

Clause 3 in Report No. 9 of Committee of the Whole was adopted, without amendment, by the Council of The Regional Municipality of York at its meeting held on May 19, 2016.

3

2015 Regional Centres and Corridors Program Update

Committee of the Whole recommends:

1. Receipt of the presentation by Josh Reis, Senior Planner, Programs and Process Improvements.
2. Adoption of the following recommendations contained in the report dated April 29, 2016 from the Commissioner of Corporate Services and the Chief Planner:
 - 1 Council continue to seek Federal and Provincial assistance with respect to providing critical infrastructure, including the Yonge North Subway Extension, required to support forecasted levels of growth and intensification within Regional centres and corridors.
 - 2 The Regional Chair forward this report to the Provincial Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, the Provincial Minister of Transportation, the Federal Minister of Infrastructure and Communities and York Region Members of Parliament as an example of the Region's continued commitment to focusing growth within centres and corridors, Provincial Urban Growth Centres and Mobility Hubs.
 - 3 This report be circulated by the Regional Clerk to all local municipalities and Metrolinx for information.

Report dated May 12, 2016 from the Commissioner of Corporate Services and Chief Planner now follows:

1. Recommendations

It is recommended that:

1. Council continue to seek Federal and Provincial assistance with respect to providing critical infrastructure, including the Yonge North Subway

Extension, required to support forecasted levels of growth and intensification within Regional centres and corridors.

2. The Regional Chair forward this report to the Provincial Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, the Provincial Minister of Transportation, the Federal Minister of Infrastructure and Communities and York Region Members of Parliament as an example of the Region's continued commitment to focusing growth within centres and corridors, Provincial Urban Growth Centres and Mobility Hubs.
 3. This report be circulated by the Regional Clerk to all local municipalities and Metrolinx for information.
2. Purpose

This report is an update on development activities within the Regional centres and corridors in 2015. This report also highlights ongoing initiatives and related projects that continue to drive the Region's city building initiatives forward and emphasizes Council's commitment to planning for transit oriented complete communities.

3. Background

Development is to be focused in York Region's centres and corridors

"Centres" can be viewed as the Region's future downtown areas and "corridors" are the connections between them. In 1994, York Region's first Official Plan established a system of centres and corridors to provide a focus for residential and commercial growth. As stated in the 2010 York Region Official Plan, the Regional centres and corridors "form the foundation of the Region's city building model of development".

The Region's centres and corridors implement the Provincial Growth Plan's goal of focusing growth in urban areas. The Regional centres are also designated, under the Provincial Growth Plan, as Provincial Urban Growth Centres and are expected to accommodate a significant share of population and employment growth. The centres and corridors support livable and complete communities that help better manage growth and slow outward growth.

The four Regional centres are planned for a mix of uses, including residential, retail and offices. These transit oriented communities are served by rapid transit, including vivaNext bus rapid transit, the Spadina subway extension and future

Yonge North subway extension. Regional centres and corridors create a high quality of life for residents, and provide businesses with convenient access to York Region's talented workforce.

Annual updates continue to highlight achievements within the centres and corridors

Since 2013, Regional staff have provided annual Centres and Corridors Program updates, highlighting key achievements and activities, to Committee and Council. This update is summarized in Attachment 1.

4. Analysis and Options

Residential Activity

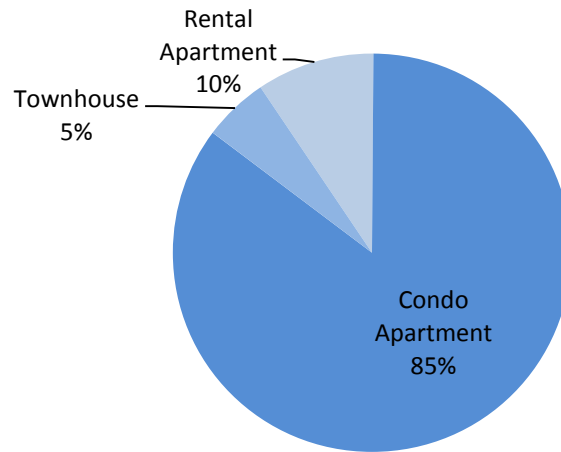
Residential construction activity within the centres and corridors remains steady

There are currently 20 multi storey residential buildings under construction in the centres and corridors. This activity represents approximately 4,900 residential units. Since the last update in 2015, seven buildings were completed and two new buildings started construction. This construction activity is a visible sign of growth within the centres and corridors, bringing with it a mix of uses, support for existing and future transit investments, and jobs.

25 per cent of all new 2015 residential development activity in the Region is located in centres and corridors

Approximately 25 per cent (2,360 units) of all new residential unit starts in York Region in 2015 were located within the Regional centres and corridors. A majority of this activity (85 per cent) was in new condominium apartment unit starts. Figure 1 shows the breakdown of new unit starts by type

Figure 1
New Unit Starts in Centres and Corridors by Type

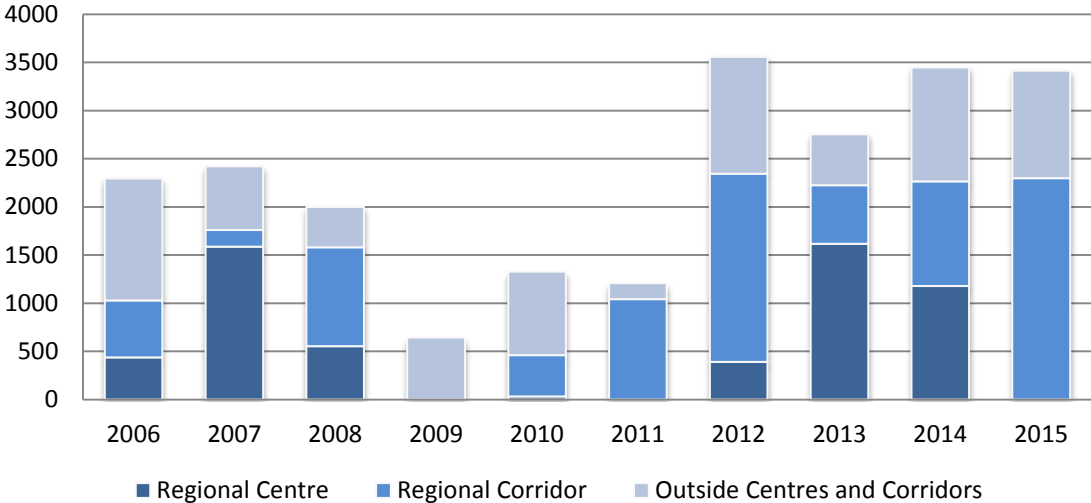


66 per cent of the Region's higher density residential growth is located within Regional centres and corridors

In 2015, 66 percent of all new high density residential unit starts were located within the Regional centres and corridors. The 2,230 new high density unit starts were located entirely with the Regional corridors, with no new residential unit starts occurring within the Regional centres.

