

Clause 15 in Report No.5 of Committee of the Whole was adopted, without amendment, by the Council of The Regional Municipality of York at its meeting held on March 26 , 2015.

15

## Retail Trends – Study and Next Steps

Committee of the Whole recommends adoption of the following recommendations contained in the report dated February 24, 2015 from the Commissioner of Corporate Services and Chief Planner:

1. The findings and recommendations contained within the Retail Trends Study be considered as part of the York Region Official Plan update.
2. A specific land budget category for major retail not be included in the Region's 2041 land budget exercise to accommodate forecasted population and employment growth.
3. Staff report back to Council, as necessary, to implement study recommendations regarding tools to effect change in the retail market.
4. This report and the Retail Trends Study be forwarded to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

### 1. Recommendations

It is recommended that:

1. The findings and recommendations contained within the Retail Trends Study be considered as part of the York Region Official Plan update.
2. A specific land budget category for major retail not be included in the Region's 2041 land budget exercise to accommodate forecasted population and employment growth.
3. Staff report back to Council, as necessary, to implement study recommendations regarding tools to effect change in the retail market.
4. This report and the Retail Trends Study be forwarded to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

## 2. Purpose

This report provides Council with an overview of a Retail Trends Study undertaken for the Region with the support of provincial funding. The Study provides a summary of current trends in retail planning, outlines some of the challenges and opportunities to direct the establishment of more sustainable forms of retail development, and includes an number of recommendations. This report recommends next steps for considering and advancing a number of the study recommendations.

## 3. Background

A shift in the way retail development has been built in the Region will support current planning objectives for complete, walkable and transit-oriented communities

Past trends in retail development within York Region can generally be characterized as single-storey, land consumptive and designed to favour auto-oriented shoppers. The trend has been for highly visible locations, on sites that are easily accessed by automobile. Land traditionally sought for retail uses includes areas identified and protected for employment uses in the *York Region Official Plan 2010 (YROP-2010)*. There is a need to shift trends in retail development towards forms that are integrated into complete communities and intensified cities, largely through mixed use forms.

The *YROP-2010* introduced policies which require that retail uses be designed to be walkable, transit-supportive, and integrated into communities. In addition to directing new retail development, the policies encourage the intensification and revitalization of existing retail, including directing a significant amount of mixed-uses, including street-related retail, to Regional Centres and Corridors. Local Municipalities are required to define major retail uses, and are not to permit major retail within designated or strategic employment lands. Given the nature of past retail trends, and the shift in the market required, the *YROP-2010* included a policy directing the undertaking of this Retail Trends Study. The intent of the study was to provide recommendations for a Regional approach to shift the market toward new forms of retail development.

The retail trends study, jointly funded by the Region and the Province, will inform the Regional Municipal Comprehensive Review and Official Plan Update

In May 2014, Regional Council received the work plan for the Regional Municipal Comprehensive Review and Official Plan update. As outlined in that report, and

in accordance with *YROP-2010* (policy 4.4.10), a request for proposal for a Retail Trends Study was released in late 2013. The Retail Trends Study “Shift the Market and Market the Shift”, was undertaken at a cost of approximately \$100,000, by Tate Economic Research Inc. in association with Macaulay Shiomi Howson Ltd. The study was jointly funded by the Region (\$70,000) and the Province through the Places to Grow Implementation Fund (\$30,000).

In order to fully understand the nature of retail development, and the best means of meeting Official Plan objectives with respect to future retail uses, study deliverables were to include a variety of recommendations for the Region to consider on how to encourage mixed-use, compact, transit-supportive and pedestrian-oriented retail development. The study was also to include recommendations for estimating future retail land needs for land budget purposes. The executive summary from the Report is attached to this report (Attachment 1). The report in its entirety is available in the ‘2014 Official Plan Review’ section of the Regional Official Plan page of York.ca.

