural Area* and Holland Marsh Specialty Crop Area shall be designated and protected in local municipal official plans and zoning by-laws.

5.2.4 To discourage the use of the Holland Marsh Specialty Crop Area for uses that do not require its muck soils for food production.

5.2.5 That in the *Agricultural* and *Rural Areas*, one accessory residential unit within the primary dwelling is permitted.

5.2.6 That additional residential structures for farm help required for *agricultural uses* on the farm, may be permitted, subject to local municipal requirements and if grouped with existing farm structures. A consent to sever these structures from the main *agricultural use* is prohibited.

5.2.7 That notwithstanding policy 5.1.12.e of the Plan, a consent for an *agriculture-related use* is not permitted within the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan area.

5.3 RURAL AREA

The Rural Area is comprised of lands located outside of urban areas and agricultural/specialty crop areas, which have unique social, economic and geographic characteristics. Rural lands used for agricultural uses help to create the continuous land base for agriculture, linking the Agricultural Areas and supporting elements of the agri-food network. The Rural Area includes viable farms, businesses, and land uses such as equestrian facilities, farm markets, Hamlets, existing rural residential and estate residential development and golf courses supporting the rural economy in York Region. A number of factors, including soil capability, topography, land use fragmentation by non-agricultural uses, as well as natural features have combined to make these lands more rural in character than lands in the Agricultural Area designation. Agriculture and agriculture-related activities within the Rural Area are encouraged for the long-term contribution to the Agricultural System.

The Rural Area contains areas of environmental significance, including large portions of Natural Core Area and Natural Linkage Area of the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan. Within the Rural Area, development will be limited in order to retain the rural character of the landscape and ensure viable agricultural uses remain.

The policies of this section provide direction for land uses within the Rural Area in order to protect the existing character and support the agricultural base.

Objective: *To retain the character of lands in the Rural Area and to protect the viability of agriculture, agriculture-related and on-farm diversified uses.*

RURAL AREA POLICIES:

It is the policy of Council:

5.3.1 To recognize and protect the *Rural Area* on *Map 1A* as an integral component of the *Agricultural System*.

5.3.2 That, in addition to permissions in Section 5.1, the following land uses within the *Rural Area* designation on *Map 1A* are permitted:

- **a.** Recreational, tourism, institutional (including cemetery), and resource-based commercial/industrial uses, outside of the Regional Greenlands System;
- **b.** Management or use of resources, resource-based recreational uses, other rural land uses that are not appropriate in settlement areas;
- **c.** Fish, wildlife and forest management, conservation project and flood and erosion control projects, home businesses, home industries, bed and breakfast establishments, low-intensity recreational uses, unserviced parks, small-scale commercial, industrial and institutional uses, *major recreational uses* and *accessory uses*, within the Countryside Areas designation for lands within the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan; and
- **d.** Additional uses, as permitted in accordance with applicable Provincial plans.

5.3.3 That *major recreational uses*, such as golf courses and outdoor playing fields, or expansion to these uses, may be permitted in the *Rural Area* subject to an amendment to the local official plan and/or zoning by-law as required, where the following provisions are met to the satisfaction of York Region and local municipality:

- **a.** The size of the use is appropriate for the area and will not further fragment the *Rural Area*;
- **b.** The proposed use will not introduce a conflicting use that adversely impacts ongoing agricultural activities or related uses in the immediate and surrounding areas subject to an *Agricultural Impact Assessment*;
- **c.** To maintain, restore or enhance the amount of natural self-sustaining vegetation on the site and improve connections between *key natural heritage features* and *key hydrologic features* through submission of an *environmental impact study*;
- **d.** There is an integrated pesticide and fertilizer management plan that minimizes or excludes applications;
- **e.** Ensure adequate water quality and quantity through submission of water conservation, wastewater and stormwater management plans;
- **f.** The provisions of the Provincial plans are met, where applicable; and
- **g.** Notwithstanding Policy 5.3.2 a), small-scale structures for recreational uses (such as boardwalks, footbridges, fences, and docks) may be permitted within *key natural heritage features* and *key hydrologic features* subject to the provisions of the Regional Greenlands System in Chapter 3 and shall be limited in number to minimize *negative impacts* on these features.

5.3.4 Special Provisions for the lands municipally known as 11333 Dufferin Street. Notwithstanding the policies of this section, the lands described as PIN 03342-0266, PT LT 29 Con 2 Vaughan; PL LT 30 Con 2 Vaughan PTS 1-8 64R6003 Except PT 3 Expropriation PL R602558; S/T VA41581 Partially Released by R283556; S/T VA82915, Vaughan are intended to be developed for urban uses. The lands shall only be developed on the basis of full municipal services, an approved and registered draft plan of subdivision, and an approved implementing zoning by-law.

5.3.5 That rural lands within the linear river valleys of the Greenbelt Protected Countryside shown on *Map 1C*, that are surrounded by the urbanizing *Designated Greenfield Areas* of Vaughan and Markham, per *Map 1B*, shall be identified in local official plans and protected for natural heritage restoration and *urban agriculture*.

5.3.6 That, notwithstanding policy 5.3.2, permitted uses within the rural lands identified in policy 5.3.5 are limited to the following:

- **a.** *Passive recreation*;
- **b.** Environmental management, restoration, and enhancement;
- **c.** Compatible urban *agricultural uses*; and
- **d.** Recreational and parklands uses in accordance with the Greenbelt Plan and local municipal *secondary plans* on the basis of appropriate technical studies and natural systems planning.

5.4 HAMLETS

Historic Locust Hill Train Station

A Hamlet is a small, rural settlement of existing residential and limited commercial, industrial or institutional uses. York Region's Hamlets exist within the Protected Countryside Area designation of the Greenbelt Plan and within the Countryside Area designation of the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan. These communities are traditionally serviced by individual private on-site wastewater systems and drilled wells. Hamlets were often the first settlements in York Region and are valued for their part in retaining the rural character and cultural heritage resources of the past.

The policies in this section provide for the retention of Hamlets while permitting limited growth through infilling.

> ***Objective:*** *To retain the rural character and cultural heritage of Hamlets while permitting limited growth through infilling.*

HAMLETS POLICIES:

It is the policy of Council:

5.4.1 To protect long-established *Hamlets* as designated on *Map 1A*, subject to applicable Provincial plans.

5.4.2 That local official plans and zoning by-laws shall designate the boundaries of *Hamlets* as identified on *Map 1A* of the Plan.

5.4.3 That local official plans shall provide policies that limit future growth to minor infilling in *Hamlets*, subject to the ability to service growth by individual private on-site water and wastewater systems.

5.4.4 That minor infilling is limited to small-scale residential, industrial, commercial, institutional, and recreational uses and may be permitted within *Hamlets*, as detailed in local official plans and subject to the ability to service the use by individual private on-site water and wastewater systems.

5.4.5 That *development* in *Hamlets* shall be of an appropriate size and scope to ensure compatibility with the surrounding community in the context of use of land, buildings and structure size, area, density, and height, in accordance with local official plan policies.

5.4.6 That consents may be permitted in *Hamlets*, subject to applicable Provincial plans and local official plan consent policies and the ability to service the *development* by individual private on-site water and wastewater systems.

5.4.7 That any increase in the number of residents through infilling must not change the rural nature of the *Hamlet*.

5.4.8 That notwithstanding policy 5.4.3, additional growth and *development* in *Hamlets* may be permitted in existing *secondary plans* with an appropriate water and wastewater solution in conformity with Provincial plans, approved and in effect the date this Plan came into effect.

5.5 MINERAL AGGREGATE RESOURCE AREAS

Within York Region, these resources may also be subject to the applicable provisions of the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan, Lake Simcoe Protection Plan, Greenbelt Plan, and Growth Plan. York Region has limited sand and gravel resources, with no primary resources remaining and only secondary resources available, as identified in *Map 8 – Mineral Aggregate Resources*. The majority of these resources are subject to the applicable provisions of the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan. It is important that remaining aggregate resource areas be protected from incompatible uses or uses that would limit the extraction of the resource in the future, as they provide locally sourced building materials for communities and infrastructure.

The availability of aggregates close to market is important for economic and environmental reasons. It is equally important that these resources are extracted in an environmentally sensitive way and that exhausted pits and quarries be rehabilitated to uses compatible with agriculture, rural or open spaces. The *Aggregate Resources Act* and Provincial plans require the rehabilitation or restoration of pits and quarries to be used for other compatible uses, recognizing the interim nature of extraction.

In addition to aggregates, York Region has limited petroleum resources, which are considered in the policies of this section.

> ***Objective:*** *To protect mineral resources for possible future extraction close to markets and to ensure rehabilitation of extraction areas.*

MINERAL AGGREGATE RESOURCE AREA POLICIES:

It is the policy of Council:

5.5.1 To protect *Mineral Aggregate Resource* Areas as shown on *Map 8*.

5.5.2 To recognize and provide for the continued operation of currently licensed *pits and quarries* and to encourage the extraction of mineral aggregate from locations within *Mineral Aggregate Resource* Areas, subject to the *Aggregate Resources Act*, the policies of the Plan and local official plans and by-laws.

5.5.3 That existing *mineral aggregate operations* shall be permitted to continue without the requirement of an official plan amendment, zoning by-law amendment or *development* permit under the *Planning Act*.

5.5.4 That *mineral aggregate operations* shall be protected from *development* and activities that would preclude or hinder their expansion or continued use or which would be incompatible for reasons of public health, public safety or environmental impact.

5.5.5 That only processes under the *Aggregate Resources Act* shall address the depth of extraction of new or existing *mineral aggregate operations*.

5.5 MINERAL AGGREGATE RESOURCE AREAS

5.5.6 To protect *Mineral Aggregate Resource* Areas from land uses and activities incompatible with extractive operations. New uses, other than extractive uses may be considered within these areas only if it can be demonstrated through detailed studies that:

- **a.** The proposed land use would not significantly preclude future extraction of *mineral aggregate resources* or resource use would not be feasible;
- **b.** The proposed land use would serve the long-term interest of the public better than aggregate extraction;
- **c.** Aggregate extraction would not be economically, socially or environmentally feasible; and
- **d.** Issues of public health, public safety and environmental impact are addressed.

5.5.7 That an application for a new operation will be required to demonstrate how:

- **a.** The connectivity between *key natural heritage features* and *key hydrologic features* will be maintained before, during, and after the extraction of *mineral aggregate resources*;
- **b.** The operator can replace *key natural heritage features* and *key hydrologic features* that would be lost from the site with equivalent and/or enhanced features on another part of the site or on *adjacent lands*;
- **c.** The *water resource system* will be protected and/or enhanced; and
- **d.** Any *key natural heritage features* and *key hydrologic features* and their associated *vegetation protection zones* will be addressed.

5.5.8 That local official plans shall identify and protect *Mineral Aggregate Resource* Areas and existing licensed aggregate extraction uses and provide policies for the location, expansion, operation and rehabilitation of pits and quarries.

5.5.9 To encourage local municipalities to enact by-laws that:

- **a.** regulate truck traffic to minimize adverse impacts on surrounding residents and *infrastructure*; and
- **b.** regulate the removal of topsoil.

5.5.10 To permit *portable asphalt plants*, wayside pits and quarries used on public authority contracts, in consultation with local municipalities, without requiring an official plan amendment or zoning by-law amendment, except within the Regional Greenlands System as identified in policy 5.5.20 of the Plan. A zoning by-law amendment shall be required to permit such facilities in areas of existing *development*.

5.5.11 That extraction and processing activities be conducted in a manner that minimizes negative environmental, economic and social impacts, in accordance with all government legislation, standards and policies.

5.5.12 To minimize the adverse effects of *wayside pits and quarries* in accordance with all government legislation, standards and policies, and support the use of alternative materials to sand and gravel and the reuse of construction materials, where possible, for the conservation of existing aggregate supplies.

5.5.13 That *mineral aggregate resource conservation* shall be undertaken, including through the use of accessory aggregate recycling facilities within operations, wherever feasible.

5.5.14 That local municipalities shall develop and implement official plan policies and other strategies to conserve *mineral aggregate resources* including the recovery and recycling of manufactured materials derived from *mineral aggregate resources* and utilization or extraction of on-site *mineral aggregate resources* prior to *development*.

5.5.15 To require the rehabilitation of abandoned *pits and quarries* and the progressive rehabilitation of operating pits and quarries in a manner that is in conformity with other policies of the Plan.

5.5 MINERAL AGGREGATE RESOURCE AREAS

5.5.16 That mineral aggregate extraction may occur in *Agricultural Areas* as an interim use provided it is supported by an *Agricultural Impact Assessment* and that the site will be rehabilitated back to an agricultural condition so that substantially the same areas and same average soil quality is restored. In the following cases, complete agricultural rehabilitation is not required:

- **a.** Outside of a speciality crop area, where there is a substantial quantity of aggregate below the water table warranting extraction, or the depth of planned extraction in a quarry makes restoration to pre-extraction levels unfeasible; or,
- **b.** Where other alternatives have been considered by the applicant and found unfeasible in accordance with the Provincial Policy Statement.

5.5.17 That policies and provisions in the Provincial Policy Statement, the Growth Plan, the Greenbelt Plan, the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan and the Lake Simcoe Protection Plan shall be complied with in regard to new and existing *mineral aggregate operations* and *wayside pits* for the proper extraction and rehabilitation of sites.

5.5.18 That *mineral aggregate operations* are permitted in Natural Linkage Areas designation for lands within the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan.

5.5.19 That *mineral aggregate operations* are exempt from certain landform conservation requirements in accordance with the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan.

5.5.20 That within the Regional Greenlands System, as identified on *Map 1*, *mineral aggregate operations*, *wayside pits and/or quarries* are subject to applicable policies of the Plan and the applicable Provincial plans, including the following:

- **a.** In those portions of the Regional Greenlands System as part of the Growth Plan, Greenbelt Plan and Lake Simcoe Protection Plan, no new *mineral aggregate operations*, *wayside pits and/or quarries*, or any ancillary or *accessory uses* thereto, will be permitted in the following *key natural heritage features* and *key hydrologic features*:
  - **i.** *significant wetlands*;
  - **ii.** *habitat of endangered or threatened species*; and,
  - **iii.** *significant woodlands*, unless as specified in the applicable Provincial plan.

5.5.21 To protect *petroleum resources* for long-term use and any proposed exploration and production of *petroleum resources*, and/or the rehabilitation of petroleum wells, shall be in accordance with the applicable Provincial plan, regulations and standards of the Province.

5.5.22 *Development* on, abutting, or adjacent to lands affected by oil, gas and salt hazards or petroleum resource operations, may be permitted only if rehabilitation measures to address and mitigate known or suspected hazards are underway or have been completed.

6.0 SERVICING OUR COMMUNITIES

6.1 MAKING EFFICIENT USE of INFRASTRUCTURE
6.2 GROWTH and INFRASTRUCTURE ALIGNMENT
6.3 MOVING PEOPLE and GOODS
6.4 WATER and WASTEWATER SERVICING
6.5 STORMWATER MANAGEMENT
6.6 WASTE MANAGEMENT
6.7 ENERGY and UTILITIES

6.0 SERVICING OUR COMMUNITIES

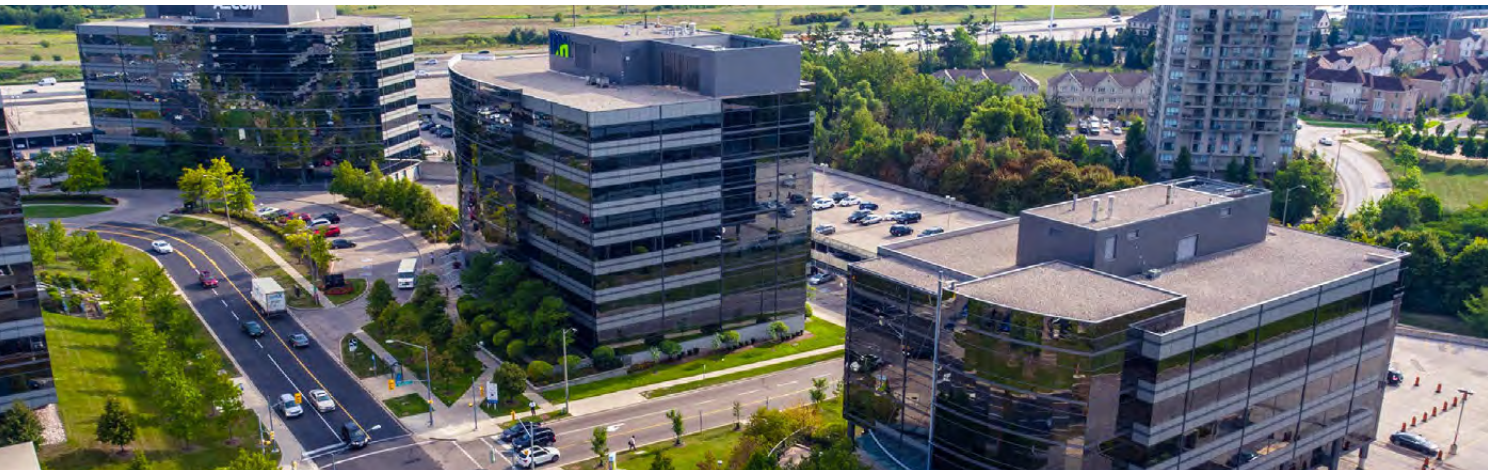
6.1 MAKING EFFICIENT USE of INFRASTRUCTURE
6.2 GROWTH and INFRASTRUCTURE ALIGNMENT
6.3 MOVING PEOPLE and GOODS
6.4 WATER and WASTEWATER SERVICING
6.5 STORMWATER MANAGEMENT
6.6 WASTE MANAGEMENT
6.7 ENERGY and UTILITIES

York Region is committed to providing high quality services for residents and businesses, vital to maintaining and improving quality of life and economic competitiveness. Services include transit, streets, water, wastewater, waste management, energy, rail, airports, utilities, and communications operated by a variety of public and private sector agencies. The effective provision of services involves reducing demand while expanding and updating existing infrastructure. This approach requires a strong policy framework, dynamic partnerships and sustainable infrastructure investment from all levels of government. Ultimately, the goal of the Plan is to ensure that overall services align with York Region's planned growth.