Since 2006, 65 per cent of all new high density residential unit starts have been located within the Regional centres and corridors. This activity reflects Council's approved policy direction and strategy to focus compact, mixed use and transit oriented development to the centres and corridors. Figure 2 shows the amount of multi storey apartment unit starts within the Regional centres, Regional corridors and all other areas of the Region. This figure indicates that the centres and corridors continue to be the focus for high density residential development in the Region.

**Figure 2
Multi Storey Apartment Unit Starts**



Employment and Office Activity

Employment within centres and corridors grew by 2 per cent in 2015

Surveyed employment within centres and corridors grew by over 2,200 jobs as of mid-year 2015 to approximately 112,800 jobs. This growth represents a 2 per cent increase over mid-year 2014, and is consistent with the Region’s overall growth of 2.4 per cent for the same period. These jobs support over 7,800 businesses that contribute to the economic success of the Regional centres and corridors. A significant amount of this growth (1,900 jobs) can be attributed to growth within the Highway 7 corridor, east of Yonge Street, and includes portions of the East Beaver Creek and Allstate Parkway employment nodes. These areas are serviced by the Highway 7 east vivaNext rapidway that first opened in September 2013.

Since 2009, approximately 12,300 new jobs have been created within the centres and corridors. Major office development and the creation of high quality employment opportunities is important to the long term success of the Regional centres and corridors.

New office development activity in centres and corridors shows growing support for mixed use communities

In 2015, 12,000 square metres (130,000 square feet) of new office development was generated within the Regional centres and corridors. Attachment 1 includes a map showing the residential and employment development activity in the

centres and corridors. This activity represents 67 percent of all new office development in the Region in 2015. Past developments have pointed to the emerging mixed use communities within the centres and corridors as a factor in their decision making process. Initiatives to attract new office development activity to the centres and corridors are important to ensure a mix of uses and high quality job opportunities for the Region's workforce.

Transit and Infrastructure

Transit oriented development delivers density and built form that is consistent with Council's vision for centres and corridors

The built form of development within the centres and corridors should contribute to compact, mixed use and transit oriented communities. In recent years, Regional staff have received a number of proposals seeking approvals for reductions in density. In April 2015, Regional Council adopted recommendations to reinforce support for development density and built form consistent with the vision for centres and corridors. Despite some proposals to reduce density, other developments continue to seek permissions for more transit supportive densities.

Density is expressed in terms of a building's Floor Space Index (FSI). FSI is the ratio between the gross floor area of any buildings and the lot area. An FSI of 1 means the gross floor area of the building is equal to the lot area. An FSI of 2.5 means the building has a gross floor area that is two and a half times the size of the lot.

Generally, a building with an FSI of 2.5 or higher can only be accomplished in a building form that incorporates structured or underground parking facilities – an arrangement that is more favourable for encouraging transit use. Density can be achieved in a variety of building formats (i.e. mid rise or high rise) on a lot and should be achieved in a manner that best reflects the planned vision for the community. Table 1 highlights some approved developments and their densities.

Table 1
Examples of Approved Development Densities in Centres and Corridors

Municipality	Project Name	Description	Density (FSI)	Location
Newmarket	Green and Rose 212 Davis Drive	A 15 storey, 225 unit purpose built rental apartment building	1.83	South side of Davis Drive, east of Parkside Drive
Vaughan	1834361 Ontario Inc. (SP-V-049-15)	Four residential towers (14 to 35 storeys), one 15-storey office building and ground floor commercial uses	5.5	South side of Highway 7, east of Jane Street
Richmond Hill	Baif Developments	Three mixed use buildings ranging in height from 18 – 20 storeys	4.02	Southwest corner of Yonge Street and Major Mackenzie Drive
Markham	Unionville Gardens (Wyview Group)	An 8-storey residential building consisting of 379 units and 12 townhouses	2.6	Northwest corner of Highway 7 and Village Parkway

Ongoing planning and delivery of rapid transit infrastructure is required to support long term development

Ongoing planning and delivery of new rapid transit infrastructure, such as the vivaNext rapidways and Spadina Subway Extension, is required to support York Region's city building strategy. This infrastructure increases the range of transportation options available to residents and workers to move within and between centres, and unlocks new intensification opportunities.

The Spadina Subway Extension to Highway 7 and Jane Street in the Vaughan Metropolitan Centre is scheduled to open in December 2017. The section of Highway 7 rapidway from Edgeley Boulevard to Bowes Road (3.6 km) is expected to open in December 2016.

Currently, 8.6 kilometres of vivaNext rapidways and 15 vivastations have been constructed. A total of 34.6 kilometres of vivaNext rapidways and 38 vivastations are currently funded through the Metrolinx program. An additional 34.2 kilometres of dedicated, centre-lane bus rapidways and 26 vivastations is required to complete the Viva Bus Rapid Transit Project. Investment in these transit corridors is consistent with York Region's Transportation Master Plan. These corridors will further improve mobility within the Region, intermodal connectivity and integrate with Province's Regional Express Rail Program by connecting to major anchor

hubs in Markham, Richmond Hill and Newmarket. These remaining segments of rapidways will add critical reach and connectivity to vivaNext Bus Rapid Transit routes already in service or under construction, allowing commuters to connect for “the last mile” of their trip and promoting mixed-use land development and increasing density while reducing outward growth.