#### 4. Analysis and Options

The study concludes that York Region residents are currently well serviced through a hierarchy of retail destinations

The current profile of retail destinations is outlined in the study and includes:

##### 1 - Four super-regional retail nodes:

- Markville Shopping Centre node in Markham
- Upper Canada Mall node in Newmarket / East Gwillimbury
- Highway 400 & Highway 7 node in Vaughan
- Vaughan Mills

##### 2 - Nine regional serving retail nodes:

- SmartCentres Aurora East (Wellington Road, west of Highway 404)
- The Aurora Centre (Bayview Avenue, north of Wellington Road)
- The Promenade node (Bathurst Street and Centre Street/Vaughan)
- Yonge & Highway 7 node (Richmond Hill/Markham)
- Yonge & 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue (Hillcrest Mall) node (Richmond Hill)

## Retail Trends – Study and Next Steps

- Elgin Mills Crossing (Elgin Mills, west of Highway 404, Richmond Hill)
- Highway 7 & Woodbine Avenue node (Markham)
- Kennedy Road & Steeles Avenue (Pacific Mall, Markham)
- Markham Road & 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue (Markham)

In addition to these regional centres, the market is serviced by historic main streets, and towns and villages (such as Nobleton and Keswick).

The pace of new retail development may slow, and the nature of retail space will likely change

The study suggests that market trends in the retail sector indicate that there will be a continuing demand for new retail space in York Region to serve continued population growth. However, the study also suggests that the rate of growth is anticipated to be slower than in the past, and that the nature of new space is anticipated to change as follows:

- Configuration of space will change in response to e-commerce
- Intensification of existing shopping centres/retail nodes within Centres and Corridors will occur as demand for retail space in these high quality locations continues to increase
- New super-regional or regional ‘traditional’ shopping centres are unlikely given that sites with the best locational characteristics are already developed and there are restrictions on the conversion of employment lands

To attract forms of retail development which support the regional urban structure, not only is there a need to ‘Shift the Market’, but also to ‘Market the Shift’ through the use of a number of tools

Highly visible sites with easy access, in close proximity to strong markets (densely populated areas) continue to be the most appealing to major retail developers. Retail development has been, and tends to continue to be, very land consumptive in the form of primarily single-storey development with extensive areas of parking. With release of *Places to Grow: The Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe*, Provincial direction has been reflected in the Official Plan which requires a shift for all development types, including retail, toward a built form which is compact, transit supportive and pedestrian-oriented (Figure 1).

**Figure 1**  
Example of Mixed-use Retail in an Urban Setting



The Region's focus on Centres and Corridors will mean that retail is close to a strong market. However, 'new retail' may not be as visible and presents new challenges with respect to mixed-uses and access. To be successful in shifting the retail market, York Region and its local municipalities, need to be successful in 'Marketing the Shift'. Doing so will likely take modification to policy as well as the use of other tools, incentives, encouragements and communications (some examples are included in Attachment 2).

Challenges, including operational and parking challenges, should be addressed proactively and in consultation with the industry

The Study documents some of the challenges in making the shift to more sustainable retail options, which include mixed-use development. Challenges include operational difficulties when retail is combined with residential development (waste management, noise, privacy, and odour control), parking and loading facilities, limitations on space configuration, as well as exposure and visibility.

The study recognizes the value of public sector support in the form of: a policy framework that promotes mixed-use; incentives for the industry; political support and buy in; and working with the development industry to overcome some of the challenges that mixed-use retail poses (which traditional retail development does not).

Encouraging mixed-use development is a key component of making the shift

One of the most successful means to deliver retail uses as part of transit supportive, complete communities is through mixed-use developments. To make mixed-use development an attractive option for retailers, investment in transit, transportation, and parking infrastructure needs to be considered.

To encourage retail uses in mixed-use developments (particularly vertically mixed-uses) and more urban forms of retail development, the study recommends a number of options for the Region to consider, including:

- implementing community improvement plans,
- deferral of fees,
- development of a model ‘development permit by-law’ for Regional Centres and Corridors,
- parking strategies,
- bonusing,
- cultural heritage programs including loans and grants, and
- expedited planning/development processes.

Some of these recommendations can be explored through the review and update of the *YROP-2010*, but other tools will need to be explored and implemented by, or in partnership with, local municipalities.

The Study also recommends that Major Retail no longer be a specific category in the York Region land budgeting process in recognition of the shift to integrating retail uses within complete communities and intensified cities. The land budget identifies community lands which will incorporate retail uses, with mixed-use forms preferred. Limited ancillary retail uses are accounted for within employment lands in accordance with the employment policies of the York Region Official Plan.

Study recommends actions regarding incentives, Community Improvement Plans, investment in infrastructure, and phasing to assist in making the shift require additional review and consultation

The study recommends consideration of financial incentives for mixed-use retail developments including deferral of Development Charges and planning fees.