York Region supports policies that are responsive and adaptable as service usage patterns continue to change. This helps to ensure residents and business infrastructure needs are addressed as York Region continues to grow and the demand for services increases. It is important to ensure that long-term plans for servicing incorporate conservation strategies and the protection of the natural environment including key natural heritage and key hydrologic features.

The policies of Chapter 6 coordinate the provision of services with the city and community building policies of the Plan. Furthermore, the policies support and implement the long-term vision of the York Region Transportation, and Water and Wastewater Master Plans, Long-Term Water Conservation Strategy and the Solid Waste Strategy (SM4RT Living Plan).

Servicing Our Communities Goal: *To provide the services required to support York Region's residents and businesses in a financially and environmentally sustainable manner.*



6.1 MAKING EFFICIENT USE of INFRASTRUCTURE

York Region has a conservation-first approach to servicing the needs of residents. This approach aims to maximize the use of existing infrastructure while strategically leveraging future infrastructure investments. The intent is to improve the quality of life of residents by promoting healthy lifestyles while also managing the financial impacts of growth and enhancing the natural environment.

York Region's approach to transportation planning is focused on making efficient use of existing and future transportation infrastructure, while addressing impacts of a changing climate. To reduce automobile dependence, more sustainable transportation options need to be innovative, convenient, and reliable. This goal requires a combination of infrastructure investment, supportive policies and partnerships.

A compact, mixed-use urban form is required to support sustainable modes of transportation. Strong transportation system, land use planning, and Transportation Demand Management policies and programs will create an environment where walking, cycling and transit are comfortable and convenient ways to reach employment, recreation, public, and cultural destinations in York Region.

Water conservation, water demand management and efficiency measures are essential components of York Region's long-term water supply strategy. These measures help to meet new demand in a cost-effective manner. The savings resulting from water conservation and efficiency measures assist in deferring costly capital projects.

Water conservation and its efficiency is implemented through York Region's Long-term Water Conservation Strategy, a comprehensive program that aims to lower demand for water, increase the efficiency of water infrastructure through leakage reduction, support businesses through water audits, and retrofit incentives, and provide education and outreach.

The policies of this section are intended to maximize use of existing infrastructure by reducing demand, increasing conservation and efficiency.

> ***Objective:*** *To promote a reduction in the demand for services through conservation and efficiencies by maximizing the use of existing infrastructure and strategically leveraging future infrastructure investments.*

6.1 MAKING EFFICIENT USE of INFRASTRUCTURE

TRANSPORTATION

York Region's approach to transportation planning is focused on making efficient use of existing and future transportation infrastructure, and is one of the key components addressing impacts of a changing climate. At the forefront of this approach are York Region's comprehensive Transportation Demand Management and Sustainable Mobility Measures that promote walking, cycling, transit use and a per capita reduction in trips taken. To reduce automobile dependence, alternative transportation options need to be innovative, convenient, and reliable. Diverting automobile trips towards more sustainable modes of transportation will improve travel options, enhance air quality, and protect York Region's natural heritage. This goal requires a combination of infrastructure investment, supportive policies, and partnerships.

The policies of this section are intended to promote and enhance alternative modes of transportation.

> **Objective:** *To provide a full range of transportation facilities throughout York Region, while reducing automobile dependence by enhancing opportunities for residents and workers to walk, cycle, take transit and carpool.*

TRANSPORTATION POLICIES:

It is the policy of Council:

6.1.1 To prioritize *active transportation*, transit, and goods movement and require that Transportation Demand Management measures to reduce single occupancy automobile trips are identified in transportation studies and in *development* applications.

6.1.2 To monitor the provision of parking across York Region, consistent with policy 2.3.19 of the Plan.

6.1.3 To require *development* applications to complete a *Mobility Plan* to demonstrate how the proposed *development* is designed to support a transportation system for all users.

6.1.4 To require local municipalities to consider major trip generators and to strengthen land use and site design policies that promote multimodal access to destinations and sustainable modes of transportation, including walking, cycling, transit, and carpooling.

6.1.5 To continue to work with local municipalities and external agencies to develop programs and initiatives that encourage transportation options other than single occupancy vehicles, including transportation network options that are multi-modal and include inter-connections between modes.

Sustainable Non-auto Mode Split
The proportion of trips by sustainable mode (i.e. walking, cycling, conventional transit, rapid transit, GO rail and carpool) out of total trips by all modes, for a given time period. York Region seeks to increase non-auto mode split, particularly during rush hours.

6.1 MAKING EFFICIENT USE of INFRASTRUCTURE

WATER and WASTEWATER

York Region is committed to providing long-term water and wastewater services to its communities that are safe, well-managed, sustainable and delivered in a financially responsible manner, in addition to ensuring that York Region's environment is protected and enhanced. It is York Region's goal that the delivery of works and services be integrated with York Region's other infrastructure, planning and growth management responsibilities.

The policies of this section support the sustainability principles within the York Region Water and Wastewater Master Plan, and promote conservation and efficient use of water and wastewater services.

Objective: *To deliver safe, clean drinking water and provide long-term water and wastewater services to York Region's communities that are safe, well-managed, and sustainable.*

WATER and WASTEWATER POLICIES:

It is the policy of Council:

6.1.6 To investigate full cost pricing of water, in cooperation with local municipalities, to encourage water conservation and facilitate system improvements.

6.1.7 To promote the implementation of water efficiency innovations such as water reuse systems, rainwater harvesting and innovative stormwater management technologies with local municipalities and conservation authorities.

6.1.8 To investigate innovative wastewater treatment technologies and approaches including grey water reuse, naturalized wastewater treatment and water recycling in residential, commercial, institutional and industrial uses.

6.1.9 To require that plans for servicing incorporate conservation strategies and the protection of the natural environment including *key natural heritage* and *key hydrologic features*, subject to other policies of the Plan.

York Region's Long-Term Water Conservation Strategy Objectives:

- Promote responsible use of water as a resource
- Apply a One Water approach to enhance water system sustainability and drive efficiency
- Reduce water consumption as population increases for sustainable long-term servicing
- Be a water efficiency and conservation influencer for the industry and regulatory partners

6.2 GROWTH and INFRASTRUCTURE ALIGNMENT

A key strategy of the Plan is the alignment of growth with the timing and delivery of Regional infrastructure and the importance of ensuring that this infrastructure is phased appropriately so that planning for infrastructure is financially viable over its lifecycle, and available to meet current and projected needs.

There is alignment between the Plan and York Region's Water and Wastewater, and Transportation Master Plans. York Region works in partnership with local municipalities and other stakeholders to ensure the proper and orderly provision of new infrastructure. The policies of this section are intended to provide for careful coordination of infrastructure with growth and a financially sustainable approach to the provision of new infrastructure.

> ***Objective:*** *To ensure that the timing and delivery of water and wastewater and transportation infrastructure are phased to maintain financial sustainability.*

GROWTH and INFRASTRUCTURE ALIGNMENT POLICIES:

It is the policy of Council:

6.2.1 To ensure that the provision of Regional *infrastructure* is coordinated with the integrated growth management policies in Section 2.2 and phasing policies in Section 4.2 of the Plan and policy 4.4.27.

6.2.2 That the delivery and operation of Regional *infrastructure* required to support growth be phased in a manner which is consistent with York Region's Water and Wastewater and Transportation Master Plans and maintains York Region's financial sustainability.

6.2.3 That York Region work with local municipalities to ensure that growth is aligned with the timing and delivery of *infrastructure* by:

- **a.** coordinating Regional and local Infrastructure Master Plans and Official Plan updates;
- **b.** integrating growth-related *infrastructure* phasing plans with asset renewal plans;
- **c.** monitoring and adjusting the timing of *infrastructure* delivery in the Capital Budget to align with actual growth and the Regional Fiscal Strategy;
- **d.** prioritizing *infrastructure* required to support areas proposed to accommodate growth in a manner that promotes the achievement of other policies and/or targets of the Plan; and
- **e.** regularly monitoring system performance and capacity utilization, and prioritizing growth in areas where *infrastructure* may be underutilized.

6.2.4 To review and coordinate the delivery of Regional services with local municipalities, school boards, conservation authorities and agencies to ensure *infrastructure* and operational efficiencies.

6.3 MOVING PEOPLE and GOODS

York Region is committed to implementing a comprehensive active transportation network. York Region's approach to transportation planning is focused on trip reduction, providing a range of transportation options, and shifting to more sustainable modes of transportation such as walking, cycling and transit. Active transportation provides significant environmental, health and economic benefits, including reduced traffic congestion, improved air quality, reduced infrastructure and user costs, and increased street safety.

The policies of this section identify and provide for a range of transportation options.

ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION

Prioritizing opportunities for active transportation such as walking and cycling and reducing automobile traffic can help make communities more liveable by creating an environment that is pleasant and safe with less noise and pollution. This also promotes public health through healthy lifestyles, can encourage social interaction within neighbourhoods, and create a stronger sense of community. The policies of this section provide an overall strategy for promoting and encouraging active transportation modes.

Objective: *To create an active transportation system that promotes active transportation modes.*

ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION POLICIES:

It is the policy of Council:

6.3.1 To apply the principles and objectives and policies of the Transportation Master Plan to support the implementation of the Regional pedestrian and cycling network in partnership with local municipalities and other stakeholders.

6.3.2 To implement the Regional Cycling Network shown on *Maps 9A* and *9B* to enhance Regional transportation multimodal efficiency by placing priority on improving connections to facilitate *active transportation* and community connectivity.

6.3.3 To provide connected, comfortable, safe and accessible pedestrian and cycling facilities that meet the needs of York Region's residents and workers, including children, youth, seniors and people of all abilities.

6.3.4 To require local municipalities to include policies in local official plans and *secondary plans*, which require sidewalks, streetlighting and street furniture within the Urban Area and Towns and Villages as a condition of *development*.

6.3.5 To integrate pedestrian, cycling and transit activities through improvements such as bicycle racks and storage at transit stops, bicycle racks on buses, and improved access for pedestrians and bicycles at transit stops, commuter lots, park and ride facilities, stations and terminals, where warranted.

6.3 MOVING PEOPLE and GOODS

Bicycle-friendly facilities for a business may include:

› covered and locked spaces or bicycle racks for bicycle storage
› bicycle wash stations
› showers and lockers
› laundry facilities
› emergency or pay phones
› security cameras

and provide information on:

› safe cycling
› benefits of cycling
› bicycle routes
› repair shops
› bicycle-friendly local businesses

It is the policy of Council:

6.3.6 To require local municipalities to include pedestrian and cycling connections where appropriate as a condition of *development*. Connections could include, but not limited to:

a. Interconnections between local streets, cul-de-sacs, and across green spaces;
b. Connections between *developments* and adjacent sidewalks;
c. Connections across commercial *developments*; and,
d. Easements across condominium *developments*.

6.3.7 To require the *development* and implementation of local municipal pedestrian and cycling master plans.

6.3.8 To coordinate Regional and local pedestrian and cycling networks to protect, enhance and connect to the Regional Greenlands trails system, where appropriate.

6.3.9 To encourage the protection of abandoned railway rights-of-way for public uses that maintain the corridor's integrity and continuous linear characteristics through uses such as trails, cycling paths and transit, where appropriate.

6.3.10 To continue developing and promoting the Regional scale pedestrian and cycling network such as the Lake to Lake Cycling Route and Walking Trail and the South York Greenway Cycling, Pedestrian and Micro-Mobility Corridor in partnership with local and neighbouring municipalities.

6.3 MOVING PEOPLE and GOODS

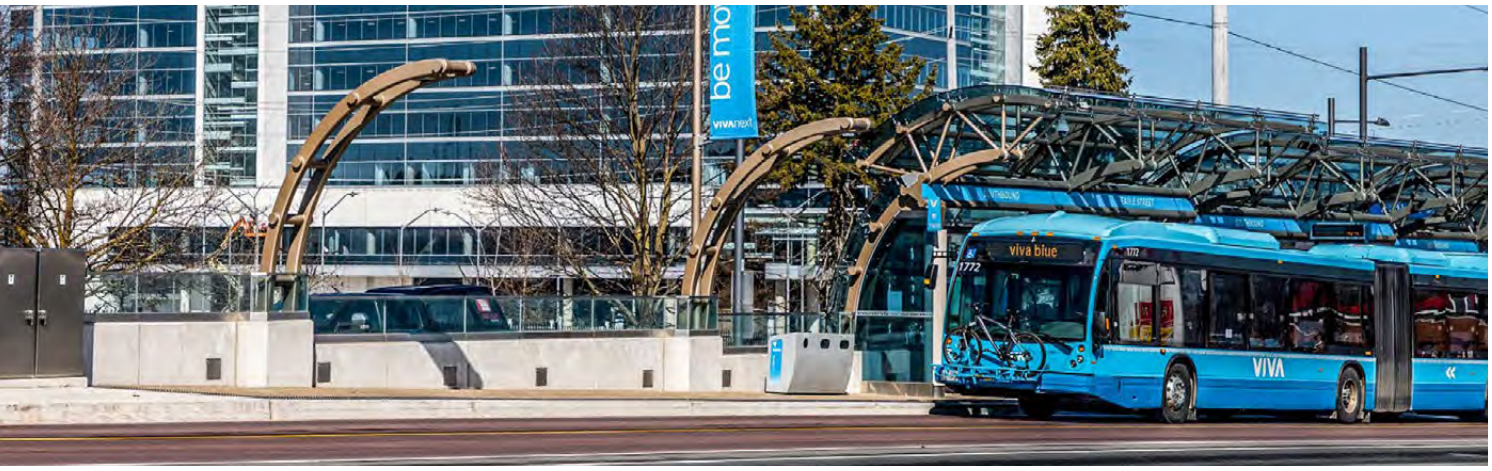
TRANSIT

An expanded, comprehensive and interconnected public transit system is required, both to reduce vehicular traffic and to provide efficient and convenient access to housing, jobs and services. A well-integrated public transit system in York Region is essential to maintain and enhance the quality of life for residents and workers. A compact, mixed-use built form will encourage and support a higher level of transit service, while helping to reduce the overall average trip length required for work, shopping, school, recreation and other purposes. The York Region Transportation Master Plan sets the long-term objectives for rapid transit that form the basis for the transit network.

The establishment of subway routes and a series of rapid transit corridors are the cornerstones of York Region's transit network. This system complements a comprehensive active transportation network, expanded Metrolinx rail and bus service, an aggressive Transportation Demand Management program and the development of transit-supportive complete communities.

York Region's continued commitment to improving transit services in partnership with local municipalities, Metrolinx, the Toronto Transit Commission and other connecting transit agencies, the Province, Federal government and other stakeholders is consistent with the Growth Plan, the Metrolinx Regional Transportation Plan, and other relevant plans/policies. The policies of this section provide a comprehensive strategy for achieving a wide range of transit alternatives.

Objective: *To provide transit service that is convenient and accessible to all residents and workers of York Region.*



6.3 MOVING PEOPLE and GOODS

TRANSIT POLICIES:

It is the policy of Council:

6.3.11 To recognize transit as a Regional strategic investment priority supporting the economy and a key element to supporting York Region's transportation system planning and urban structure.

6.3.12 To develop effective transit services which support integration by providing connection points for inter- and intra-regional transit and connections between the Urban Area and Towns and Villages.

6.3.13 To protect for and develop transit corridors and related *infrastructure* necessary to establish the York Region Transit Network as illustrated on *Map 10*.

6.3.14 To expand transit service to areas with existing and planned *transit-supportive* densities, including working with partners on:

- **a.** Subway line extensions;
- **b.** Heavy rail;
- **c.** 400 series express bus services on Transitways; and
- **d.** Rapid transit (bus/light rail).

6.3.15 To provide preferential treatment for transit vehicles on Regional streets, including the construction of *high-occupancy vehicle lanes*, dedicated transit lanes, transit signal priority and other transit priority measures.

6.3.16 To achieve higher transit usage by supporting improvements in service, convenient access, connectivity and urban design, including the following:

- **a.** Minimizing walking distance to planned and existing transit stops through measures such as the provision of walkways, sidewalks and more direct street patterns;
- **b.** Connecting transit stops directly to sidewalks and adjacent buildings in the Urban Area and Towns and Villages;
- **c.** Providing bus bays, transit shelters and bus loops with sufficient lighting and accessibility features where warranted as identified by Transit Service Guidelines;
- **d.** Directing medium-and high-density urban *development* to major transit corridors;
- **e.** Creating an efficient system for parking and drop-off facilities for commuters;
- **f.** Providing intermodal terminals or hubs;
- **g.** Providing transit service on mid-block collector streets;
- **h.** Giving priority to *active transportation* users accessing transit through the planning and *development* approvals process;
- **i.** Applying industry, Provincial, and Regional best practices and guidelines in the review and evaluation of *development* applications and related studies; and,
- **j.** Requiring that *development* applications include a *mobility plan* that addresses the criteria in policies 2.3.17 and 4.2.16.

6.3.17 To require local municipalities to:

- **a.** Provide *active transportation* facilities, sidewalks, street lighting and street furniture along Regional roads serviced by transit; and,
- **b.** Ensure that sidewalks and street lighting are provided on both sides of all streets within the Urban Area, and Towns and Villages that are serviced by transit.

6.3.18 That for the purpose of implementing the Transit Network shown on *Map 10*, as a condition of approval of a *development* application, in accordance with the *Planning Act*, York Region may require the necessary lands for public transit rights-of-way and related facilities through dedication at no expense to York Region.