The Yonge North Subway Extension remains the number one transit priority in York Region and is critical to unlock the growth potential for the Richmond Hill/Langstaff Gateway Urban Growth Centre

The Yonge North Subway Extension (YNSE) is the critical missing link in the dedicated regional rapid transit system, a vital gap in creating a seamless transit network in the GTHA and remains a top priority for the Transportation Master Plan. To service this section of Yonge Street presently requires approximately 2,500 bus trips per day travelling to an outdated terminal that was built in 1973.

The project extends 7.4 kilometres north from Finch Station to the Richmond Hill/Langstaff Gateway Urban Growth Centre at Highway 7 and includes 5 stations, Richmond Hill Centre and Steeles Avenue intermodal terminals and 2,000 commuter parking spaces. The YNSE is ready to move to full engineering and construction.

Development activity within the Richmond Hill Centre/Langstaff Gateway Centre is currently constrained by transportation capacity. Without the YNSE, development in the centre is limited to 7,000 residential units (approximately 13,500 people). This Regional Centre is also a Provincial Urban Growth Centre and Anchor Mobility Hub. An extension of the Yonge Subway fuels a potential population of 48,000 residents and 31,000 jobs in this Urban Growth Centre anchor hub and the project would produce a lasting economic stimulus, especially during construction, creating up to 21,800 person-years of employment.

With a potential daily ridership of 165,000 (or 2 people/second) the project services a demonstrated need and meets the Province’s smart growth objectives related to the intensification and development being planned for the Richmond Hill/Langstaff Gateway Urban Growth Centre. In this key mobility hub, the project will create a Union Station of the north by linking GO service, subway service, bus rapid transit and BRT/express service along Highway 407 ETR and integrating with the Province’s Regional Express Rail Program.

Over \$10 Million has been invested to date for studies and comprehensive community consultations to be completed for the YNSE project. This investment builds on the over \$3 billion of existing investment by senior government in York Region rapid transit and aligns with Federal, Provincial and Municipal priorities to stimulate the economy, support the middle class, reduce greenhouse gas

emissions and unlock the full development potential within the Provincial Urban Growth Centre. Federal and Provincial investment in rapid transit infrastructure, including the Yonge North Subway Extension, is required to support complete, healthy, transit oriented communities where people can live, work and play.

Other Activities and Initiatives

A joint community facility in the Vaughan Metropolitan Centre builds on recent residential and office development activity

It was recently announced that the Vaughan Metropolitan Centre will be home to a new YMCA Centre of Community, City of Vaughan Library, recreation space and 80,000 square feet of Class A office. This project is a collaboration between the YMCA, SmartReit and the City of Vaughan. York Region's *Best Practices for Planning Centres and Corridors* highlights the importance of civic presence within a new centre. This joint project and community space will continue to build on the recent residential and office development activities with the Vaughan Metropolitan Centre and the opening of the Spadina Subway Extension in December 2017.

Rental housing development is currently under construction in Newmarket on the Davis Drive corridor

Construction is currently underway on a 225 unit rental housing development at 212 Davis Drive, in Newmarket. York Region Council provided a deferral of Regional Development Charges for 36 months in order to help make the project a reality. This transit supportive development is adjacent to the Davis Drive vivaNext rapidway which opened in December 2015.

A new York University campus in Markham Centre is anticipated to generate increased activity

In 2015, the Province announced Markham Centre as the location for a new post secondary educational campus. This campus will initially support 4,000 students and will spur increased development within Markham Centre. The joint project between York University and Seneca College is located within a mixed use, complete community and an identified mobility hub, with easy access to GO transit and vivaNext rapidways. This mobility hub will include increased service through the Province's Regional Express Rail initiative. All-day two-way service will support future city building activities in the area.

Marketing and communication efforts are underway to support York Region office market attraction in centres and corridors

Office development is a key component of the Region's objectives and vision for centres and corridors. Despite recent successes, new office development activity is needed to ensure quality employment opportunities exist and are located close to higher-order transit and where people live. Council will be receiving a report in June 2016 outlining a campaign and strategy to attract new office development activity to the Region, including the centres and corridors.

Staff continue to inform residents about the vision for centres and corridors through a number of public events

Planning and Economic Development staff continue to attend a number of public events each year in order to educate and inform residents about the Region's city building initiatives and Centres and Corridors program. These events allow staff to engage in discussions about planning, intensification and growth with residents. Staff also continue to explore opportunities to meet with and hear from key landowners in the centres and corridors.

Link to key Council-approved plans

This report highlights development activities and ongoing initiatives of York Region's Centres and Corridors program. Continued development activity in centres and corridors supports the *2015 to 2019 Strategic Plan* objectives of "encouraging growth along Regional centres and corridors" and "focusing on networks and systems that connect people, goods and services" by ensuring we plan for complete communities where people can live, work and play.

Development activities and the ongoing delivery of tools, resources, and programs support the urban structure and city building objectives of the York Region Official Plan, 2010 in recognizing centres and corridors as urban communities where people can live, work and play.

Vision 2051 recognizes that centres and corridors will help maintain economic competitiveness by encouraging the location of major office, institutional, cultural and entertainment facilities in the centres and corridors with a goal of achieving a balance of employment and residential opportunities. In particular, the activities and initiatives of Centres and Corridors program support the *Vision 2051* goal of creating livable cities and complete communities.

5. Financial Implications

Development activity within the centres and corridors supports the ongoing delivery of infrastructure and services to support growth

There are no financial implications associated with the recommendations of this report. Staff resources associated with the ongoing delivery of the Centres and Corridors program and related initiatives are provided for under the 2016 York Region operating budget. The development charges and property taxes collected from development within the centres and corridors contribute to the capital infrastructure and associated services to support the creation of healthy, safe, sustainable communities.

6. Local Municipal Impact

York Region and the local municipalities have a vested interest in ensuring success within the centres and corridors

Planning for the Regional centres and corridors is a collaborative effort between Regional staff and our local municipal partners. Newmarket, Vaughan, Richmond Hill, Markham, Aurora and East Gwillimbury are engaged in the development of new secondary plans and new Regional program development and initiatives, including the Office Market Attraction marketing and communication strategy. In addition, Regional and local municipal staff work together to develop official plan policies and throughout the development review and approvals process for new projects within the centres and corridors.