## Retail Trends – Study and Next Steps

Any consideration of financial incentives should be subject to a thorough cost-benefit analysis. Other approaches, such as community improvement plans are also suggested, and may be preferred.

The study notes there is the impression from the industry, that infrastructure is not there to support this density of development. Of specific mention is investment in transit, reduced requirements for parking and/or provision of on-street parking, as well as consideration of operational features which could benefit development such as integrated fare system so people can stop and shop between trips.

The study recommends that phasing be considered to allow retail to evolve into mixed-use over time, provided that interim development doesn't jeopardize the ultimate development form.

Table 1 of the Study (Attachment 2) includes more detail through a list of potential tools available for the Region and local municipalities to consider.

Findings and recommendations of the Retail Trends Study will be explored with local municipalities and the industry for future action

The Study includes a number of findings and recommendations. The recommendations have various implications on other areas of Regional business and will need to be thoroughly considered and assessed. There are a number of findings and recommendations that will inform the retail policy review associated with the Official Plan review and update. In consultation with the industry, local municipalities, and other stakeholders, Regional staff will recommend a policy framework that will be supportive of the shift in the retail market required to support complete communities and the densities required by the *YROP-2010*. Following policy updates, additional consultation will be undertaken with municipalities to consider those report recommendations which go beyond Regional policy.

Link to key Council-approved plans

Well-designed retail that is appropriately integrated into complete communities, encouraging walking, cycling, and transit, is an objective of the *YROP-2010*. The findings of this study will inform the review and update of retail policies of the *YROP-2010* to further guide success in this regard.

Strong retail planning will help strengthen the Region's economy, support community health and well-being and manage environmentally sustainable growth, all of which are priority areas of the *2015 to 2019 Strategic Plan*.

Consistent with the Region's *Vision for 2051*, well integrated retail uses will result in livable cities and complete communities; a place where everyone can thrive.

## 5. Financial Implications

This study was undertaken within the existing Planning and Economic Development budget, with the support of grant funding from the Ontario Growth Secretariat (Places to Grow Implementation Fund). Consideration of study recommendations through the review and update of the York Region Official Plan will occur within the existing staff complement and budget. Financial implications of advancing other tools to help market the shift will be the subject of a subsequent report(s) as necessary.

## 6. Local Municipal Impact

Local municipal staff will be consulted on a updated retail policy framework to be considered through the *YROP-2010* review and update. Additionally, Regional staff will work with local municipalities to explore implementation of a number of other recommendations of the report as we collectively strive for the integration of retail uses into complete communities and cities.

## 7. Conclusion

To 'shift the market' to more compact, mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented and transit supportive forms of retail development, a strong policy framework and public sector support is required, effectively, 'marketing the shift'. An emphasis on supportive and adaptive policies, sound infrastructure investment (including parking), and other tools/incentives need to be explored.

It is recommended this study be used to stimulate discussion and prompt development of updated policies as part of the review and update, and to prompt further exploration of other tools that can help make the transition to a new form of retail development that delivers on the Regional Structure, complete communities, and vibrant cities.

For more information on this report, please contact Sandra Malcic, Manager, Policy and Environment, at ext. 75274



## Retail Trends – Study and Next Steps

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.

Attachments (2)

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Accessible formats or communication supports are available upon request

**Retail Trends Study**  
**“Shift the Market and Market the Shift”**  
**Consolidated Summary Report**

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The Regional Municipality of York

January 2015



**TATE ECONOMIC RESEARCH INC.**



# Executive Summary

## Why “Shift the Market Market the Shift”?

Since the 1970’s, much of the retail development in Ontario including the Regional Municipality of York has been primarily single-storey, land consumptive and designed to favour auto-oriented shoppers. However, with *Places to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (Growth Plan)*, the Province has directed a shift in the market for retail, and all other development, toward a built form which assists in creating compact<sup>1</sup>, mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented and transit supportive communities.

York Region and the local municipalities have been working to reflect this direction in their planning including the Region’s 2010 Official Plan (ROP). As part of the Official Plan review and update, York Region is developing an approach that will provide guidance to its municipalities on planning for future retail development both through intensification and redevelopment of the built up area, and in the development of new communities.