6.3.19 To support the Transit Network shown on *Map 10* by securing lands in accordance with policy 6.3.18 of the Plan, for facilities such as:

- **a.** Transit stations including intermodal terminals, mobility hubs, subway, bus and light rail stations and related passenger drop-off and commuter parking lots;
- **b.** Related surface and sub-surface transit *infrastructure*, including vent shafts, transformer stations, turning loops, transit stations, emergency exits, *transit operation and maintenance facilities*, passenger standing pads and passenger pick-up and drop-off areas, electrical and electronic *infrastructure* and passenger safety facilities; and,
- **c.** *Active transportation* facilities to support users including pedestrians and cyclists.

6.3.20 That the Transit Network shown on *Map 10* is further described in one or more of the following documents:

- **a.** York Region Transportation Master Plan;
- **b.** Approved environmental assessments or approved transit project assessments;
- **c.** York Region Transit Annual Transit Initiatives; and
- **d.** York Region Transit's (YRT) transit service guidelines.

6.3.21 To provide accessible and integrated public transit to accommodate people of all abilities and ages.

6.3.22 To require local municipalities to include policies in local official plans to support implementation of the Transit Network shown on *Map 10*, consistent with the policies of the Plan.

6.3.23 To coordinate the planning, integration, improvement and operation of existing and potential new transit services, including fares with local municipalities, the Toronto Transit Commission, the Province, Metrolinx and neighbouring transit agencies.

6.3.24 To work with Provincial and Federal governments, local municipalities, the Toronto Transit Commission and other peer transit agencies, Metrolinx and adjacent municipalities to encourage sustainable capital and operational funding and tools to support transit.

6.3 MOVING PEOPLE and GOODS

COMPLETE STREETS

The street network in York Region is comprised of a system of urban and rural streets, and highways owned and operated by local municipalities, York Region and the Province. The street network is an essential component of York Region's overall transportation system. Regional streets accommodate a wide variety of uses including active and sustainable transportation options, transit, automobile and goods movement.

There is a strong relationship between transportation and urban form. Where streets travel through urban communities, streetscapes need to be designed to encourage active transportation and transit uses. Effective urban form is also essential in creating vibrant streetscapes that will attract commerce and enhance recreational use.

Objective: *To plan, protect and design a Regional street network that accommodates all modes of transportation and supports the efficient movement of goods*

COMPLETE STREETS POLICIES:

It is the policy of Council:

6.3.25 To recognize that all regional arterial roads are designed to accommodate all vehicles and modes of travel including passenger vehicles, goods movement, transit, *active transportation* and users of all ages and abilities.

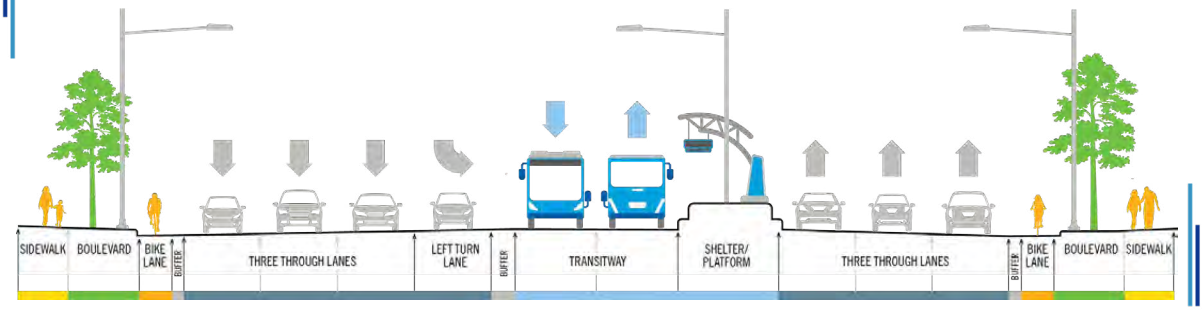
6.3.26 That the hierarchy of streets on *Map 11* supports York Region's urban structure. These corridors are to accommodate and provide connectivity for all modes of transportation including *active transportation*, transit users, automobile use and the movement of goods, public and private utilities, and on-street parking where appropriate.

6.3.27 To implement the street network identified on *Map 11*, based on the following:

- **a.** The York Region Transportation Master Plan and the Capital Budget;
- **b.** The completion of the necessary planning and *Environmental Assessment* studies for each project;
- **c.** Street improvement projects that take into account the needs and requirements of all forms of transportation including *active transportation*, transit users, automobiles, commuter rail, and goods movement;
- **d.** Prioritizing the needs of transit users and the integration of adjacent land uses in Regional Centres and Corridors, to promote these *sustainable* forms of transportation over single-occupant automobiles; and
- **e.** Facilitating improved inter-modal linkages between and within local municipalities and surrounding areas and other jurisdictions.

6.3.28 To implement transit improvements on urban streets as identified on *Map 10* and *Map 11*, which may include transit lanes, *high-occupancy vehicle lanes*, queue jump lanes, cycling facilities and other transit signal priority needs to support an integrated mobility network.

Typical Rapid Transit Corridor Cross-Section



COMPLETE STREETS POLICIES (continued):

It is the policy of Council:

6.3.29 To require transit or *high-occupancy vehicle lanes* and cycling facilities within the right-of-way of existing and future 6-lane Regional streets, as appropriate based on established thresholds and criteria.

6.3.30 That street widenings and proposed Regional roads shall be in accordance with the policies of Chapter 3 and shall protect and enhance the Regional Greenlands System.

6.3.31 That priority be given to protecting existing heritage streetscapes.

6.3.32 That the planned street widths shown in *Map 11* represent the required street widths under the Plan and may include York Region's transportation and transit requirements for vehicle lanes, sidewalks, cycling facilities, *high-occupancy-vehicle lanes*, public transit lanes and transit facilities (including shelters but not necessarily including those facilities referenced in policy 6.3.19 of the Plan), boulevards, landscaping and public streetscape enhancements.
Notwithstanding the above:

- **a.** Additional widths may be required for elements such as sight/daylight triangles, turning lanes, cuts, fills and extra turn lanes; and,
- **b.** Where planned street widths greater than 41m right-of-way, the street widths shown on *Map 11* shall include exclusive left and/or right turn lanes.

6.3.33 That as a condition of the approval of a *development* application, landowners are required to provide land at no expense to York Region for street widenings, as identified on *Map 11*, based on the following principles, and in accordance with the *Planning Act*:

- **a.** That land will be conveyed to York Region for street widenings, sight triangles, cuts, fills, exclusive left and/or right turn lanes, and extra turn lanes required as a result of new growth and *development*, changes in use that generate significant traffic volumes, or additions that substantially increase the size or usability of buildings or structures;
- **b.** That in general, street widenings shall be taken equally from the existing or approved *Environmental Assessment* centre line of construction; however unequal or reduced widenings may be required where constraints or unique conditions such as topographic features, historic buildings or other *cultural heritage resources* such as archaeological features, significant environmental concerns or other unique conditions necessitate taking a greater widening or the total widening on one side of the existing street right-of-way; and
- **c.** That additional land may also be required to construct future grade separations.

6.3.34 That in cases where a street widening results in a greater requirement for land on one side of the existing right-of-way based on the centre line of construction, which extends beyond the road allowance width identified on *Map 11*, and if the constraint is the result of existing or approved *development*, man-made physical obstructions which cannot reasonably be relocated, or other *development* related constraint York Region will, unless otherwise agreed to, compensate the landowner for those lands in excess of the planned road allowance limit.

6.3.35 That land required for new or realigned Regional roads to accommodate land *development* be conveyed, at no expense to York Region, up to and including the first 41 metres of the required right-of-way.

6.3.36 To limit direct vehicle access from *developments* adjacent to Regional roads by:

- **a.** Providing connections to local streets; and,
- **b.** Creating shared driveways by creating interconnections between adjacent properties.

6.3.37 To plan for and protect Provincial corridors and rights-of-way for transportation and transit facilities as defined through an *Environmental Assessment* process, or otherwise identified in Provincial plans to meet current and projected needs and not permit *development* in such *Planned Corridors - Transportation* that could preclude or negatively affect the use of the corridor for the purpose(s) for which it was identified or is actively being planned.

6.3.38 To plan and design existing and future Regional streets in a manner that prepares for the impacts of a changing climate.

6.3.39 That as an *Environmental Assessment Act* process progresses, any related official plan or *secondary plan* may, in consultation with the proponent, include provisions for the phased release of lands that are appropriate to the *Environmental Assessment* process.

6.3.40 To work with the Province and local municipalities to plan for and protect for the following corridors and facilities as shown on *Map 11*:

- **a.** Highway 427 north to the Highway 413 Corridor;
- **b.** Highway 404 north beyond Ravenshoe Road to the Highway 48/Highway 12 junction;
- **c.** Highway 400-404 Link (the Bradford Bypass);
- **d.** the Highway 413 Corridor;
- **e.** Interchanges, mid-block crossings and interchange ramp-extensions on 400-series highways; and,
- **f.** Regional and other arterial street crossings as identified in the York Region Transportation Master Plan.

Local municipalities, shall develop official plan policies that provide corridor protection to ensure that *development* applications will not predetermine or preclude the planning and/or implementation of the above noted transportation facilities.

6.3.41 To require local municipalities to plan, design and construct finer grid street networks to accommodate and support transit facilities and sustainable transportation options.

6.3.42 That arterial streets identified on *Map 11* currently not part of the Regional street network, or those arterial streets otherwise identified to serve a Regional function, may be considered for a transfer in jurisdiction to York Region, and such a transfer shall not require an amendment to the Plan.

6.3.43 To require local municipalities, in local official plans and *secondary plans*, to protect arterial streets under local jurisdiction, as illustrated on *Map 11*, as major transportation corridors.

6.3.44 To require local municipalities to plan for, protect, and implement, including land takings necessary for, continuous collector and local streets in both east-west and north-south directions in each concession block, in all new urban *developments*, including *New Community Areas* to ensure an integrated finer grid street network is developed.

6.3.45 That within Lot 29 and Lot 30 Concession 6, City of Vaughan, implementing local official plans and *secondary plans* for the lands shall include policies to protect the Future Highway 413 Transportation Corridor, to the satisfaction of the Province. These policies may include provisions for the phased release of lands, without amendment to the Plan, if such release does not preclude or predetermine the implementation of the transportation facilities within the Corridor.

6.3.46 To require local municipalities to include Official Plan policies to plan and implement, including land takings necessary for, mid-block crossings of 400-series highways, as shown on *Map 11*. The location of the mid-block crossing on Highway 400 between Kirby Road and the King Vaughan boundary is conditional upon the alignment of the Future Highway 413 Transportation Corridor, and will be determined through an *Environmental Assessment* process.

6.3.47 To require local municipalities to include new local streets and shared private roadway systems in emerging infill areas within secondary, block and tertiary plans to:

- **a.** Consolidate access along Regional roads;
- **b.** Minimize the use of cul-de-sacs, dead-ends which inhibit infill *development* from integrating with existing communities; and
- **c.** Implement a street network that supports the delivery of emergency services.

6.3.48 To plan and coordinate cross-boundary transportation needs and to improve connectivity among transportation systems and modes with adjacent municipalities and appropriate agencies.

6.3.49 That an Individual *Environmental Assessment* will be undertaken for the unopened road allowance of Teston Road between Dufferin Street and Keele Street which will include a comprehensive network analysis and environmental impact assessment to determine a preferred transportation strategy in the corridor.

6.3.50 That Regional streets, which support *Agricultural Areas* be designed to support the movement of farm-related vehicles and equipment.

6.3.51 That *infrastructure* is permitted in all land use designations, and *key natural heritage features* and *key hydrologic features*, where the *infrastructure* provisions of the applicable Provincial plan have been met. Demonstrated need for a project and conformity with the applicable Provincial plan will be assessed and included as part of an *Environmental Assessment Act* process. If an *Environmental Assessment Act* process does not apply, the requirements of the applicable Provincial plan will be met through *Planning Act*, *Condominium Act*, *Local Improvement Act*, or other applicable approval processes.

6.3 MOVING PEOPLE and GOODS

GOODS MOVEMENT

An interconnected, efficient and multi-modal goods movement network is integral to York Region's economic vitality. York Region's manufacturing and logistics sectors serve both Canadian and American markets and require a transportation network that links all modes of goods movement. York Region's transportation system should allow for efficient goods movement that has regard for the sensitivities of residents and different land uses. As York Region continues to grow, it is increasingly important that lands surrounding major goods movement corridors be reserved for employment activities that require heavy truck and rail traffic. The policies of this section provide a comprehensive approach to movement of goods throughout York Region and beyond.

Objective: *To promote a linked and efficient network for goods movement that supports economic vitality and minimizes conflicts with sensitive land uses.*

GOODS MOVEMENT POLICIES:

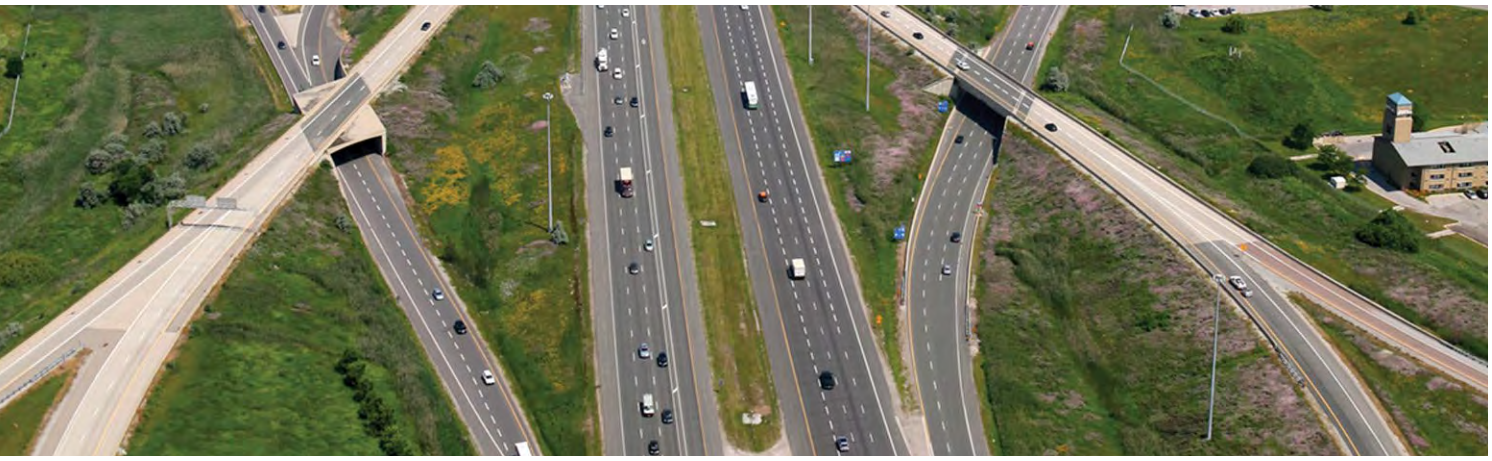
It is the policy of Council:

6.3.52 To work with the Province, local municipalities, and surrounding jurisdictions to plan for, protect and promote an interconnected and efficient multimodal goods movement network that links local municipalities, *Employment Areas* and surrounding areas, utilizing Provincial highways, Regional streets and rail corridors to meet current and future needs.

6.3.53 To avoid locating land uses that are sensitive to noise and vibration in proximity to rail facilities. If avoidance is not possible, appropriate design and buffering from *sensitive land uses* is required to protect the long-term viability of such facilities, in accordance with provincial guidelines.

6.3.54 To encourage freight and logistics uses to locate in clusters that create synergies within the goods movement industry.

6.3.55 To work with local municipalities to direct activities that require heavy truck traffic to locate in areas near and adjacent to Provincial highway interchanges, and to protect land in those locations for that purpose.



6.3.56 To support an interconnected and efficient system for goods movement through:

- **a.** The completion of the 400-series highway network, including the Future Highway 413 Transportation Corridor, Highway 400-404 link (Bradford By-pass), the Highway 427 Extension, and the Highway 404 Extension; and,
- **b.** The addition of 400-series highway interchanges, mid-block crossings, interchange ramp extensions, and overpasses.

6.3.57 To recognize that Provincial highways and Regional roads are generally corridors for goods movement.

6.3.58 To direct the movement of hazardous goods to rail and roadways outside of the Urban Area and Towns and Villages to minimize risks and ensure the safe and efficient movement of goods, where possible.

6.3.59 That integrated planning for growth management, including goods movement and transportation planning will, support and enhance the *Agricultural System* to ensure uses and *infrastructure* are compatible with *agricultural uses*, where possible in terms of size, scope and impact.

6.3.60 To protect grade separation of railways and major streets, where required.

AIRPORTS

Convenient access to air travel facilities provides an important economic advantage to businesses and can contribute to the quality of life of residents. Through the Plan York Region supports airport infrastructure within the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area and maintaining efficient transportation connections, including transit, to nearby airport facilities. It is important to ensure that new development does not conflict with the operations of the proposed Pickering Airport. The policies of this section provide direction for existing and future airport infrastructure and transportation links throughout York Region and beyond.

> **Objective:** *To support strong airport infrastructure within the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area, while minimizing conflicts between airport operations and surrounding lands.*

6.3 MOVING PEOPLE and GOODS

AIRPORTS POLICIES:

It is the policy of Council:

6.3.61 To encourage and support the Province and Federal government, local municipalities, the Greater Toronto Airports Authority, airline companies and airport operators to provide airline and airport services to the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area that meet the needs of York Region's residents and businesses.

6.3.62 To encourage the continued operation of the Toronto Buttonville Municipal Airport, until such time that services can be met by another nearby facility.

6.3.63 To support efficient transportation connections, including transit, streets and rail, from York Region to both Toronto Pearson International Airport and the proposed Pickering Airport.

6.3.64 To comply with the *Aeronautics Act*, which provide that buildings and structures in the vicinity of airports shall not interfere with airport operations and the movement of air traffic, which may cause a potential aviation safety hazard.

6.3.65 That the planning of land uses in the vicinity of existing and planned airports are to be undertaken so that the long-term operation and economic role is protected.

6.3.66 To ensure that *development* of residential or other *sensitive land uses* will occur in accordance with any Provincial and Federal requirements to protect existing and planned airports.