7. Conclusion

The Centres and Corridors program is a long term strategy to drive intensification and city building efforts forward in York Region. The growth and development activity that is underway is evidence that the strategy is working. Initiatives undertaken through the Centres and Corridors program and its partners, including the Office Market Attraction marketing and communications strategy, continue to encourage and support growth along Regional centres and corridors. Current and future activities are focused on delivering on the vision of vibrant, successful and compact communities where people can live, work and play.

Attachment 1 provides a summary of this update. For more information on this report, please contact Josh Reis, Senior Planner, Centres, Corridors and Subways at ext. 71515.

2015 Regional Centres and Corridors Program Update

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.

April 29, 2016

Attachments (1)

#6744332

Accessible formats or communication supports are available upon request

York Region's Centres and Corridors Program is about city-building. Centres and Corridors is the term that is used to describe the foundation of York Region's planned urban structure. "Centres" can be viewed as the Region's future downtown areas and "corridors" are the connections between them. It is an integrated approach that combines the planning of urban pedestrian friendly and walkable communities with the construction of new rapid transit that connects York Region and the GTA. Key goals include providing a range of housing and travel options, employment opportunities, conserving resources and creating lively sustainable communities within walking distance of transit and other services.

Progress towards the planned population and job targets for each of the four Regional Centres continues to support Regional priorities to encourage growth along Regional centres and corridors. In 2015, 25% of all new residential unit starts were in centres and corridors. Much of this activity was in the form of mixed use development (residential units and commercial office and retail uses). This development activity shows support and the desire for communities that provide the essentials for everyday life. New office development activity in centres and corridors improves access to opportunities for the Region's talented workforce.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF PLANNING FOR CENTRES AND CORRIDORS?

- Preserves natural features and agricultural land in the Region and beyond
- Growing smarter by redeveloping land that has already been built on
- Improved access to jobs to support a highly skilled workforce
- Walkable transit oriented communities promote active and healthy lifestyles
- Convenient access to rapid transit services to connect people with where they want to be
- A variety of housing options for all ages and incomes
- More high quality public spaces

25% OF ALL RESIDENTIAL UNIT STARTS in York Region were in centres and corridors



112,800

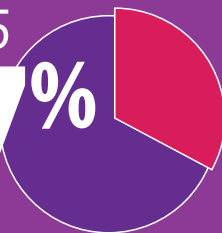


jobs currently exist in the centres and corridors

In 2015

67%

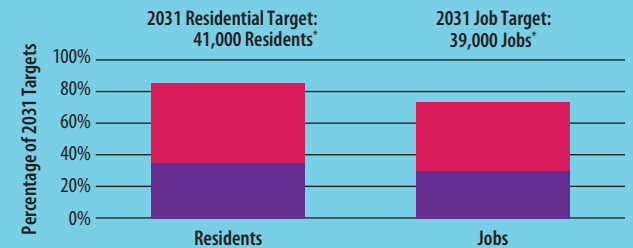
of new office space was started in centres and corridors



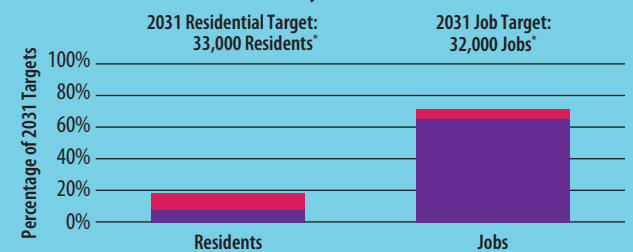
Progress Towards Targets within the Regional Centres

■ 2015 Existing and Under Construction ■ 2015 Under Application

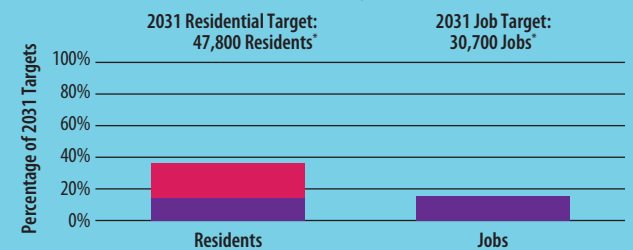
Markham Centre



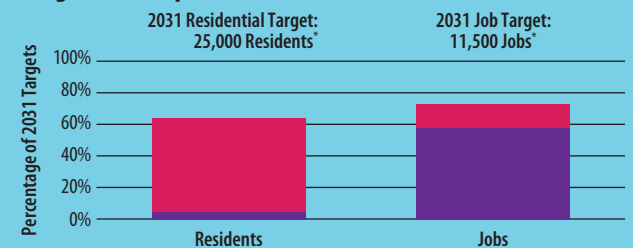
Newmarket Centre Secondary Plan



Richmond Hill / Langstaff Gateway



Vaughan Metropolitan Centre



* Population and employment targets subject to Secondary Plan approvals in Markham, Newmarket, Richmond Hill and Vaughan

Since 2006

65%

of all new multi-storey residential apartment units have been located within the centres and corridors.

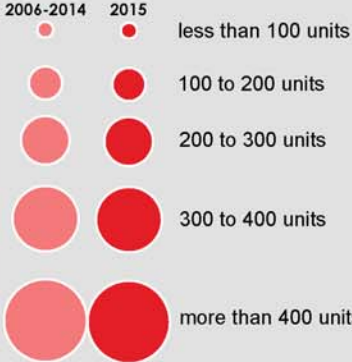


YORK

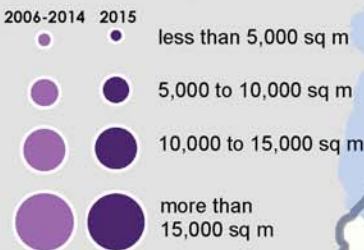
REGION

RESIDENTIAL & COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY WITHIN CENTRES & CORRIDORS

Residential Dwelling Units Constructed in:



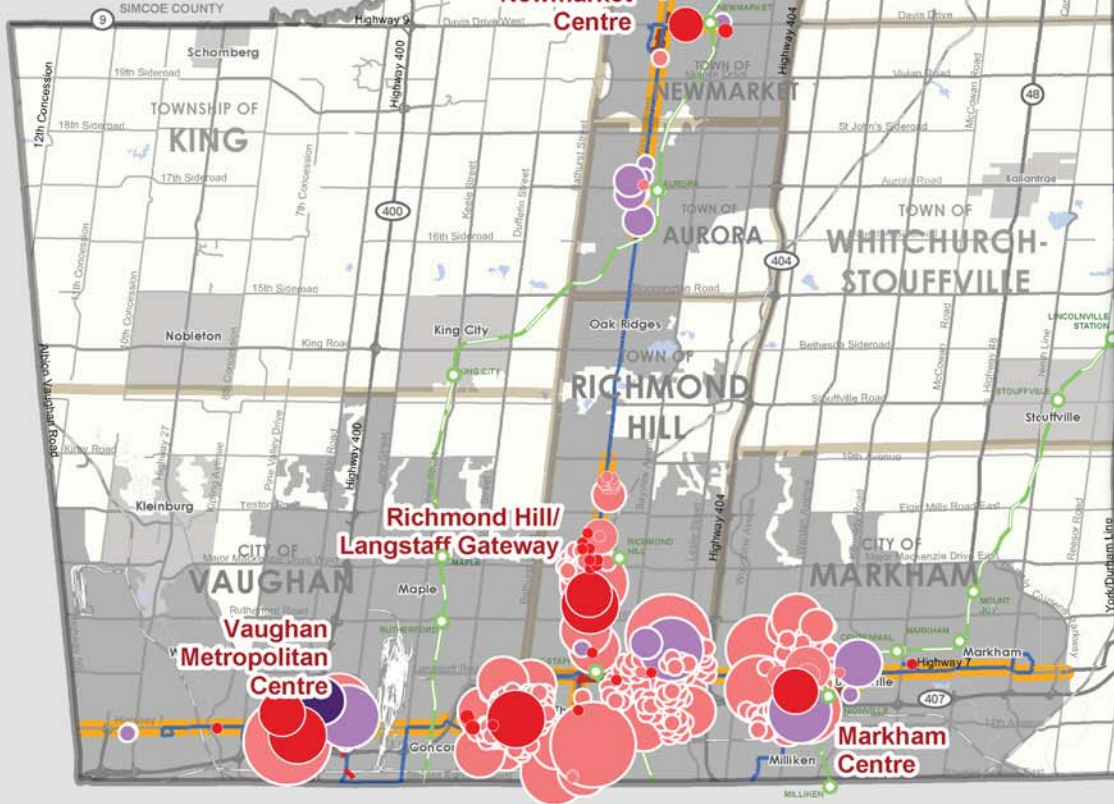
Office Building Development (by square metres) Constructed in:



Regional Designation

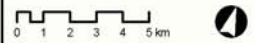


* The dots showing proportional size of each development do not necessarily represent an exact location; rather, they illustrate a graphical representation of the level of development activity in a general area.



BASE MAP INFORMATION

Provincial Freeway	Municipal Boundary
Provincial Highway	Regional Boundary
Road	Town or Village
Railway	Urban Area
GO Rail Commuter Line	
Subway Extension	
York Viva Bus Rapid Transit System	



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 Corporate Services Department
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A stylized illustration of a building facade on the left side of the slide. It features a vertical column with a clock face showing the number 7, and several horizontal window bands with blue shading and black outlines. The background is a light blue gradient.

2015 Centres and Corridors Program Update

Presentation to
Committee of the Whole

Josh Reis, Senior Planner

May 12, 2016

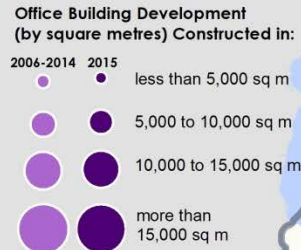
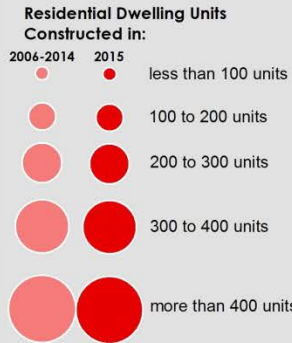


City Building

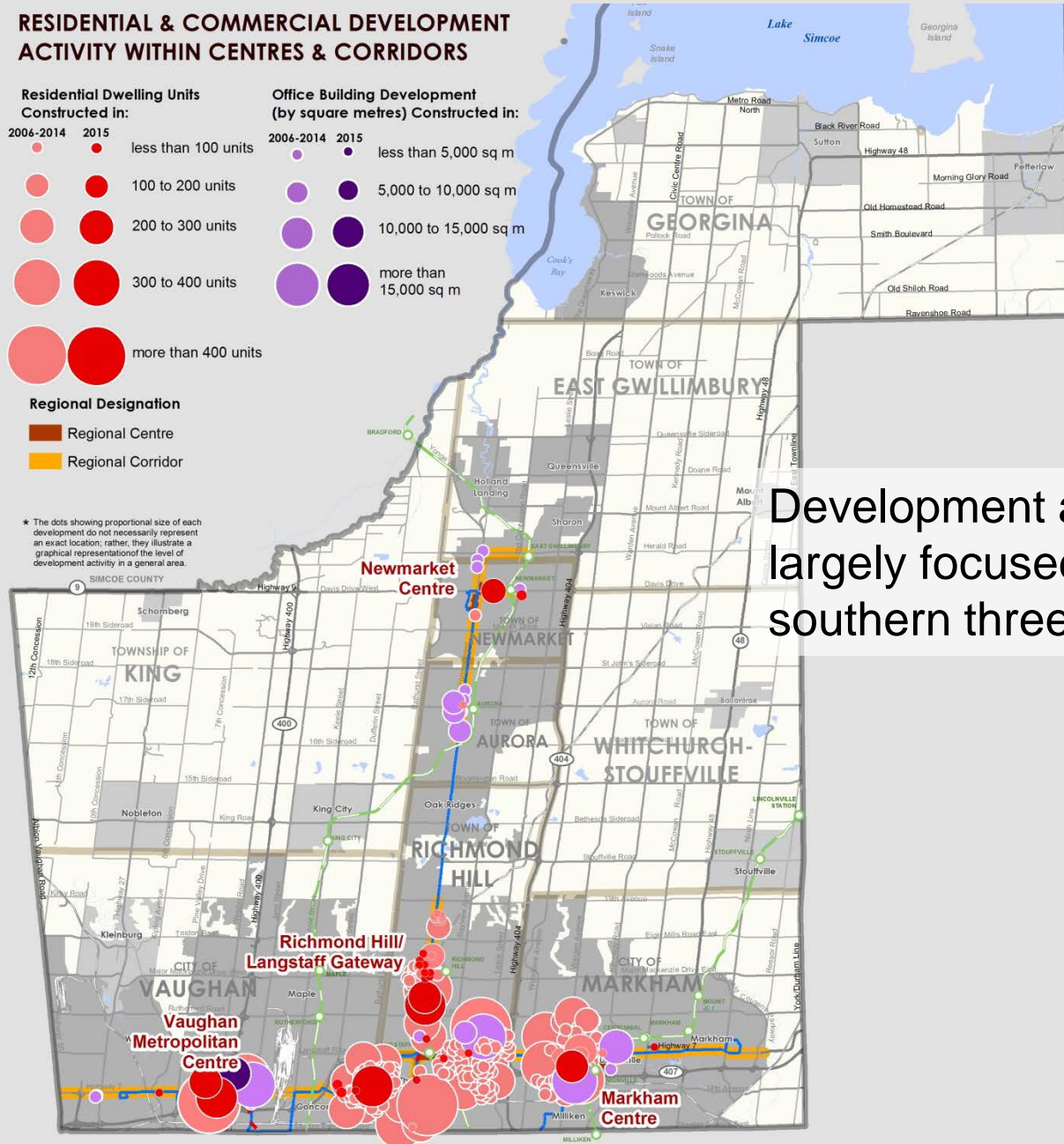
“Combining investment in rapid transit with a land use planning system that encourages compact, sustainable and people oriented places”. - ROP 2010