6.3.67 That That the Toronto Buttonville Municipal Airport lands are designated for business park use in the City of Markham Official Plan, including permission to operate an airport. When airport operations at the Buttonville Airport cease, the significant majority of the subject lands shall be retained for business park use, and the balance for a mix of urban uses. The City of Markham, in consultation with York Region, will determine the details of the final extent of employment designation through an implementing *secondary plan* process.

The re-use of the Airport site is intended to generate a range of quality employment opportunities and expand upon the number of jobs planned for the site.

6.3.68 To encourage the Federal government and other government agencies to locate airport facilities for the de-icing of aircraft and the management of de-icing fluid run-off outside of *Wellhead Protection Areas* (WHPAs) where the facilities would be located in a *significant drinking water threat* area.

6.4 WATER and WASTEWATER SERVICING

York Region is committed to providing water and wastewater services to its communities that are safe, well managed, sustainable and delivered in a financially responsible manner, in addition to ensuring that the Region's environment is protected and enhanced. It is York Region's goal that the delivery of works and services be integrated with York Region's other infrastructure, planning, and growth management responsibilities.

Without direct access to the Great Lakes, York Region relies on agreements with the City of Toronto, and the Regions of Durham and Peel to provide the safe and effective delivery of water and wastewater services to the Urban Area. There are two main sources of drinking water in York Region: surface water from Lake Ontario and Lake Simcoe and a limited amount of groundwater from aquifers located within York Region. Holistically managing our water sustainably supports strong, vibrant communities, comprehensive watershed planning and healthy environments.

Through the York Region One Water approach, York Region will sustainably meet the water needs of communities by considering all of York Region's water resources. These include a number of valuable resources such as drinking water, wastewater, recycled water, rainwater and stormwater to be managed holistically, collaboratively and sustainably.

> ***Objective:*** *To deliver safe, clean drinking water and provide long-term water and wastewater services that are safe, well-managed, and sustainable.*

WATER and WASTEWATER POLICIES:

It is the policy of Council:

6.4.1 To provide reliable water and wastewater services to residents and businesses to ensure continuing community well-being and the economic vitality of York Region.

6.4.2 To apply the objectives and policies of the Water and Wastewater Master Plan to support the implementation of the Regional water and wastewater network in partnership with local municipalities and other stakeholders.

6.4.3 That the provision of appropriate water and wastewater *infrastructure* and servicing capacity is coordinated with plans of subdivision, plans of condominium, site plans or any other *development* applications by local municipalities in order to ensure services are available prior to occupancy.

6.4.4 That planning efforts for municipal water and wastewater treatment facilities and *infrastructure* are coordinated with surrounding jurisdictions and shall be in accordance with Provincial regulations, guidelines, standards and procedures and where possible minimize and mitigate any potential adverse affects from odour, noise and other contaminants.

6.4 WATER and WASTEWATER SERVICING

6.4.5 To provide full municipal water and wastewater servicing to accommodate growth and maintain continual service in the Urban Area identified on *Map 1*.

6.4.6 To supply the Urban Area and Towns and Villages with municipal water from the Great Lakes, Lake Simcoe or from groundwater sources, or combination thereof, subject to the restrictions of the Greenbelt Plan,Lake Simcoe Protection Plan, *Clean Water Act*, or other Provincial plans and statutes.

6.4.7 That where the protection of public health is an issue, in areas of existing groundwater contamination as determined by a Medical Officer of Health, and where full municipal water and wastewater services is not planned, available, or feasible in such an area, and cannot be provided, private communal water supply and wastewater treatment systems may be considered for existing residential development. Consideration of private communal systems shall be reviewed in the context of applicable Regional Guidelines, Provincial plan policies suitable administrative, engineering, environmental and financial arrangements to the satisfaction of York Region and the Province.

6.4.8 That employment uses may be permitted on an interim basis to use *private communal water services* and/or *private communal sewage services*, where full municipal services are planned, subject to the following:

- **a.** That for employment uses operating on *private communal water services* and/or *private communal sewage services*, when full municipal services are made available, the *development*, at no cost to York Region, shall connect to the municipal service system based upon an agreeable timeframe as determined by York Region;
- **b.** That the private communal system shall be designed to the satisfaction of York Region for future connection to full municipal services as part of the municipal system;
- **c.** That an economic/fiscal impact is submitted to the satisfaction of York Region to confirm that the proposed *development* will have no financial burden on York Region;
- **d.** That a servicing justification report be prepared to the satisfaction of York Region to consider and evaluate alternative servicing options have been considered and evaluated in terms of, but not limited to alternative locations, where full municipal services exist or are planned;
- **e.** That an *environmental impact study* and/or *Agricultural Impact Assessment* have been submitted to the satisfaction of York Region to ensure that environmental and agricultural impacts have been addressed and that the private communal water and/or wastewater services are suitable;
- **f.** That all agreements and approvals required to provide *private communal water services* and/or *private communal sewage services*, planning and/or *development* agreements for applications shall be in place before or form part of *development* approval for applications submitted under the *Planning Act*;
- **g.** That any proposal must comply with all applicable Provincial legislation and Plans; and
- **h.** That within the Lake Simcoe Protection Plan area, it can be demonstrated that the private communal system does not add phosphorus loadings to the *watershed* in accordance with the Lake Simcoe Protection Plan.

6.4.9 That where municipal services exist outside of settlement areas within an existing municipal servicing area boundary as defined by the *environmental assessment*, connection to a municipal service may be permitted for only existing or permitted uses subject to the submission of suitable studies, administrative and financial arrangements to the satisfaction of York Region.

6.4.10 To require local official plans to identify to the extent possible Regional wells, water and wastewater treatment plants, *private communal water* and *sewage systems* and appropriate buffer areas according to Provincial guidelines.

6.4.11 That where local official plans permit minor infill in Towns and Villages and *Hamlets* on private individual wastewater systems consistent with current Provincial guidelines, these systems will be permitted only if it can be demonstrated to the local municipality that there are no adverse impacts on soil, surface or groundwater quality and quantity, and in accordance with applicable policies in the South Georgian Bay Lake Simcoe and the Credit Valley, Toronto and Region and Central Lake Ontario Source Protection Plans.

6.4.12 To achieve water balance in compliance with the Great Lake Charter and the Great Lake Charter Annex by ensuring that all *infrastructure* planning decision-making processes manage intra-basin transfer to within permitted quantity and water removed from the Great Lakes is returned at an equivalent or better quality.

6.4.13 That *development* within Towns and Villages identified on *Map 1* will occur on the basis of full municipal water and wastewater treatment services where such facilities currently exist or where expansion of such facilities is deemed fiscally and environmentally feasible by York Region. For existing or previously approved *development* in Towns and Villages, municipal water and wastewater treatment services will be continued where feasible and in keeping with the provisions of local official plans and the Plan.

6.4.14 That all improvements or new water and wastewater *infrastructure* systems shall conform to the applicable Provincial plans including the source protection plans.

6.4.15 That the construction or expansion of partial services is prohibited in the Oak Ridges Moraine unless it has been deemed necessary to address a serious health or environmental concern identified by the Medical Officer of Health or other designated authority.

6.4.16 That the planning and design of water and wastewater *infrastructure* will consider potential impacts from climate change.

6.4.17 To provide high-quality, safe, and clean drinking water while protecting surface and groundwater resources by:

- **a.** Meeting and exceeding water quality standards defined by the *Safe Drinking Water Act*;
- **b.** Identifying source water protection areas;
- **c.** Protecting the drinking water supply through source water protection strategies defined by the *Clean Water Act*;
- **d.** Protecting and enhancing York Region's system of lakes, rivers and streams;
- **e.** Ensuring groundwater use sustains the long-term health of aquifers; and
- **f.** Maintaining and updating the groundwater monitoring program.

6.4.18 To protect surface water quality by addressing both point and non-point sources of pollution in partnership with local municipalities and conservation authorities.

6.4.19 That the location of new municipal sewage system *infrastructure*, wherever possible, shall be located outside of the vulnerable areas within a *Wellhead Protection Area* or *Intake Protection Zone* where it would be identified as a *significant drinking water threat*. Specific types of sewage *infrastructure* may not be permitted where the activity is identified as a *significant drinking water threat* in accordance with the South Georgian Bay Lake Simcoe and the Credit Valley, Toronto and Region and Central Lake Ontario Source Protection Plans.

6.4.20 To require local municipalities to implement mandatory connection to municipal wastewater systems, where they exist, in vulnerable areas of a *Wellhead Protection Area* and/or *Intake Protection Zone* where individual on-site sewage systems have been identified as a *significant drinking water threat*.

6.4.21 Local municipalities, developers, and public agencies shall work toward reducing the amount of inflow and infiltration in both local and Regional wastewater systems consistent with Regional programs and standards.

6.4.22 To ensure that wastewater effluent is managed to minimize impacts on the quality of the receiving water body and Regional *infrastructure*.

6.4.23 That water and wastewater systems be sized to consider the potential for expansion of the service area, intensification and increased servicing allocation where permitted by the York Region Official Plan, York Region Master Plans, local municipal official plans and Provincial plans.

6.4.24 That mapping updates to the *Wellhead Protection Areas* and *Intake Protection Zone* that are consistent with applicable Provincial plans and source water protection plans do not require an amendment to the Plan.

6.4 WATER and WASTEWATER SERVICING

WELLHEAD and INTAKE PROTECTION

Wellhead Protection Areas are zones around wells where land uses must be planned to protect the quality and quantity of the water supply. Intake Protection Zones are zones established to protect the quality and quantity of water entering lake based municipal water supply facilities. In these areas, it may be necessary to restrict or even prohibit certain land uses due to their potential to impact drinking water quality and quantity.

The policies of the Plan support both the approved Credit Valley, Toronto and Region and Central Lake Ontario Protection Plan, as well as the South Georgian Bay Lake Simcoe Source Protection Plan in order to address threats to drinking water quality and quantity. This section contains source protection policies regarding highly vulnerable aquifers, significant groundwater recharge areas and recharge management areas and the Wellhead Protection Areas and Intake Protection Zones as shown on *Map 6*.

Objective: *To ensure that municipal water quality and quantity is protected from incompatible land uses.*

WELLHEAD and INTAKE PROTECTION POLICIES:

It is the policy of Council:

6.4.25 That *Wellhead Protection Areas* and *Intake Protection Zones* are shown on *Map 6*.

6.4.26 To require local municipalities to update official plans and zoning by-laws to incorporate *Wellhead Protection Area* and *Intake Protection Zone* policies and mapping as necessary.

6.4.27 To protect the quality and quantity of Regional water supply from incompatible uses and sources of contamination with the Province, local municipalities and conservation authorities by implementing Source Protection Plans.

Wellhead Protection Areas and Intake Protection Zones

It is the policy of Council:

6.4.28 That applications for any land use, except low density residential, in *Wellhead Protection Areas* A, B, C and *Intake Protection Zone* 1 will require a Section 59 notice pursuant to the *Clean Water Act*, issued by the Risk Management Official as part of the complete application requirements under the *Planning Act*, *Condominium Act*, and *Building Code Act*.

6.4.29 That applications for *development* and/or *site alteration* proposed within *Wellhead Protection Areas* A, B, C and *Intake Protection Zone* 1 as identified on *Map 6* are subject to the provisions of the Credit Valley, Toronto and Region and Central Lake Ontario and South Georgina Bay Lake Simcoe Source Protection Plans and certain land use activities may be prohibited.

6.4.30 To update wellhead studies and modeling as necessary to address substantial changes and refine the location and extent of *Wellhead Protection Areas* and *Intake Protection Zones* for municipal drinking water supplies. Changes to *Wellhead Protection Areas* and *Intake Protection Zones* or policies will require an amendment to the Plan.

6.4.31 That in *Wellhead Protection Areas* A, B, C, D and *Intake Protection Zone* 1, a *Source Water Impact Assessment and Mitigation Plan* will be prepared and approved prior to the establishment of new land uses that involve the storage or manufacture and/or handling of:

- **a.** Petroleum-based fuels and or solvents;
- **b.** Pesticides, herbicides, fungicides or fertilizers;
- **c.** Chlorinated solvents;
- **d.** Construction equipment;
- **e.** Inorganic chemicals;
- **f.** Road salt and contaminants;
- **g.** The generation and storage of hazardous waste or liquid industrial waste, and waste disposal sites and facilities;
- **h.** Organic soil conditioning sites and the storage and application of agricultural and non-agricultural source organic materials;
- **i.** Snow storage and disposal facilities;
- **j.** Tailings from mines; and
- **k.** Dense non-aqueous phase liquids (DNAPLS).

6.4.32 That where certain land use activities are prohibited, the expansion or redevelopment of existing incompatible activities within *Wellhead Protection Areas* A, B, C and D is subject to an approved *Source Water Impact Assessment and Mitigation Plan*.

6.4.33 That redevelopment of incompatible activities, as outlined in policy 6.4.32, within *Wellhead Protection Areas* and *Intake Protection Zones* to more compatible uses is encouraged subject to an approved *Source Water Impact Assessment and Mitigation Plan*.

6.4.34 That proposed geothermal systems are subject to the following:

- **a.** Geothermal systems are prohibited within *Wellhead Protection Areas* (WHPA) A and B with a vulnerability score of 8 or higher;
- **b.** Only horizontal closed-loop geothermal systems are permitted within the WHPA-B where the vulnerability score is 6 or less, subject to Regional approval;
- **c.** Notwithstanding policies a and b, within *Wellhead Protection Areas*, the entirety of the geothermal systems shall be above the municipal aquifer;
- **d.** Notwithstanding policies a and b, geothermal systems are permitted in WHPAs, and future planned municipal water systems where potable drinking water site condition standards can be demonstrated to the satisfaction of York Region; and
- **e.** Notwithstanding policies a and b, within WHPAs and where future planned municipal water systems have been identified by York Region, proposed geothermal systems as part of a *Planning Act*, *Condominium Act*, and *Building Code Act* application, shall only be permitted if approved by York Region.

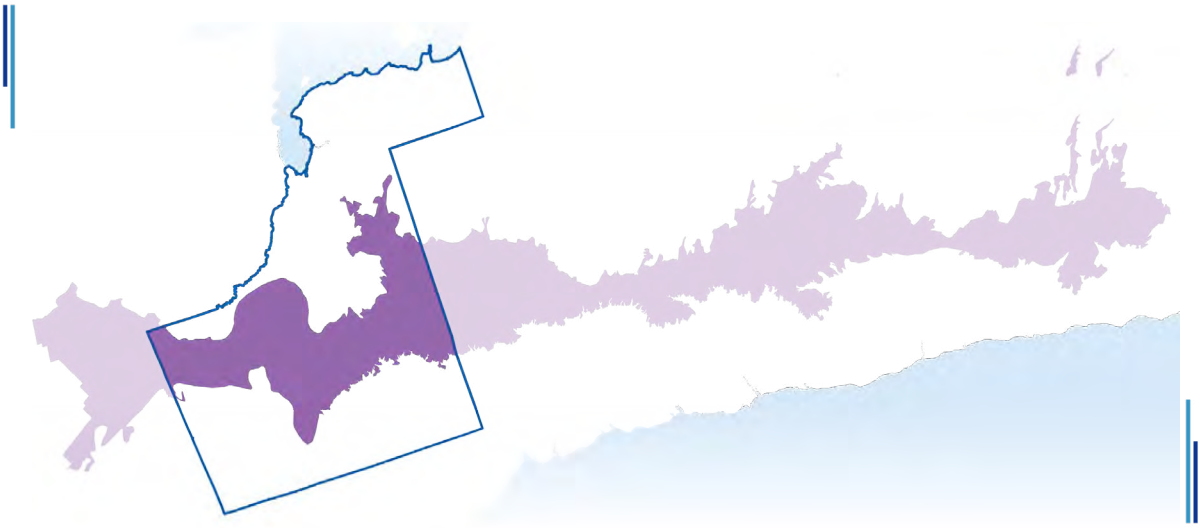
ON the OAK RIDGES MORAINE:

6.4.35 That notwithstanding policy 6.4.31, within *Wellhead Protection Areas* A, B, C and D, new land uses which involve the storage, manufacture of materials or uses detailed in 6.4.31 are prohibited.

6.4.36 That in WHPA-A, the 0-to-2 year time of travel zone, or IPZ-1 as shown on *Map 6*, new storage of animal manure, undertaking of animal agriculture and the storage of agricultural equipment for other than personal or family use, is prohibited.

6.4.37 To assist local municipalities in the review and approval of site management and contingency plans as required by the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan to ensure that land uses do not pose a *significant threat* to Regional wells.

The Oak Ridges Moraine within York Region



6.5 STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

Stormwater is precipitation (mainly rainwater and snow) that falls on the ground surface and then partly runs off overland (runoff), infiltrates into the ground (infiltration), and evaporates or transpires through vegetation and plants. Areas with less vegetation and more paved/hard surface produce increased amount of runoff and less infiltration. Increased runoff causes flooding and erosion risks in downstream watercourses and communities. Increased runoff also carries high contaminant loads and causes increased water temperatures, which degrade the quality of streams, rivers, lakes, and fisheries and terrestrial habitats.

Areas with more vegetation and less hard surfaces produce less runoff and increase infiltration of stormwater, thereby reducing flooding and erosion risks and increasing recharge of groundwater systems which make water available for wells and baseflow in streams. In addition, projected impacts of climate change are expected to pose challenges due to significant shifts in weather patterns, especially in storm frequency and intensity. These challenges include earlier snowmelt, more frequent extreme rainfall events, and increased flood risks. As such, comprehensive and effective stormwater management is required and vital for sustainability of the environment including streams, rivers, lakes, and fisheries and terrestrial habitats.

The policies of this section provide for planning for new stormwater management facilities based on comprehensive watershed/subwatershed plans. In addition, when retrofitting existing or designing new stormwater management facilities, the impacts of climate change should also be taken into consideration. The One Water Approach should be fully implemented with the use and reuse of stormwater for water supply purposes with the ultimate goal of reducing water taking from watersheds and reducing the amount of runoff and effluent that is returned to waterbodies.

> ***Objective:*** *To ensure the careful management of stormwater through the use of innovative techniques and relevant guidelines and best practices.*

STORMWATER MANAGEMENT POLICIES:

It is the policy of Council:

6.5.1 To support and work in partnership with local municipalities, the Province, conservation authorities and other agencies in the implementation of stormwater management initiatives and guidelines to protect the natural environment, manage hazards and reduce risk.

6.5.2 That new stormwater management facilities be designed to reduce the risk of contaminating drinking water, and where possible direct the discharge of stormwater outside of *Wellhead Protection Areas* and *Intake Protection Zones*, where the activity is identified as a *significant drinking water threat* in accordance with applicable policies in the South Georgian Bay Lake Simcoe and the Credit Valley, Toronto and Region and Central Lake Ontario Source Protection Plans. Specific types of stormwater management facilities may not be permitted where the activity is identified as a *significant drinking water threat* in accordance with the South Georgian Bay Lake Simcoe and the Credit Valley, Toronto and Region and Central Lake Ontario Source Protection Plans.

6.5 STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

6.5.3 To require that *development* and *site alteration* proposals meet applicable stormwater management policies, guidelines and best practices.

6.5.4 That local municipalities require that stormwater management works be built, maintained and financially sustained for the life of the asset in accordance with applicable legislation and guidelines to ensure that they function as designed.

6.5.5 To work with local municipalities and the conservation authorities in the preparation and implementation of comprehensive stormwater management master plans or equivalent, informed by *watershed* planning.

6.5.6 That all comprehensive *secondary plans* prepared by local municipalities and implemented in cooperation with York Region and related agencies shall include urban stormwater management approaches.

6.5.7 That *development* take an integrated and innovative approach to stormwater management, be water efficient, and minimize stormwater volumes, contaminant loads and changes in water balance and maximize infiltration through an integrated treatment approach.

6.6 WASTE MANAGEMENT

Strong waste management policies are key to achieving the visionary goal of the SM4RT Living Waste Management Master Plan - a world in which nothing goes to waste. York Region is taking a sustainable approach to waste management with policy and programming guided by 4R hierarchy of reduce, reuse, recycle and recover.

York Region and local municipalities are committed to providing leadership through partnering, innovating and inspiring change. The policies outlined in this section assist in implementing the SM4RT Living Plan.

The SM4RT Living Plan has the following visionary goal – A world in which nothing goes to waste. In pursuing the visionary goal, York Region and its nine local municipalities will take as their mission – Leading the way through partnering, innovating and inspiring change.

The efforts of York Region and local municipalities will be guided by three main objectives:

- Successfully navigate legislative changes: Responding flexibly and using legislative changes to continually improve SM4RT Living.
- Use resources and infrastructure more strategically to achieve SM4RT Living: Focusing efforts, innovating and improving coordination to create a more seamless, cost effective system and do more with available resources.
- Inspire people across York Region to embrace SM4RT Living and advance the circular economy: Value of partners and pioneers in igniting the uptake of SM4RT Living and the circular economy across our communities.

Objective: *To achieve an efficient waste management system that minimizes material entering the waste stream, and is managed in the most economically efficient, environmentally sensitive and socially responsible manner.*

WASTE MANAGEMENT POLICIES:

It is the policy of Council:

6.6.1 To achieve the waste management reduction and diversion targets identified in the SM4RT Living Waste Management Plan.

6.6.2 To work with local municipalities, Province and federal government to advance the circular economy and full extended producer responsibility.

6.6 WASTE MANAGEMENT

Extended producer responsibility

Extended producer responsibility is an environmental policy approach in which a producer's responsibility for a product is extended to the post-consumer stage of a product's life cycle.

Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment

It is the policy of Council:

6.6.3 To pursue partnerships and establish agreements in collaboration with local municipalities to define roles and obligations in managing system performance, managing shared resources and *infrastructure*, optimizing efficiencies and achieving the goals and objectives of the SM4RT Living Waste Management Plan.

6.6.4 To support and require local municipalities to include standards for waste diversion, material storage and collection that maximize diversion and align with provincial direction, in the approval process for new multi-residential *developments*.

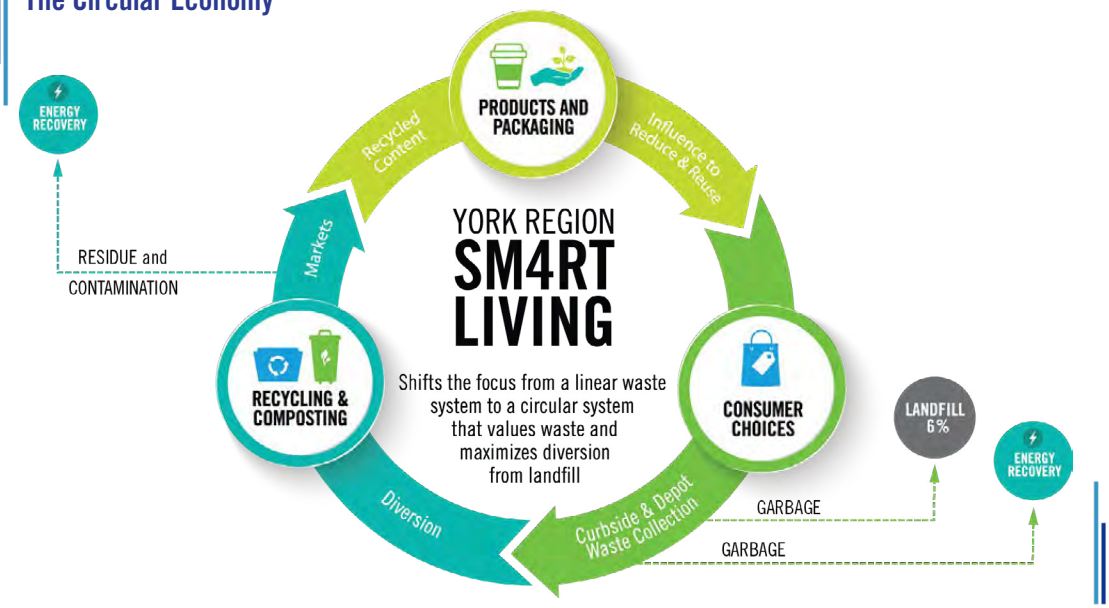
6.6.5 To work with local municipalities to require existing multi-unit residential buildings to provide convenient access to three-stream waste diversion programs and incorporate additional specialized programs where opportunities exist, such as batteries and electronic waste.

6.6.6 To encourage the industrial, commercial and institutional sectors to develop waste reduction programs that support York Region's move to the circular economy.

6.6.7 To require local official plans to identify all known closed and active waste disposal facilities and provide policies for *development* within or on lands in close proximity to such sites, and their future rehabilitation, in accordance with provincial guidelines and legislation.

6.6.8 To prohibit new waste disposal sites within the Regional Greenlands System as identified on *Map 2*.

The Circular Economy



6.7 ENERGY and UTILITIES

Connections to a wide range of both public and private utility networks, including facilities and corridors are required for the transmission of electricity, gas, broadband and communication/telecommunication services, and to sustain a high standard of living in York Region. It is important that these networks have regard for potential impacts on the surrounding area, including existing communities and the natural environment.

As York Region grows, additional utility infrastructure will be integrated with innovative technologies, renewable energy systems and energy conservation practices. It is the intent of the Plan to utilize best practices for energy use and demand management, as set out in this section.

> ***Objective:*** *To demonstrate leadership in energy conservation and innovation, and to encourage the coordinated, efficient and safe integration of utilities to better serve residents and businesses.*

ENERGY and UTILITIES POLICIES:

It is the policy of Council:

6.7.1 To work with municipalities to identify and protect existing and proposed utility corridors as determined through the *Environmental Assessment Act* process where applicable or identified in Provincial plans to support expected growth within York Region and its neighbouring municipalities.

6.7.2 To require local official plans to identify and protect utility corridors including the Future Highway 413 Corridor and the proposed Highway 400-404 link (Bradford By-pass) for long-term servicing needs, including and in compliance with corridors identified in Provincial plans.

6.7.3 That local municipalities identify and include policies to protect existing and planned TransCanada Pipelines and facilities in accordance with the following:

- **a.** Early consultation with the utility provider;
- **b.** That *development* within 200 metres of its pipelines and within 750 metres of a compressor station should be undertaken to ensure TransCanada Pipelines can assess potential impacts and provide recommendations to avoid adverse impacts; and,
- **c.** That notwithstanding policy 6.7.7, use of rights-of-way should be limited to municipal open space uses.

6.7.4 To coordinate the provision of services and encourage the integration of utilities work with corporations, commissions, and government agencies responsible for the regulation, transmission and delivery of utilities.

6.7.5 To require underground installation of utilities, where feasible, in *New Community Areas* and strategic growth areas, and to encourage buried utilities in the balance of York Region.

6.7.6 To require local municipalities to engage cellular service providers early in the *development* process, to facilitate the integration of cellular transmission facilities with new buildings.

6.7.7 To encourage complementary uses on utility corridors, such as trails, transit, commuter parking, community gardens, *low-impact development* and appropriate vegetation.

6.7.8 To require local municipalities to develop broadband policies that support implementation of emerging technologies, advanced telecommunications and open access conduit on all existing and future municipal roads and within subdivisions.

6.7.9 To engage and collaborate with local municipalities, local utilities and other stakeholders in the provision of energy conservation, demand management, district energy, alternative energy systems, renewable energy systems and local generation.

6.7.10 To demonstrate leadership in energy efficiency and the use of *renewable energy systems* and *alternative energy systems* in York Region operations, by supporting the implementation of York Region Corporate Energy Conservation and Demand Management Plan.

6.7.11 To encourage on-site *alternative energy systems* and *renewable energy systems* for residential, commercial, institutional and industrial buildings and to work with local municipalities on design requirements.

6.7.12 That renewable energy projects and *alternative energy systems* shall be permitted throughout the Region in accordance with provincial and federal requirements, and that these permissions be incorporated into local official plans and zoning by-laws. Local municipalities shall specify in more detail where renewable projects will be permitted.

6.7.13 To promote shared rights-of-way and encourage the co-location of linear *infrastructure* and coordinate efforts with surrounding jurisdictions and municipalities to minimize land requirements and increase the efficiency of utility construction and maintenance, where appropriate.

7.0 IMPLEMENTATION of the OFFICIAL PLAN

7.1 ENGAGEMENT and PARTNERSHIPS
7.2 MONITORING and MEASURING SUCCESS
7.3 The PLANNING PROCESS
7.4 INTERPRETING the PLAN

York Region

7.0 IMPLEMENTATION of the OFFICIAL PLAN

7.1 ENGAGEMENT and PARTNERSHIPS
7.2 MONITORING and MEASURING SUCCESS
7.3 The PLANNING PROCESS
7.4 INTERPRETING the PLAN

The policies of the Regional Official Plan aim to achieve the realization of complete communities. Planning decisions in York Region should produce value and positive outcomes for communities and residents, including economic growth, community development and environmental protection.

The primary goal in implementing the policies of the Plan is to ensure resiliency and the ability to adapt to changing economic and environmental conditions and increasing social diversity. The effectiveness of the Plan is contingent upon the following principles as set out in this Chapter:

- Applying innovative approaches and integrated solutions to planning processes;
- Regular monitoring of policies;
- Coordinating with the public, governments, agencies, and the development industry to ensure proactive; implementation, consensus-building, accountability and transparency; and
- Coordinating human services delivery and infrastructure investment with population and employment growth.

Goal: *To apply the policies of the Plan fairly and equitably and bring diverse perspectives into the planning process.*

York Region's Chief Planner, Paul Freeman answers resident questions about urban corridors in the Region.

7.1 ENGAGEMENT and PARTNERSHIPS

York Region is committed to engaging its diverse population and strengthening community inclusivity in the planning process and application of the Plan to help deliver planning decisions that consider the input of all residents and communities. Engagement and ongoing discussions with members of the public, Regional partners, Indigenous communities and stakeholders are essential to implement the objectives and policies of the Plan.

Stakeholders involved in the planning process and implementation of the Plan include, but are not limited to, local municipalities, senior levels of government, conservation authorities, local utilities, the development industry, adjacent municipalities, and others. Through continued engagement and effective partnerships, York Region's policies, strategies and operations will continue to respond to the unique community needs of residents and businesses.

> ***Objective:*** *To engage York Region's diverse communities, while partnering with other levels of government and a variety of stakeholder and partners to deliver the objectives of the Plan.*

ENGAGEMENT and PARTNERSHIPS POLICIES:

It is the policy of Council:

7.1.1 To engage in a timely manner with the public, Indigenous communities, stakeholders and governments to ensure accountable and transparent planning processes that deliver the key objectives and policies of the Plan.

7.1.2 To periodically review and ensure that engagement through the planning process is inclusive and reaches diverse communities.

7.1.3 To continue to work in partnership with local municipalities to deliver the objectives of the Plan and to engage a variety of stakeholders through local municipal planning initiatives.

7.1.4 To provide sufficient information about proposed amendments and engage the public using a variety of print, in person and virtual methods.

7.1.5 To advocate to senior levels of government for funding partnerships to support sustainable growth in York Region.

Indigenous Communities

Indigenous communities in the Regional Official Plan refers to First Nations (as recognized under the *Indian Act*) as well as Indigenous peoples including urban Indigenous who live throughout York Region and are not officially recognized under the *Indian Act*. This inclusive approach reflects a range of Indigenous peoples that have historical interests and/or treaty rights or live in York Region. *View the treaty map.*

7.1.6 To engage with Indigenous communities and coordinate on land use planning matters, in accordance with Provincial policy and guidance, subject to further guidance from the Province.

7.1.7 That local municipalities shall engage with Indigenous communities and coordinate on land use planning matters, in accordance with Provincial policy and guidance.

7.1.8 To encourage local municipalities to continue to build relationships and understanding with Indigenous communities to support meaningful engagement.

7.1.9 To encourage local municipalities to consider the archaeological process and protocols of Indigenous communities.

7.1.10 To develop in conjunction with Indigenous communities, having *traditional territories* in or an interest in the archaeological or cultural heritage of York Region, local municipalities, and the Province, an Indigenous engagement framework or equivalent strategy, which will provide principles for engaging Indigenous communities on planning matters and will consider the interests of Indigenous communities in conserving cultural heritage and *archaeological resources*.

7.2 MONITORING and MEASURING SUCCESS

Comprehensive monitoring and sharing data with York Region's partners and stakeholders will help measure the success of the Plan. Monitoring allows York Region to respond to new trends and to continuously improve the effectiveness of the Plan. Ongoing monitoring and assessment will:

- Identify emerging trends and related issues that could impact the relevancy of the policies in the Plan;
- Analyze the effectiveness of the policies and strategies within the Plan and other Regional initiatives; and
- Provide the basis for adjustments and updates where required.

Objective: *To monitor the implementation of the Plan's key objectives and targets.*

MEASURING and MONITORING SUCCESS POLICIES:

It is the policy of Council:

7.2.1 To measure the success of the Plan by developing a series of indicators and producing regular reports that monitor progress towards targets established in the Plan.

7.2.2 To regularly monitor and report on planning and *development* activity, including summarizing activity within priority *intensification* areas such as Regional Centres and Corridors and *major transit station areas*.

7.2.3 To regularly monitor the location, type and characteristics of business and supply of serviced employment land with local municipalities.

7.2.4 To review the Plan within 10 years of approval and at least every 5 years thereafter to ensure that the Plan conforms with Provincial Plans, is consistent with Provincial Policy Statements and that the objectives and targets of the Plan are being met or exceeded.

7.2.5 To collaborate with all levels of government to share data to help inform decision making.

7.2.6 To work in partnership with local municipalities to make land use planning data publicly accessible.

7.2.7 To monitor the co-ordination of growth, *infrastructure* and servicing capacity to inform updates to Regional forecasts, *infrastructure* master plans, and 10-year capital plans to ensure financial sustainability.

7.3 The PLANNING PROCESS

Construction in the Vaughan Metropolitan Centre

The Regional Official Plan sets the strategic policy framework for the structural elements of York Region. Local official plans establish policies that refine the policies of the Plan. Within this mutually supportive framework, a clear and effective planning process is established. An effective and efficient development review process is essential to successful implementation of the Plan. This section guides the review process and includes working with partners and stakeholders to achieve excellence in planning and implementation:

- Ensuring positive outcomes for the economy, community and environment;
- Ensuring that new development meets or exceeds the standards specified in the Plan emphasizing excellence in urban design and transit-oriented development; and to ensure a diversity in housing types and affordability; and
- Involving interested stakeholders at the outset of the review process to ensure that concerns and requirements are identified early and options to address are explored.

Objective: *To ensure that the planning process is conducted in a transparent and timely manner.*

PLANNING PROCESS POLICIES:

It is the policy of Council:

7.3.1 That local official plans and comprehensive zoning bylaws shall be brought into conformity with the Plan in accordance with the *Planning Act*.

7.3.2 That when considering local official plan and Regional official plan policies, the more restrictive policies shall apply.

7.3.3 To work with communities, agencies, and governments to co-ordinate the planning review process by measures such as engaging early in the process, eliminating duplication, coordinating reviews, simplifying procedures and resolving conflicts.

7.3.4 To support local official plan and *secondary plan* policies that are more specific or restrictive than this Plan, provided:

- **a.** Such policies are consistent with the general intent and provisions of the Plan and applicable Provincial Plans;
- **b.** Policies on agriculture, mineral aggregate and wayside pits may not be more restrictive than the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan; and,
- **c.** Policies on the *agricultural system*, non-renewable resources and lot creation may not be more restrictive than the Greenbelt Plan.