RESIDENTIAL & COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY WITHIN CENTRES & CORRIDORS



* The dots showing proportional size of each development do not necessarily represent an exact location; rather, they illustrate a graphical representation of the level of development activity in a general area.



Development activity is largely focused within the southern three municipalities

Centro Square



Includes residential,
office and retail uses

25% of all new residential unit starts



66% of all new multi-storey residential development

Indicates the strength of Council's policies to direct high density growth to the centres and corridors



55% of York Region's resident labour force work in the Region





90% of York Region's labour force is in services-based occupations

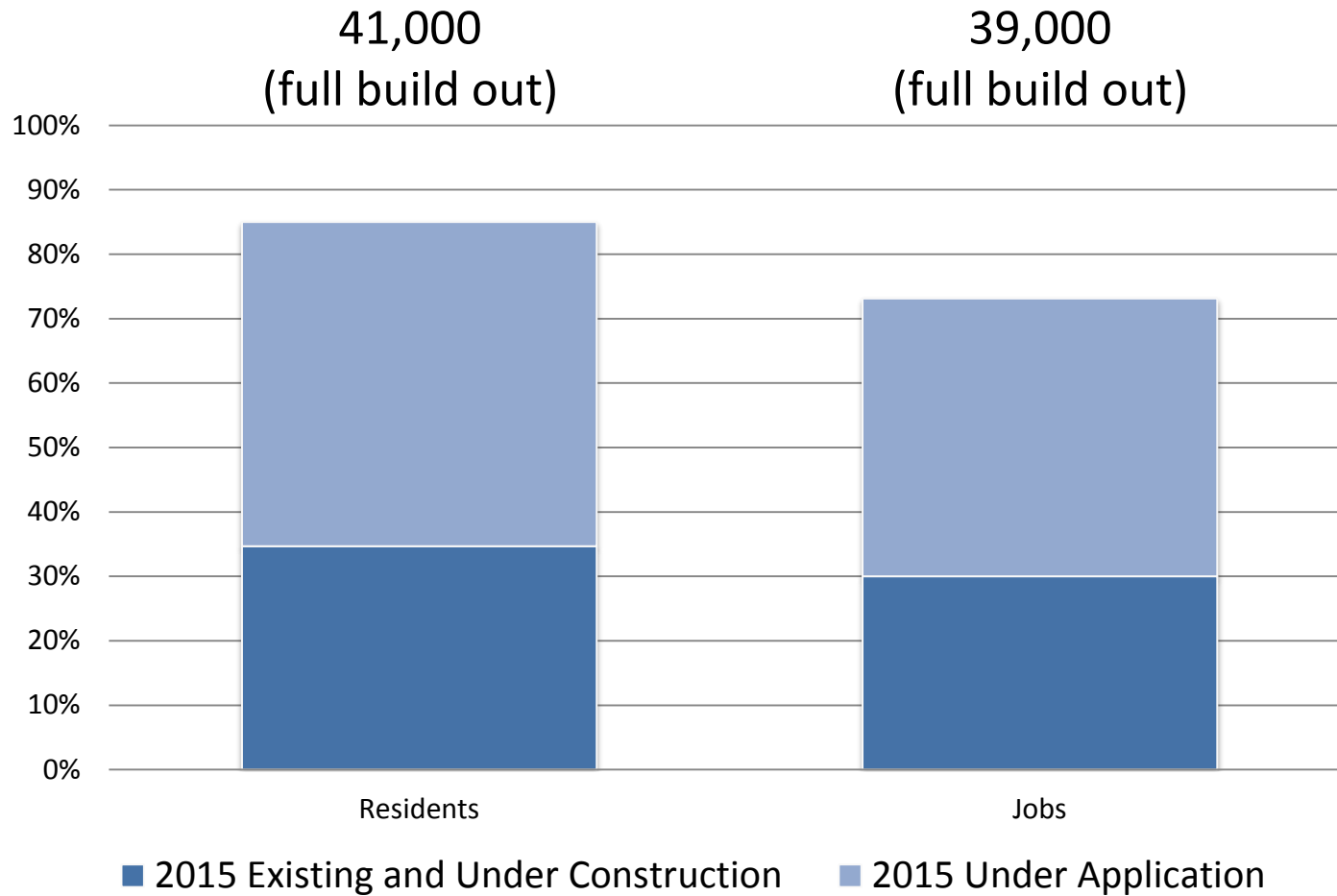
Employment demand by local residents is mostly for the kind of office jobs envisioned for centres and corridors