7.3.5 To consider the following factors in determining conformity between the Plan and local official plans:
- **a.** Conformity with Provincial Plans, statutes, and regulations;
- **b.** Consistency between the overall direction and long-term objectives of the local official plan and those of the Plan; and,
- **c.** Reasonable efforts in the local official plan to accommodate matters encouraged by the policies of this Plan, or to provide a statement indicating why such a policy direction is not appropriate in the local context.

7.3.6 To consider the use of the Community Improvement provisions of the *Planning Act* to implement the policies of the Plan. In doing so, York Region may:
- **a.** Designate any part of York Region as a Community Improvement Project Area
- **b.** Enact a Regional Community Improvement Plan that utilizes incentive programs including making grants or loans within the Community Improvement Plan Area; and,
- **c.** Participate in a Community Improvement Plan of a local municipality.

7.3.7 That York Region may use Community Improvement Plans for:
- **a.** *Infrastructure* that is within York Region's jurisdiction;
- **b.** land and buildings within and adjacent to existing or planned transit corridors that have the potential to provide a focus for higher density mixed-use *development* and redevelopment;
- **c.** *Affordable* housing;
- **d.** Sustainable buildings (or *development*) designed to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to changing climate; and,
- **e.** Other matters as the Province may prescribe in accordance with the *Planning Act*.

7.3.8 That amendments to local official plans may be exempt from Regional approval where they are of local significance, no Regional interest is adversely affected, and they conform with Provincial plans and policies of this Regional Official Plan. Amendments impacting any one of the following areas are not eligible for exemption:
- **a.** Applications directly and substantially affecting Regional servicing *infrastructure* including, but not limited to, transportation, water, and wastewater;
- **b.** Applications that substantially change Regional capital forecasts;
- **c.** Applications that substantially change the planned local and Regional urban structure;
- **d.** Approval of new or changes to a *Special Policy Area;*
- **e.** Applications pursuant to Section 26 to the *Planning Act;*
- **f.** Applications for employment land conversions;
- **g.** Major secondary plans;
- **h.** Retail applications having a Regional impact;
- **i.** Applications within the Regional Greenlands System; or,
- **j.** Applications with cross-boundary impacts.

7.3.9 That amendments to the Plan shall follow prescribed information required by the *Planning Act* and its regulations, as amended.

7.3.10 To determine whether an application to amend the Plan is complete, the following will be required:
- **a.** A completed Regional Official Plan Amendment application form;
- **b.** The current application fee;
- **c.** A draft of the proposed amendment, including the proposed text and all proposed schedules;
- **d.** At least one pre-application meeting to determine the required information and materials; and,
- **e.** Other requisite information and materials as determined through the pre-application meeting(s).

7.3.11 That Table 7 contains a list of studies that may be required to properly evaluate proposed amendments to the Plan. Required studies will be determined during the pre-application meeting.

Table 7: Possible Regional Planning Studies Required to Evaluate a Proposed Amendment to the Plan

Planning Studies	Circumstance
Affordable Housing Contribution Plan	All Regional Official Plan Amendment applications
Archaeological Assessment	*Development* of lands containing significant or potentially significant *archaeological resources*
Agricultural Impact Assessment	Non-agricultural *development* with potential impact on agricultural operations and the *Agricultural System*
Contaminant Management Plan	*Major development* within *highly vulnerable aquifers*
Earth Science Heritage Evaluation	*Development* within the minimum area of influence of an *earth science area of natural or scientific interest*
Environmental Impact Study	*Development* on or within 120 metres of a *key natural heritage feature*, or *key hydrologic feature*, or the Regional Greenlands System
Landform Conservation Plan	*Development* on landform conservation areas within the Oak Ridges Moraine
Aggregate Study	*Development* within and/or adjacent to *mineral aggregate resources*
Subwatershed Study or Equivalent	Prior to approval of *Secondary Plans* within *New Community Areas*
Planning Justification Report (including Provincial Plan Conformity Evaluation, where applicable)	All Regional Official Plan Amendment applications
Section 59 Notice	Application for any land use, except *low density residential* in Wellhead Protection Areas A, B, C and Intake Protection Zone 1
Source Water Impact Assessment and Migration Plan	*Development* within *wellhead protection areas* and *intake protection zones*
Transportation Plan	All Regional Official Plan Amendment applications
Water and Wastewater Servicing Plan	All Regional Official Plan Amendment applications

7.3.12 That for an amendment application that has been deemed complete, additional reports and studies may be identified and required. These additional requirements do not affect the original complete application date.

7.3.13 That all Regional studies required in the Plan be included in local municipal official plan complete applications requirements.

7.3.14 That if a plan of subdivision or part thereof has been registered for eight years or more, and does not meet the growth management targets of the Plan and does not conform to the policies of the Plan, Regional Council or the Council of the respective local municipality shall use its authority under Section 50(4) of the *Planning Act* to deem it not to be a registered plan of subdivision.

7.3.15 That local municipalities shall require that approvals of draft plans of subdivision include a lapsing date in accordance with Section 51(32) of the *Planning Act*.

7.4 INTERPRETING the PLAN

The following policies provide a guide for the interpretation of individual policies of the Plan.

Objective: *To provide clarity in the interpretation of the Plan.*

INTERPRETING THE PLAN POLICIES:

It is the policy of Council:

7.4.1 That Chapters 1 through 7, inclusive of preambles, goals, objectives, policies, and tables, definitions, maps, figures and appendices contained herein constitute the York Region Official Plan.

7.4.2 That all policies of the Plan must be considered together to determine conformity. Individual policies should not be read or interpreted in isolation.

7.4.3 That the boundaries and elements identified on *Maps 1 to 13* are fixed unless otherwise specified in the policies of the Plan. Where permitted, exact boundaries shall be defined in local official plans and zoning bylaws, except in the following cases:

- **a.** The boundary of the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan, and the Greenbelt Plan, 2017. In this case, the boundaries are fixed and may only be clarified through reference to the applicable Provincial Regulations; and,
- **b.** The boundaries of the Urban Area identified on *Map 1*, are fixed where they are identified by a municipal street, rail line, parcel fabric as it exists on the day of adoption of the Plan, lot and/or concession blocks, or, other clearly identifiable physical features.

7.4.4 That where a term is defined in the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan, 2017, those definitions shall prevail over those contained in the Plan for the purposes of planning matters within that Plan area.

7.4.5 That amendments to land use designations will only be considered within the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan Area:

- **a.** As part of a provincial review of that Plan;
- **b.** As provided for in the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan, and the *Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Act*, as amended; or,
- **c.** Within Urban Areas, Towns and Villages and *Hamlets*, not requiring boundary modifications.

7.4.6 That amendments to the Protected Countryside of the Greenbelt Plan, will not be considered unless part of the provincial review of that Plan, except as provided for in the Greenbelt Plan, or the *Greenbelt Act*, as amended.

7.4.7 That for lands identified as being in the Parkway Belt West Plan, Provincial approvals are required before planning applications will be considered. Where the Parkway Belt West Plan is amended to remove lands, the underlying Regional land use designation will apply without amendment to the Plan.

7.4.8 That in the case of a discrepancy between the text and the related map, the policies will take precedence.

7.4.9 That no amendment to the Plan is required to construct new or expanded *infrastructure* subject to and approved under the *Environmental Assessment Act* which considers the sustainability and growth management objectives of the Plan and is in conformity with Provincial Plans.

7.4.10 That an amendment to the Plan is not required and changes may be made during office consolidations for:

- **a.** Additions or deletions to York Region's area and application of the land use designation of the abutting lands, when the addition is a result of realignments to Provincial highways or Regional boundary streets;
- **b.** Altering the numbering and arrangement of provisions in the Plan;
- **c.** Updating the base mapping used in the Plan or adding base information to maps to show existing and approved *infrastructure*;
- **d.** Updating environmental *Maps 2 through 5* in accordance with the policies of Section 3.4 of the Plan;
- **e.** Updating *Maps 6, 7* and *12A* in accordance with policy 6.4.24 of the Plan;
- **f.** Correcting clerical, grammatical, spelling and technical mapping errors;
- **g.** Changing format or presentation; or,
- **h.** Altering punctuation to obtain a uniform mode of expression.

TRANSITION

7.4.11 That all planning decisions shall conform to the Provincial Plans and shall be consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement, subject to applicable Provincial transition provisions.

7.4.12 That legally existing and permitted land uses that conform with in-force local official plans, zoning bylaws and *Ministerial Zoning Orders*, at the time the Plan is approved, are permitted to continue to the extent provided for in the local official plans and zoning bylaws and *Ministerial Zoning Orders* in accordance with Provincial plans as applicable.

7.4.13 That *development* applications which have not been deemed complete by the date of the Plan's approval shall be subject to the policies of the Plan.

7.4.14 That existing uses and residential dwellings on existing lots of record in the Greenbelt Plan Area are subject to Section 4.5 of the Greenbelt Plan.

7.4.15 That in the Greenbelt Plan Area, where a local municipal official plan was amended prior to December 16, 2004 to specifically designate land uses, the approval may continue to be recognized and further applications required under the *Planning Act* or *Condominium Act* to implement the official plan approval are not required to conform to the Greenbelt Plan, and are permitted in the Plan.

7.4.16 That where a local municipal zoning bylaw was amended prior to December 16, 2004 to specifically permit land use(s), the approval may continue to be recognized and any further applications required under the *Planning Act* or *Condominium Act* to implement the land use permitted by the zoning bylaw are not required to conform to the Greenbelt Plan.

Applications to further amend the site-specific official plan or zoning bylaw permissions referred to above for uses similar to or more in conformity with the provisions of the Greenbelt Plan, 2017 are also permitted. All such applications should, where possible, seek to achieve or improve conformity with the Greenbelt Plan, 2017.

7.4.17 That within the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan Area, uses, buildings and structures legally existing on November 15, 2001 are permitted in every land use designation, subject to the provisions of the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan.

7.4.18 That all applications, matters or proceedings as defined under the *Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Act,* commenced on or after November 17, 2001 are required to conform with the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan.

DEFINITIONS

YORK REGION **OFFICIAL PLAN** 2022

Accessory Uses
Uses of land that are found on the same parcel as the principal use, but are subordinate and incidental and includes accessory structures.

Active Transportation
Human-powered travel, including but not limited to, walking, cycling, rolling (inline skating, scootering) and travel with the use of mobility aids, including motorized wheelchairs and other power-assisted devices moving at a comparable speed.

Additional Residential Unit
A self-contained dwelling unit with a private kitchen, bathroom facilities and sleeping areas in a house, or building *ancillary* to a house.

Adjacent Lands
Those lands contiguous to existing or planned corridors and transportation facilities where *development* would have a negative impact on the corridor or facility. Those lands contiguous to a specific *natural heritage feature* or *key hydrologic feature* where it is likely that *development* or *site alteration* can reasonably be expected to have a negative impact on the feature. Those lands contiguous to lands on the surface of known petroleum resources, mineral deposits, or deposits of *mineral aggregate resources* where it is likely that *development* would constrain future access to the resources. Lands contiguous to *cultural heritage resources*. The extent of the adjacent lands may be recommended by the Province or based on municipal approaches which achieve the same objective. Generally, adjacent lands are considered to be within 120m from any part of the feature.

Affordable
In the case of ownership housing, housing for which the purchase price results in annual accommodation costs not exceeding 30% of gross annual household income for low- and moderate-income households. In the case of rental housing, a unit for which the rent is at or below 125% of the average market rent of a unit in the regional market area, by bedroom type.

For the purposes of this definition, "low- and moderate-income households" means the lesser of:

a. Households with incomes in the lowest 60% of the income distribution for the regional market area or,
b. Households with incomes in the lowest 60% of the income distribution for the local market area.

Agriculture Area
An area where prime agricultural lands predominate. This includes areas of prime agricultural lands and associated Canada Land Inventory Class 4 through 7 lands and additional areas where there is a local concentration of farms which exhibit characteristics of ongoing agriculture. Prime agricultural areas are identified through the Land Evaluation and Area Review.

Agricultural Condition

a. In regard to *specialty crop areas*, a condition in which substantially the same areas and same average soil capability for agriculture are restored, the same range and productivity of specialty crops common in the area can be achieved, and, where applicable, the microclimate on which the site and surrounding area may be dependent for specialty crop production will be maintained or restored; and
b) In regard to prime agricultural land outside of *specialty crop areas*, a condition in which substantially the same areas and same average soil capability for agriculture are restored.

Agricultural Impact Assessment
A study that evaluates the potential impacts of non-agricultural *development* on agricultural operations and the *Agricultural System* and recommends ways to avoid or, if avoidance is not possible, minimize and mitigate adverse impacts.

Agriculture-Related Uses
Those farm-related commercial and farm-related industrial uses that are directly related to the farm operations in the area, support agriculture, benefit from being in close proximity to the farm operations, and provide products and/or services to farm operations as a primary activity.

Agricultural System
A system comprised of a group of inter-connected elements that collectively create a viable, thriving agricultural sector. It has two components:

a. An agricultural land base comprised of prime agricultural areas, including *specialty crop areas*, and rural lands that together create a continuous productive land base for agriculture; and
b. An *agri-food network* which includes *infrastructure*, services, and assets important to the viability of the agri-food sector.

Agricultural Uses
The growing of crops, including nursery, biomass and horticultural crops; raising of livestock; raising of other animals for food, fur or fibre, including poultry and fish; aquaculture; apiaries; agro-forestry; maple syrup production; and associated on-farm buildings and structures, including but not limited to livestock facilities, manure storage, value-retaining facilities, and accommodation for full-time farm labour where the size and nature of the operation requires additional employment.

Agri-Food Network
Within the *Agricultural System*, a network that includes elements important to the viability of the agri-food sector such as regional *infrastructure* and transportation networks; on-farm buildings and *infrastructure*; agricultural services, farm markets, distributors, and primary processing; and vibrant, agriculture-supportive communities.

Agri-Tourism Uses
Farm-related tourism uses, including limited accommodation such as a bed and breakfast, that promote enjoyment, education or activities related to the farm operation.

Alternative Energy Systems
A system that uses sources of energy or energy conversion processes to produce power, heat and/or cooling that significantly reduces the amount of harmful emissions to the environment (air, earth and water) when compared to conventional energy systems.

Ancillary Uses
Small scale retail and commercial uses that primarily serve the business functions on employment lands.

Archaeological Assessment
A survey undertaken by a provincially licensed archaeologist to identify an *archaeological site* and, to the extent required, the cultural heritage value or interest of the site and applicable mitigation measures. There are four levels of assessment that are specific to the circumstances, a Stage 1, Stage 2, Stage 3 or Stage 4 archaeological assessment, each of which is required as completed by a provincially licensed archaeologist in accordance with the current Provincial requirements, standards and guidelines applicable to provincially licensed archaeologists.

Archaeological Fieldwork
Any activity carried out on, above or under land or water for the purpose of obtaining and documenting data, recovering *artifacts* and remains or altering an *archaeological site* and includes monitoring, assessing, exploring, surveying, recovering and excavating.

Archaeological Resources
Includes artifacts, *archaeological sites* and *marine archaeological sites*, as defined under the *Ontario Heritage Act*. The identification and evaluation of such resources are based upon *archaeological fieldwork* undertaken in accordance with the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

Archaeological Sites
Any property that contains an artifact or any other physical evidence of past human use or activity that is of cultural heritage value or interest.

Artifact
Any object, material or substance that is made, modified, used, deposited or affected by human action and is of cultural heritage value or interest.

Brownfield Sites
Undeveloped or previously developed properties that may be contaminated. They are usually, but not exclusively, former industrial or commercial properties that may be underutilized, derelict or vacant.

Built Heritage Resource
A building, structure, monument, installation or any manufactured or constructed part or remnant that contributes to a property's cultural heritage value or interest as identified by a community, including an Indigenous community. Built heritage resources are located on property that may be designated under Parts IV or V of the *Ontario Heritage Act*, or that may be included on local, provincial, federal and/or international registers.

Built-up Area
All lands within the limits of the developed *urban area* as defined by the Province in accordance with the provisions of the *A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe*, as depicted in Map 1B.

Community Area
Areas where most of the housing required to accommodate the forecasted population will be located, as well as most population-related jobs and most office jobs. Community Areas include delineated *Built-up Areas* and *Designated Greenfield Areas*.

Community Housing
Affordable housing owned and operated by non-profit housing corporations, housing co-operatives and municipal governments or district social services administration boards. These providers offer subsidized or low-end-of market rents.

Community Hub
A community hub makes it easier for local residents to access the health, social, cultural, recreational and other resources they need together in one spot. It can be located in a physical building or accessed through a digital service. Community hubs serve as a central access point, which offer services in collaboration with different community agencies and service providers, reduce administrative duplication, improve services for residents and are responsive to the needs of their communities. Whether in a high-density urban neighbourhood or an isolated rural community, each hub is as unique as the community it serves and is defined by local needs, services and resources.

Complete Community
Places within cities, towns, and settlement areas that offer and support opportunities for people of all ages and abilities to conveniently access most of the necessities for daily living, including an appropriate mix of jobs, local stores, and services, a full range of housing, transportation options, public service facilities and greenspaces. Complete communities are age friendly and may take different shapes and forms appropriate to their contexts.

Conserve
The identification, protection, management and use of *built heritage resources*, *cultural heritage landscapes* and *archaeological resources* in a manner that ensures their cultural heritage value or interest is retained. This may be achieved by the implementation of recommendations set out in a conservation plan, *archaeological assessment*, and/or heritage impact assessment that has been approved, accepted or adopted by the relevant planning authority and/or decisionmaker. Mitigative measures and/or alternative *development* approaches can be included in these plans and assessments.

Contaminant Management Plan
A report that demonstrates how *development* proposals involving the manufacturing, handling and/or storage of bulk fuels or chemicals (activities prescribed under the *Clean Water Act, 2006*) that demonstrates safety measures will be implemented in order to help prevent contamination of groundwater or surface water supplies. The Contaminant Management Plan must include a list of all chemicals used on the subject lands and within any structures and demonstrate how the risk of release to the environment would be mitigated and managed.