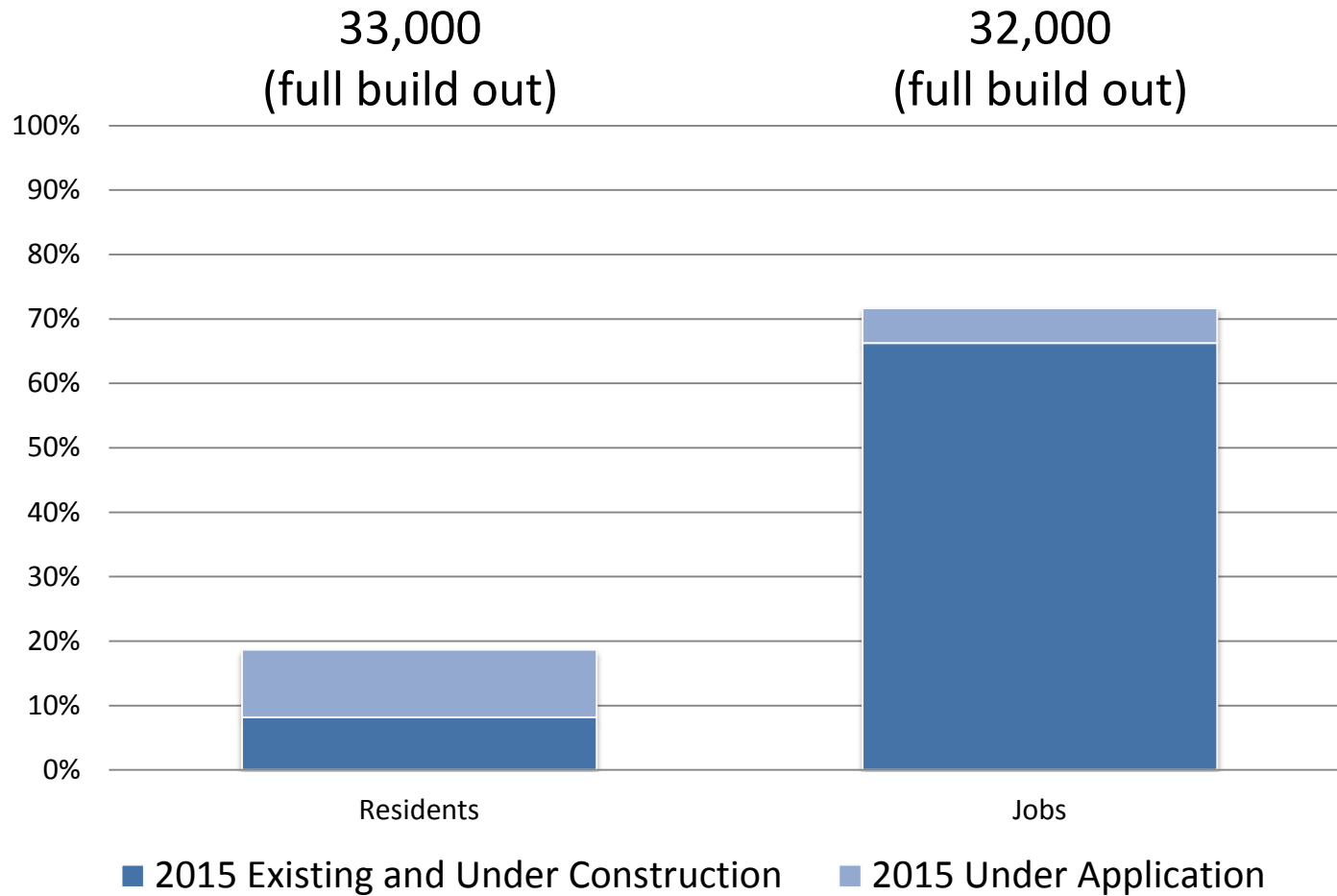
67% of all new office development

Access to the talent in York Region to be the focus for attracting new business growth