Core Employment Areas
Employment Areas and/or portions of *Employment Areas* to be designated in local official plans that generally are:

- **i.** Within *Employment Areas* adjacent to, or in proximity to 400-series highways
- **ii.** Adjacent to, or in proximity to, existing or planned employment uses that are incompatible with non-employment uses. Examples include noxious uses and/or traditional and/or land extensive employment uses such as manufacturing, warehousing and logistics
- **iii.** Not appropriate for more flexible employment uses

Cultural Heritage Landscape
A defined geographical area that may have been modified by human activity and is identified as having cultural heritage value or interest by a community, including an Indigenous community. The area may include features such as buildings, structures, spaces, views, *archaeological sites* or natural elements that are valued together for their interrelationship, meaning or association. Cultural heritage landscapes may be properties that have been determined to have cultural heritage value or interest under the *Ontario Heritage Act*, or have been included on federal and/or international registers, and/or protected through official plan, zoning by-law, or other land use planning mechanisms.

Cultural Heritage Resources
Built heritage resources, *cultural heritage landscapes* and *archaeological resources* that have been determined to have cultural heritage value or interest for the important contribution they make to our understanding of the history of a place, an event, or a people. While some cultural heritage resources may already be identified and inventoried by official sources, the significance of others can only be determined after evaluation.

Cultural and Regenerating Woodland
For the purpose of policy 3.4.31, *woodlands* where the *ecological functions* of the site are substantially compromised as a result of prior land use activity and would be difficult to restore and/or manage as a native *woodland* in an urban setting. An *environmental impact study* should assess these *ecological functions* with consideration of the following:

- The *woodland* is regenerating, typically with a dominant proportion of woody species being invasive and non-native (e.g., Norway Maple, Manitoba Maple, Siberian Elm, Scots Pine, European Buckthorn, White Mulberry, Tree-of-heaven, Apple, White Poplar, etc.)
- The area was not treed approximately 20 to 25 years ago as determined through air photo interpretation or other suitable technique
- Soils may be degraded, for example, soil may be compacted, the topsoil removed, or there may be substantial erosion from over-use and/or the *woodland* may be regenerating on fill
- There is limited ability to maintain or restore self-sustaining *ecological functions* typical of native *woodlands*

Woodlands (including plantations) established and/or managed for the purpose of restoring a native *tree* community are excluded from cultural and regenerating *woodlands* (e.g. naturalization or restoration projects).

Designated Greenfield Area
Lands within the urban area and towns and villages but outside *Built-up Areas* that have been designated in a local official plan for *development* required to accommodate forecasted growth to the horizon of this Plan. Where Map 1B and this definition conflict, this definition prevails.

Developable Area
The developable area includes all lands available for *development* for both private and public uses, including residential and employment uses, open space and *infrastructure* (e.g. local and Regional streets and stormwater management ponds).

The developable area excludes:

a. Environmental features and areas, where *development* is prohibited, identified in A *Place to Grow: Growth plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe*;

b. The Regional Greenlands System and approved local municipal natural heritage systems where *development* is prohibited;

c. *Key natural heritage features* and *key hydrologic features*;
d. Major *infrastructure* rights-of-way (i.e. existing 400-series highways and finalized route alignments for extensions or future 400-series highways, utility lines, and rail lines); and,
e. Existing uses (e.g. cemeteries, estate subdivisions).

Development
The creation of a new lot, a change in land use, or the construction of buildings and structures, requiring approval under the *Planning Act*, but does not include:
a. Activities that create or maintain *infrastructure* authorized under an *Environmental Assessment*, *Planning Act*, or *Condominium Act* process; or,
b. Works subject to the *Drainage Act*.

Earth Science Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest
Areas of land containing natural landscapes or features that have been identified by the Province as having earth science values related to protection, scientific study or education. On the Oak Ridges Moraine, Provincially and Regionally significant Earth Science Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest are included. Elsewhere within this Plan, only provincially significant Earth Science Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest are addressed.

Ecological Function
The natural processes, products or services that living and non-living environments provide or perform within or between species, ecosystems and landscapes, including *hydrologic functions* and biological, physical, chemical and socio-economic interactions.

Ecological Integrity
Which includes hydrological integrity, the condition of ecosystems in which:
a. The structure, composition and function of the ecosystems are unimpaired by the stresses from human activity,
b. Natural ecological processes are intact and self-sustaining, and
c. The ecosystems evolve naturally.

Ecologically Significant Groundwater Recharge Area
Areas of land that are responsible for replenishing groundwater systems that directly support sensitive areas like cold water streams and *wetlands*.

Employment Area
Areas designated in an official plan for clusters of business and economic activities including, but not limited to, manufacturing, warehousing, offices, and associated retail and *ancillary* facilities.

Endangered and Threatened Species
A species that is classified as an 'endangered species' or 'threatened species' in Ontario Regulation 230/08 (Species at Risk in Ontario List) made under the *Endangered Species Act*, as may be amended from time to time.

Environmental Assessment
An Environmental Assessment undertaken in accordance with the *Environmental Assessment Act of Ontario, RSO 1990*, as amended.

Environmental Impact Study
A study to confirm the presence and/or significance of natural features, the extent of the feature(s) and/or to determine the potential direct and indirect impacts, of a proposed *development* on the Regional Greenlands System and/or on a *key natural heritage feature* or *key hydrologic feature* and their functions. Where an environmental impact study is required, the content and scope will be determined through a pre-consultation meeting and a Terms of Reference submitted early in the application process to the approval authority. The impact evaluation shall address environmental systems and features and functions on and adjacent to the site, at site and landscape scales, and shall be consistent with any relevant guidelines prepared by the Province, the Region, the local municipality or the conservation authority, and shall meet the requirements of comparable studies required at the local or provincial level (e.g. Natural Heritage Evaluation requirement of Provincial Plans). Terms of Reference for environmental impact studies shall be submitted to the approval authority early in the application process.

Previous work that is still current, including larger scale environmental studies undertaken in support of secondary plans, master environmental servicing plans, block plans, etc., shall be considered when determining the scope of the environmental impact study. If it is determined that the requirements of the environmental impact study have already been met through these prior studies, no further environmental impact study is required. Key components of an environmental impact study, which may form part of a master environmental servicing plan, may include:

- Biophysical inventory (e.g. Ecological Land Classification) and analysis of *ecological functions*, including methodology used and relevant maps, figures and illustrations
- Verification of the status or significance of a feature in accordance with Federal, Provincial and/or Regional legislation, criteria and guidelines such as the *significant woodland* criteria as set out in policy 3.4.31 of this Plan, the Ontario Wetland Evaluation System, the Natural Heritage Information Centre or the Species at Risk in Ontario List
- Figures illustrating ecological communities, the location and extent of significant features and their *vegetation protection zones* (including location of significant species and communities), and the proposed *development* in relation to identified constraints
- Identification of *development* constraints, an assessment of impact from the proposed activities, analysis at a local and Regional scale and proposal of mitigation measures, natural system/feature enhancement opportunities, conclusion of net impacts, and demonstration of conformity with applicable policy
- The identification of monitoring requirements for *developments* within the Regional Greenlands System or *key natural heritage features* and/or *key hydrologic features*, *hazardous sites* and hazardous areas, and their associated *adjacent lands.*

Excess Soil
Naturally occurring soil or soil mixed with rock, commonly known as earth, topsoil, loam, subsoil, clay, sand or gravel, or any combination thereof, that has been excavated as part of a project and removed from the project area, typically as a result of construction activities, and cannot or will not be reused at the site where the soil was excavated and must be moved off site.

Fish Habitat
As defined in the *Fisheries Act* as spawning grounds and any other areas, including nursery, rearing, food supply, and migration areas on which fish depend directly or indirectly in order to carry out their life processes.

Future Urban Area
Areas outside of the existing urban system that have been identified for urban uses beyond the 2051 horizon of this Plan.

Gentle Density
Residential *intensification* within existing neighbourhoods, including small infill sites, where additional housing units are provided of slightly higher density than adjacent single family (or low density), in a way that is compatible with the existing neighbourhood.

Globally or Provincially Rare Plants, Animals or Communities
Plant or animal species or communities that have been assigned S1 (critically imperilled provincially), S2 (imperilled provincially), S3 (vulnerable provincially), G1 (extremely rare globally), G2 (very rare globally), or G3 (rare to uncommon globally) by the Provincial Natural Heritage Information Centre.

Green Infrastructure
Natural and human-made elements that provide ecological and hydrological functions and processes. *Green infrastructure* can include components such as *natural heritage features* and systems, parklands, stormwater management systems, street *trees*, urban forests, natural channels, permeable surfaces, and green roofs.

Groundwater Features
Water-related features in the earth's subsurface, including recharge/discharge areas, water tables, aquifers and unsaturated zones that can be defined by surface and subsurface hydrogeologic investigations.

Habitat of Endangered Species and Threatened Species
Means:

a. With respect to a species listed on the Species at Risk in Ontario List as an *endangered* or *threatened species* for which a regulation made under clause 55(1)(a) of the *Endangered Species Act*, is in force, the area prescribed by that regulation as the habitat of the species; or
b. With respect to any other species listed on the Species at Risk in Ontario List as an *endangered* or t*hreatened species*, an area on which the species depends, directly or indirectly, to carry on its life processes, including life processes such as reproduction, rearing, hibernation, migration or feeding, as approved by the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry; and
c. Places in the areas described in clause (a) or (b), whichever is applicable, that are used by members of the species as dens, nests, hibernacula or other residences.

Hamlet
Existing hamlets or similar existing small settlement areas that are long established and identified in official plans. These communities are serviced by individual private on-site water and/or private wastewater systems, contain a limited amount of undeveloped lands that are designated for *development* and are subject to official plan policies that limit growth.

Hazardous Lands
Property or lands that could be unsafe for *development* due to naturally occurring processes. Along the shorelines of large inland lakes, this means the land, including that covered by water, between a defined offshore distance or depth and the furthest landward limit of the flooding hazard, erosion hazard or dynamic beach hazard limits. Along river, stream and small inland lake systems, this means that land, including that covered by water, to the furthest landward limit of the flooding hazard or erosion hazard limits.

Hazardous Sites
Means property or lands that could be unsafe for *development* and *site alteration* due to naturally occurring hazards. These may include unstable soils (sensitive marine clays, organic soils) or unstable bedrock (karst topography).

Heritage Attributes
The principal features or elements that contribute to a *protected heritage property's* cultural heritage value or interest, and may include the property's built, constructed, or manufactured elements, as well as natural landforms, vegetation, water features, and its visual setting (e.g. significant views or vistas to or from a *protected heritage property*).

High-Occupancy Vehicle Lanes
Transit that generally operates in partially or completely dedicated right-of-way, outside of mixed traffic, and therefore can achieve levels of speed and reliability greater than mixed-traffic transit. *Higher order transit* can include heavy rail (such as subways and inter-city rail, light rail, and buses in dedicated rights-of way.

Highly Vulnerable Aquifer (HVA)
Aquifers, including lands above the aquifers, on which external sources have or are likely to have a significant adverse effect.

Housing Options
A range of housing types such as, but not limited to single detached, semi-detached, rowhouses, townhouses, stacked townhouses, multiplexes, *additional residential units*, tiny homes, multi-residential buildings. The term can also refer to a variety of housing arrangements and forms such as, but not limited to life lease housing, co-ownership housing, co-operative housing, community land trusts, land lease community homes, *affordable* housing, housing for people with special needs, and housing related to employment, institutional or educational uses.

Human Services
Supports for people at every stage of their life that strengthen our communities and positively influence a person's health and stability. Examples include healthcare, education, recreation, children's services, newcomer supports and local community outreach programs.

Hydrologic Function
The functions of the hydrological cycle that include the occurrence, circulation, distribution, and chemical and physical properties of water on the surface of the land, in the soil and underlying rocks, and in the atmosphere, and water's interaction with the environment including its relation to living things.

Inclusionary Zoning
Regulatory tool that allows local municipalities to require *affordable* housing units to be provided in new residential *developments* located within Protected *Major Transit Station Areas*.

Infrastructure
Physical structures (facilities and corridors) that form the foundation for *development*. Infrastructure includes: sewage and water systems, septage treatment systems, stormwater management systems, waste management systems, electricity generation facilities, electricity transmission and distribution systems, communications/telecommunications, transit and transportation corridors and facilities, oil and gas pipelines and associated facilities.

In Situ
In situ means remaining in place in the original location where something was found.

Intake Protection Zone
The area within Lake Simcoe and surrounding lands that may contribute water to the municipal drinking water systems and through which contaminants are reasonably likely to reach the pumping station.

Intensification
The *development* of a property, site or area at a higher density than currently exists through:

- Redevelopment, including the use of *brownfield sites*;
- The *development* of vacant and/or underutilized lots within previously developed areas;
- Infill *development*; or,
- The expansion or conversion of existing buildings.

Intermittent Stream
Stream-related watercourses that contain water or are dry at times of the year that are more or less predictable, generally flowing during wet seasons of the year but not the entire year, and where the water table is above the stream bottom during parts of the year.

Kettle Lakes
A depression formed by glacial action and permanently filled with water.

Key Hydrologic Areas
Significant groundwater recharge areas, *highly vulnerable aquifers*, and *significant surface water contribution areas* that are necessary for the ecological and hydrologic integrity of a *watershed*.

Key Hydrologic Feature
Key hydrologic features are described in Section 3.4 of this Plan and include *wetlands*, *lakes and their littoral zones*, *permanent* and *intermittent streams*, *kettle lakes*, *seepage areas and springs*, and the Lake Simcoe Shoreline.

Key Natural Heritage Feature
Key natural heritage features are described in Section 3.4 of this Plan and include the *habitat of endangered species*, threatened species and *special concern species*, *fish habitat*, *wetlands*, *Life Science Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest*, *significant valleylands*, *significant woodlands*, *significant wildlife habitat*, *sand barrens*, *savannahs* and *tallgrass prairies*.

Lakes and their Littoral Zones
Means any inland body of standing water larger than a pool or pond or a body of water filling a depression in the earth's surface. The littoral zone refers to the area of shallow water in a lake that extends from the shoreline lakeward to limit occupancy of rooted aquatic plants.

Lake Simcoe Watershed
a. Lake Simcoe and the part of Ontario, the water of which drains into Lake Simcoe; or,
b. If the boundaries of the area described by clause (a) are described more specifically in regulations, the area within those boundaries (Lake Simcoe Protection Act, 2008).

Life Science Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest
Areas of land and water containing natural landscapes or features that have been identified as having life science or earth science values related to protection, scientific study, or education.

Low Impact Development
An approach to stormwater management that seeks to manage rain and other precipitation as close as possible to where it falls to mitigate the impacts of increased runoff and stormwater pollution. It includes a set of site design strategies and distributed, small-scale structural practices to mimic the natural hydrology to the greatest extent possible through infiltration, evapotranspiration, harvesting, filtration and detention of stormwater. Low impact *development* can include: bio-swales, permeable pavement, rain gardens, green roofs and exfiltration systems. Low impact *development* often employs vegetation and soil in its design, however, that does not always have to be the case.

Major Development
Consists of:
a. the creation of four or more lots;
b. the construction of a building or buildings with a ground floor area of 500 square metres or more; or,
c. the establishment of a *major recreational use*.

Major Facilities
Facilities which may require separation from sensitive land uses, including but not limited to airports, manufacturing uses, transportation *infrastructure* and corridors, *rail facilities*, marine facilities, sewage treatment facilities, waste management systems, oil and gas pipelines, industries, energy generation facilities and transmission systems, and resource extraction activities.

Major Office
Freestanding office buildings of approximately 4,000 square metres of floor space or greater, or with approximately 200 jobs or more.

Major Recreational Use
Recreational uses that require large-scale modification of terrain, vegetation or both and usually also require large-scale buildings or structures, including but not limited to the following:
a. Golf courses;
b. Serviced playing fields;
c. Serviced campgrounds; and,
d. Ski hills.

Major Retail
Includes retail big box stores, retail warehouses and shopping centres. For the purposes of this definition a shopping centre is not a collection of *ancillary uses* that primarily serve the business functions on employment lands.

Major Transit Station Area
The area including and around selected existing or planned *higher order transit* stations or stops (bus rapid transit stations, GO stations and subway stations) within a settlement area. Major transit station areas generally are defined as the area within an approximate 500 to 800 metre radius of a transit station or stop, representing about a 10 minute walk. A minimum density target and boundary delineation are assigned to all protected major transit station areas.

Marine Archaeological Site
An *archaeological site* that is fully or partially submerged or that lies below or partially below the high-water mark of any body of water.

Mineral Aggregate Operation
Means a) lands under license or permit, other than for *wayside pits and quarries*, issued in accordance with the *Aggregate Resources Act*; b) for lands not designated under the *Aggregate Resources Act*, established pits and quarries that are not in contravention of municipal zoning by-laws and including adjacent land under agreement with or owned by the operator, to permit continuation of the operation; and c) associated facilities used in extraction, transport, beneficiation, processing or recycling of *mineral aggregate resources* and derived products such as asphalt and concrete, or the production of secondary related products.

Mineral Aggregate Resources
Gravel, sand, clay, earth, shale, stone, limestone, dolostone, sandstone, marble, granite, rock or other material prescribed under the Aggregate Resources Act suitable for construction, industrial, manufacturing and maintenance purposes but does not include metallic ores, asbestos, graphite, kyanite, mica, nepheline syenite, salt, talc, wollastonite, mine tailings or other material prescribed under the *Mining Act*.

Mineral Aggregate Resource Conservation
Means a) the recovery and recycling of manufactured materials derived from mineral aggregates (e.g. glass, porcelain, brick, concrete, asphalt, slag, etc.) for re-use in construction, manufacturing, industrial or maintenance projects as a substitute for new mineral aggregates; and b) the wise use of mineral aggregates including utilization or extraction of on-site *mineral aggregate resources* prior to *development* occurring.

Minimum Distance Separation Formulae
Formulae and guidelines developed by the Province, as amended from time to time, to separate uses so as to reduce incompatibility concerns about odour from livestock facilities.