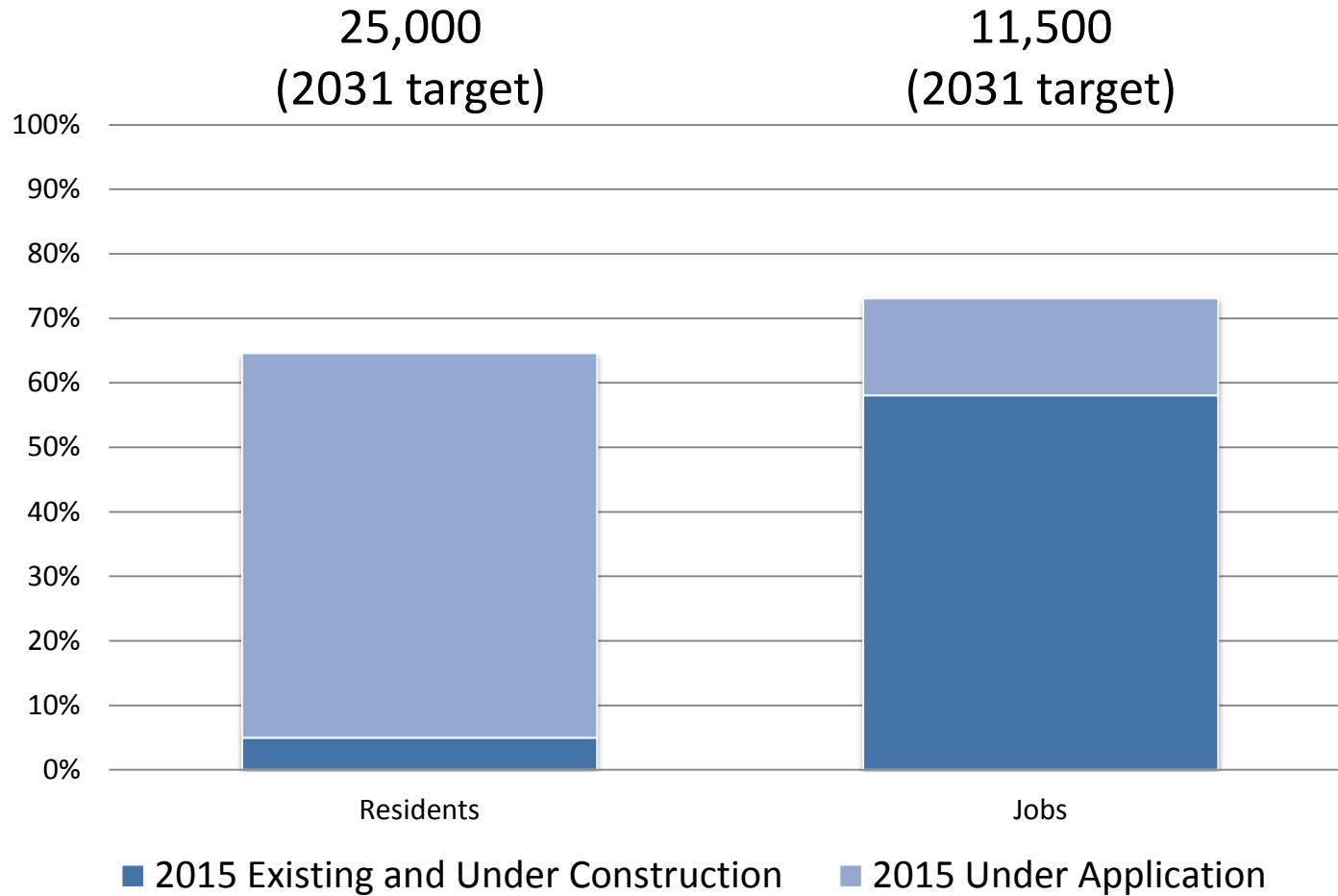
Markham Centre



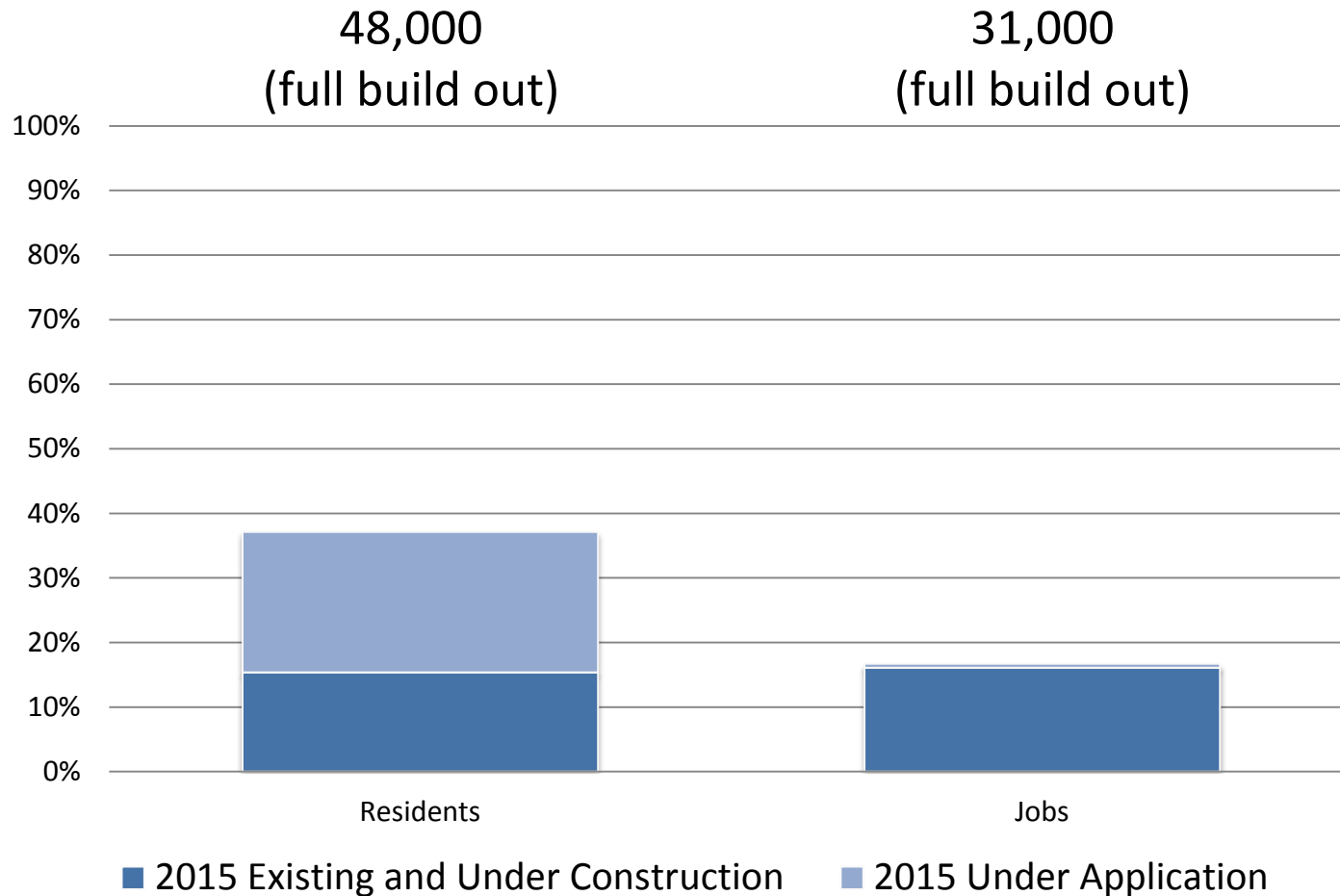
Newmarket Urban Centres



Vaughan Metropolitan Centre



Richmond Hill / Langstaff Gateway



City building is a team effort

An aerial architectural rendering of a city development project. The central focus is a dense cluster of modern, multi-story buildings, including several tall skyscrapers. This central area is surrounded by lower-rise residential and commercial buildings. To the left, there are rows of houses. To the right, there are green spaces with trees, a pond, and several power line towers. The overall scene depicts a comprehensive urban planning effort.

Critical transit infrastructure is needed to unlock the full potential in Richmond Hill/Langstaff Gateway

Recommendations

- Seek Federal and Provincial assistance with respect to providing necessary infrastructure to support forecasted growth
- This report be forwarded to Federal and Provincial ministers as an illustration of the Region's commitment to focusing growth in centres and corridors
- This report be circulated to all local municipalities

Thank you