Ministerial Zoning Order
An order of the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing issued pursuant to section 47 of the *Planning Act*.

Missing Middle
Residential buildings that contain a higher density than a single detached house but lower density than a mid-rise building ideally at different thresholds of affordability to deliver a full range and mix of housing options.

Mobility Plan
A mobility plan is a combination of a *multimodal* mobility plan along with the traditional transportation impact study analyses and is required to support all *development* applications in York Region that have potential impacts on Regional and local transportation systems. A mobility plan can be scoped based on the nature and context of the proposed *development*.

Municipal Comprehensive Review
A new official plan, or an official plan amendment, initiated by the Region under section 26 of the *Planning Act* that comprehensively applies the policies and schedules of the *A Place to Grow: Growth plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe*.

Natural Heritage System for the Growth Plan
The natural heritage system mapped and issued by the Province in accordance with the Growth Plan.

Negative Impact(s)
- **a.** In regard to water, degradation to the quality or quantity of surface or groundwater, *key hydrologic features* or vulnerable areas and their related *hydrologic functions*, due to single, multiple or successive *development* or *site alteration* activities;
- **b.** In regard to *fish habitat*, any permanent alteration to, or destruction of *fish habitat*, except where, in conjunction with the appropriate authorities, it has been authorized under the *Fisheries Act*; and
- **c.** In regard to other *natural heritage features* and areas, degradation that threatens the health and integrity of the natural features or *ecological functions* for which an area is identified due to single, multiple or successive *development* or *site alteration* activities.

New Community Areas
Lands added to the Urban Area through a Regional *municipal comprehensive review*, for community purposes including residential and population-related employment, beyond those designated for Urban uses prior to approval of this Plan.

Normal Farm Practices
Any practice, as defined in the *Farming and Food Production Protection Act*, that is conducted in a manner consistent with proper and acceptable customs and standards as established and followed by similar agricultural operations under similar circumstances, or that makes use of innovative technology in a manner consistent with proper advanced farm management practices. *Normal farm practices* shall be consistent with the *Nutrient Management Act*, and regulations made under that *Act*.

On-Farm Diversified Uses
Uses that are secondary to the principal agricultural use of the property and are limited in area. On-farm diversified uses include, but are not limited to, home occupations, home industries, *agri-tourism uses*, and uses that produce value-added agricultural products. Ground-mounted solar facilities are permitted in prime agricultural areas, including *specialty crop areas*, only as on-farm diversified uses.

Passive Recreational Uses
Outdoor recreational uses, such as non-motorized trails, that have minimal environmental impact and contribute to health and a high-quality of life for residents and workers.

Permanent Streams
A stream which continually flows in an average year.

Petroleum Resources
Oil, gas, and salt (extracted by solution mining method) and formation water resources which have been identified through exploration and verified by preliminary drilling or other forms of investigation. This may include sites of former operations where resources are still present or former sites that may be converted to underground storage for natural gas or other hydrocarbons.

Planned Corridors - Transportation
Corridors identified through Provincial Plans or preferred alignment(s) determined through the *Environmental Assessment Act* process which are required to meet projected needs.

Portable Asphalt Plant
A facility:

a. With equipment designed to heat and dry aggregate and to mix aggregate with bituminous asphalt to produce asphalt paving material, and includes stockpiling and storage of bulk materials used in the process; and

b. Which is not of permanent construction, but which is to be dismantled at the completion of the construction project.

Private Communal Sewage Services
Sewage works within the meaning of section 1 of the Ontario Water Resources Act; that serves six or more lots or private residences and is not owned by a municipality.

Private Communal Water Services
Non-municipal drinking-water system within the meaning of section 2 of the Safe Drinking Water Act, 2002 that serves six or more lots or private residences.

Protected Heritage Property
Means property designated under parts IV, V or VI of the *Ontario Heritage Act*; property subject to a heritage conservation easement property under Parts II or IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*; property identified by the Province and prescribed public bodies as provincial heritage property under the Standards and Guidelines for Conservation of Provincial Heritage Properties; property protected under federal legislation and UNESCO World Heritage Sites.

Recharge Management Area
An area that includes *Wellhead Protection Area*-Q1 and *Wellhead Protection Area*-Q2 where the aquifers in the area are susceptible to impacts where activities take water without returning it to the same source and where these activities that reduce recharge may be a threat to water quantity.

Renewable Energy Systems
A system that generates electricity, heat and/or cooling from a renewable energy source. For the purposes of this definition: A renewable energy source is an energy source that is renewed by natural processes and includes wind, water, biomass, biogas, biofuel, solar energy, geothermal energy and tidal forces.

Rural Area
Lands in the *Agricultural System*, which are located outside settlement areas and outside prime *agricultural areas*.

Sand Barrens
Lands (not including land that is being used for agricultural purposes or no longer exhibits sand barrens characteristics) that:

- **a.** Has sparse or patchy vegetation that is dominated by plants that are:
  - **i.** adapted to severe drought and low nutrient levels; and,
  - **ii.** maintained by severe environmental limitations such as drought, low nutrient levels and periodic disturbances such as fire;
- **b.** Has less than 25% *tree* cover;
- **c.** Has sandy soils (other than shorelines) exposed by natural erosion, depositional process or both; and,
- **d.** Has been further identified, by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry or by any other person, according to evaluation procedures established by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry, as amended from time to time.

Savannah
Means land (not including land that is being used for agricultural purposes or no longer exhibits savannah characteristics) that:

- **a.** has vegetation with a significant component of non-woody plants, including *tallgrass prairie* species that are maintained by seasonal drought, periodic disturbances such as fire, or both;
- **b.** has from 25% to 60% *tree* cover;
- **c.** has mineral soils; and,
- **d.** has been further identified, by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry or by any other person, according to evaluation procedures established by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry, as amended from time to time.

Secondary Plans
Land use plan for a particular area of a municipality that is prepared as an amendment to an official plan.

Seepage Areas and Springs
Sites of emergence of groundwater where the water table is present at the ground surface.

Sensitive Land Uses
Buildings, amenity areas, or outdoor spaces where routine or normal activities occurring at reasonably expected times would experience one or more adverse effects from contaminant discharges generated by nearby *major facilities*. Sensitive land uses may be a part of the natural or built environment. Examples may include, but are not limited to: residences, day care centres, and educational and health facilities.

Significant Archaeological Resources
Resources that, in the opinion of a licensed archaeologist (and confirmed by the Province through acceptance of the *archaeological assessment* report in the Ontario Public Register of Archaeological Reports) meet the criteria for determining cultural heritage value or interest set out in the Standards and Guidelines for Consultant Archaeologists, as amended, and are to be protected from impacts of any sort.

Significant Built Heritage Resources, Significant Cultural Heritage Resources
In regard to cultural heritage and archaeology, resources that have been determined to have cultural heritage value or interest. Process and criteria for determining cultural heritage value or interest are established by the Province under the authority of the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

Significant Drinking Water Threat
A condition or activity that has a high potential to have a negative impact on the quantity and/or quality of groundwater that supplies a municipal well.

Significant Groundwater Recharge Area
A *significant groundwater recharge area* identified:

- **a.** as a significant groundwater recharge area by any public body for the purposes of implementing the Provincial Policy Statement;
- **b.** as a significant groundwater recharge area in the assessment report required under the *Clean Water Act*, or
- **c.** as an ecologically significant groundwater recharge area delineated in a *subwatershed plan* or equivalent in accordance with provincial guidelines.

Ecologically significant groundwater recharge areas are areas of land that are responsible for replenishing groundwater systems that directly support sensitive areas like cold water streams and *wetlands*.

Significant Surface Water Contribution Areas
Areas, generally associated with headwater catchments, that contribute to baseflow volumes which are significant to the overall surface water flow volumes within a *watershed*.

Significant Threat
A condition or activity that has a high potential to have a negative impact on the quantity and/or quality of groundwater that supplies a municipal well.

Significant Valleylands
A *valleyland* which is ecologically important in terms of features, functions, representation or amount, and contributing to the quality and diversity of an identifiable geographic area or natural heritage system. These are to be identified using criteria established by the Province.

Significant Wetland
A *wetland* that has been identified as provincially significant by the Province.

Significant Wildlife Habitat
A *wildlife habitat* that is ecologically important in terms of features, functions, representation or amount, and contributing to the quality and diversity of an identifiable geographic area or natural heritage system. These are to be identified using criteria established by the Province.

Significant Woodlands
Woodlands which meet any one of the criteria in policy 3.4.30 of this Plan, except those excluded by policy 3.4.31 of this Plan.

Site Alteration
Activities such as grading, excavation and the placement of fill that would change the landform and natural vegetative characteristics of a site.

Source Water Impact Assessment and Mitigation Plan
A report completed by a qualified person that examines the relevant hydrologic pathways and qualitatively evaluates the level of risk associated with the land uses or land use activities that my pose a threat to the quantity or quality of a municipal drinking water supply. It proposes a plan for the mitigation and management of the identified risks and outlines an emergency response to be executed in the event that a risk is realized.

Special Concern Species
A species that is classified as a special concern species in Ontario Regulation 230/08 (Species at Risk in Ontario List) made under the *Endangered Species Act*.

Specialty Crop Areas
Areas designated using guidelines developed by the Province, as amended from time to time. In these areas, specialty crops are predominantly grown such as tender fruits (peaches, cherries, plums), grapes, other fruit crops, vegetable crops, greenhouse crops, and crops from agriculturally developed organic soil usually resulting from:

- **a.** soils that have suitability to produce specialty crops, or lands that are subject to special climatic conditions, or a combination of both;
- **b.** farmers skilled in the production of specialty crops; and
- **c.** a long-term investment of capital in areas such as crops, drainage, *infrastructure* and related facilities and services to produce, store, or process specialty crops.

Special Policy Area
An area within a community that has historically existed in the flood plain and where site-specific policies, approved by the Province, are intended to provide for the continued viability of existing uses (which are generally on a small scale) and to address the significant social and economic hardships to the community that would result from strict adherence to provincial policies concerning *development*, the criteria and procedures for approval are established by the Province. A Special Policy Area is not intended to allow for new or intensified *development* and *site alteration* if a community has feasible opportunities for *development* outside the flood plain.

Subwatershed Plan
A plan that reflects and refines the goals, objectives, targets and assessments of *watershed planning* for smaller drainage areas, is tailored to subwatershed needs and addresses local issues. A subwatershed plan should: consider existing *development* and evaluate impacts of any potential or proposed land uses and *development*; identify *hydrologic features*, areas, linkages and functions; identify natural features, areas and related *hydrologic functions*; and provide for protecting, improving or restoring the quality and quantity of water within a subwatershed. A subwatershed plan is based on pre-development monitoring and evaluation; is integrated with natural heritage protection; and identifies specific criteria, objectives, actions, thresholds, targets and best management practices for *development*, for water and wastewater servicing, for stormwater management, for managing and minimizing impacts related to severe weather events, and to support ecological needs.

Supporting Employment Area
Employment Areas and/or portions of *Employment Areas* to be designated in local official plans that are on the periphery of *Employment Areas* and/or may be candidates for mixed employment uses because of their location within existing or proposed *intensification* areas. This generally includes *Employment Areas* that:

a. are adjacent to major Regional arterial roads or on the fringe of *Employment Areas*;
b. have significant portions of commercial, retail, and/or other service or knowledge-based uses;
c. are directly abutting or in close proximity to residential or other sensitive uses and could benefit from more appropriate buffering from existing or future employment uses that may be incompatible. Examples include noxious uses, clusters of manufacturing or other traditional employment uses.

Surface Water Features
Water-related features on the earth's surface, including headwaters, rivers, stream channels, inland lakes, seepage areas, recharge/discharge areas, springs, *wetlands*, and associated riparian lands that can be defined by their soil moisture, soil type, vegetation or topographic characteristics.

Sustainable Mobility Measures
A combination of *infrastructure* improvements and strategies geared to promoting alternative travel choices during rush hours such as walking, cycling, transit, ridesharing and micro mobility.

Tallgrass Prairies
Means land (not including land that is being used for agricultural purposes or no longer exhibits tallgrass prairie characteristics) that:

a. has vegetation dominated by non-woody plants, including tallgrass prairie species that are maintained by seasonal drought, periodic disturbances such as fire, or both;
b. has less than 25% *tree* cover;
c. has mineral soils; and,
d. has been further identified, by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry or by any other person, according to evaluation procedures established by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry, as amended from time to time.

Time of Travel
Refers to the estimated time required for groundwater to move from a given location in an aquifer to the intake of a water well. A *Wellhead Protection Area* is typically divided into several time of travel zones.

Traditional Territories
The geographic area traditionally occupied or used regularly by a First Nation and/or their ancestors.

Transit Operation and Maintenance Facility
Land and/or structures used for the purpose of repairing, maintaining, storing and/or testing conventional and rapid transit vehicles, up to and including subway cars. These facilities may also include offices and other accommodations for on-site workers and transit vehicle operators.

Transit-Supportive
Relating to *development* that makes transit viable and improves the quality of the experience of using transit. It often refers to compact, mixed-use *development* that has a high level of employment and residential densities.

Tree
Any species of woody perennial plant, including its root system, that has reached or can reach a height of at least 4.5 metres at physiological maturity, provided that where multiple stems grow from the same root system, the number of trees shall be the number of stems that can be counted at a point of measurement 1.37 metres from the ground.

Urban Agriculture
Food production in urban and settlement areas for personal consumption, commercial sale, education or therapy. It includes gardening and livestock raised in backyards, container gardening on balconies or rooftops and community gardening.

Urban Expansion Area
Areas identified through the land needs assessment as being required to accommodate population and employment growth to the planning horizon.

Valleylands
A natural area that occurs in a valley or other landform depression that has water flowing through or standing for some period of the year.

Vegetation Protection Zone
A vegetated buffer area surrounding a *key natural heritage feature* or *key hydrologic feature*.

Waste Management System
Sites and facilities to accommodate solid waste from one or more municipalities and includes recycling facilities, transfer stations, processing sites and disposal sites.

Waterbody
Lakes, *woodland* ponds, etc. which provide *ecological functions*. For the purposes of determining *significant woodlands*, waterbody generally does not include small *surface water features* such as farm ponds or stormwater management ponds, which would have limited *ecological function*.

Water Resource System
A system consisting of *groundwater features* and areas and *surface water features* (including shoreline areas), and *hydrologic functions*, which provide the water resources necessary to sustain healthy aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems and human water consumption. The *water resource system* will comprise *key hydrologic features* and *key hydrologic areas*.

Watershed
An area that is drained by a river and its tributaries.

Watershed Planning
Planning that provides a framework for establishing goals, objectives and direction for the protection of water resources, the management of human activities, land, water, aquatic life and resources within a *watershed* and for the assessment of cumulative, cross-jurisdictional and cross-watershed impacts. Watershed planning typically includes: *watershed* characterization, a water budget and conservation plan; nutrient loading assessments; consideration of climate change impacts and severe weather events; land and water use management objectives and strategies; scenario modelling to evaluate the impacts of forecasted growth and servicing options, and mitigation measures; an environmental monitoring plan; requirements for the use of environmental best management practices, programs, and performance measures; criteria for evaluating the protection of quality and quantity of water; the identification and protection of hydrologic features, areas and functions and the inter-relationships between or among them; and targets for the protection and restoration of riparian areas. Watershed planning is undertaken at many scales and considers cross-jurisdictional and cross-*watershed* impacts. The level of analysis and specificity generally increases for smaller geographic areas such as subwatersheds and tributaries.

Wayside Pits and Quarries
A temporary pit or quarry opened and used by or for a public authority solely for the purpose of a particular project or contract of road construction and not located on the road right-of-way.

Wellhead Protection Area
The surface and sub-surface area surrounding a water well or well field that supplies a municipal water system and through which contaminants are reasonably likely to move so as eventually to reach the water well or well field.

Wetland
Lands that are seasonally or permanently covered by shallow water, as well as lands where the water table is close to or at the surface. In either case the presence of abundant water has caused the formation of hydric soils and has favoured the dominance of either hydrophytic plants or water tolerant plants. The four major types of wetlands are swamps, marshes, bogs and fens. Periodically soaked or wetlands being used for agricultural purposes which no longer exhibit wetland characteristics are not considered to be wetlands for the purposes of this definition.

Wildlife Habitat
Areas where plants, animals and other organisms live, and find adequate amounts of food, water, shelter and space needed to sustain their populations. Specific *wildlife habitats* of concern may include areas where species concentrate at a vulnerable point in their annual or life cycle; and areas which are important to migratory or non-migratory species.

Woodland

An area of land at least 0.2 hectare in area with at least:

- **a.** 1000 *trees* of any size, per hectare;
- **b.** 750 *trees* measuring over 5 centimetres diameter at breast height, per hectare;
- **c.** 500 *trees* measuring over 12 centimetres diameter at breast height, per hectare; or,
- **d.** 250 *trees* measuring over 20 centimetres diameter at breast height, per hectare,

but does not include a cultivated fruit or nut orchard, a plantation established and used for the purpose of producing Christmas *trees* or nursery stock. For the purposes of defining a woodland, treed areas separated by more than 20 metres will be considered a separate woodland. When determining the limit of a woodland, continuous agricultural hedgerows and woodland fingers or narrow woodland patches will be considered part of a woodland if they have a minimum average width of at least 40 metres and narrower sections have a length to width ratio of 3 to 1 or less. Undeveloped clearings within woodland patches are generally included within a woodland if the total area of each clearing is no greater than 0.2 hectares. In areas covered by Provincial Plan policies, woodland includes treed areas as further described by the Ministry of Natural Resources.

For the purposes of determining the densities above for woodlands outside of Provincial Plan Areas, the following species are excluded: staghorn sumac, European buckthorn and common lilac.

2022 YORK REGION OFFICIAL PLAN

Office Consolidation | June 2024

Implementing York Region's Vision of Strong, Caring, Safe Communities.

JUNE 2024

York Region