The approach must provide a basis to “Shift the Market” from the traditional retail development form to a more urban form of development including mixed use through changes in Regional and local municipal policies and regulations. However, this vision for the future cannot be achieved by policy and regulation alone. To be successful, the Region and local municipalities cannot simply try to impose this shift in the market, they must also “Market the Shift” by providing incentives for pursuing this new future.

## Study Objectives

This study is designed to provide recommendations for a Regional approach to “Shift the Market, Market the Shift”. The objectives of this study are:

- 1) To provide the Region and its municipal stakeholders an understanding of the retail sector in York Region as well as emerging trends in retail development;
- 2) To assess opportunities and constraints associated with mixed-use, compact retail development in the Region’s ‘Centres and Corridors’ and developing new communities;

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<sup>1</sup> For the purpose of this study, the term ‘compact’ is based on the Growth Plan definition which states, “A land-use pattern that encourages efficient use of land, walkable neighbourhoods, mixed land uses (residential, retail, workplace and institutional all within one neighbourhood), proximity to transit and reduced need for infrastructure. Compact urban form can include detached and semi-detached houses on small lots as well as townhouses and walk-up apartments, multi-storey commercial developments, and apartments or offices above retail.”



- 3) To assess land budget approaches for addressing retail uses; and,
- 4) To recommend land use planning policy and tools to guide retail development to support local municipal official plan, Regional Official Plan, Growth Plan and Provincial Policy Statement objectives.

### **The Region's Retail Sector and Future Development Trends**

York Region's retail sector has developed an extensive hierarchy of shopping formats ranging from super-regional to neighbourhood scale shopping areas.<sup>2</sup> The majority of these locations have been established in many of the most accessible locations in the Region's Centres and along the Region's Corridors including Yonge Street and York Region Road 7, as well as along the 400-series highway network. The location characteristics of these retail nodes make them highly accessible to the Region's population base as well as to consumers beyond York Region.

The Region's existing retail network was developed based on reliance on auto-oriented travel by its consumers. Traditional location characteristics such as access, visibility, exposure to high traffic volumes, ease of mobility, and proximity to the market have been, and will continue to be, the primary factors influencing the best retail locations in the Region. In addition, accessibility by non-auto modes of transportation is now also an important location characteristic of the best retail locations. These factors reinforce that the sites with the strongest location characteristics will remain at the top tier of the retail hierarchy.

Retail chains capture the largest share of consumer expenditures. The influence of retail chains on the retail network is directly linked to their ability to pay the highest rents. This ability usually ensures that the best locations will be dominated by retail chains. Their dominance of the Region's retail sector is expected to continue.

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<sup>2</sup> Atop the Region's retail hierarchy are four super-regional shopping nodes. These nodes range in size from approximately 1.4 million to 3.4 million square feet of retail space and consist of many of the Region's largest shopping centres. These nodes are located in the following major shopping areas: the Markville Shopping Centre node in Markham; Upper Canada Mall node in Newmarket; Highway 400 & Highway 7 power node in Vaughan; and the Vaughan Mills node. Other upper tier locations consist of six regional serving nodes and three specialty centres. These locations include: SmartCentres Aurora East and The Aurora Centre; The Promenade node in Vaughan; Yonge St. & Highway 7 node, Yonge St. & 16th Ave. (Hillcrest Mall) node and Elgin Mills Crossing in Richmond Hill; Highway 7 & Woodbine Ave, Kennedy Rd. & Steeles Ave. (Pacific Mall) and Markham Rd & 14th Ave. in Markham. Combined these nodes comprise approximately 6.2 million square feet of space.



Demand for new retail space will increase. Future population and employment growth forecast throughout the Region will generate demand for more locally accessible shopping facilities particularly in the Region's Centres, Corridors and new communities.

Demand for a variety of shopping formats is also expected to continue. A number of the major chain retailers currently have a strong preference for operating in more affordable retail space formats such as the freestanding box store. While other major chain retailers operate on multiple retailing platforms having store prototypes ranging from full service flagship stores to discount formats; or urban market concepts versus small market concepts.

In addition, the trend of foreign retailers coming to Canada is expected to continue and contribute to demand for a variety of shopping formats. This trend represents a variety of new opportunities which will contribute to sustaining demand in the future.

The effects of online retailing such as e-commerce and mobile commerce are also changing how consumers shop. However their impact on the 'bricks & mortar' retailing has been, and is expected to be, gradual. In many cases, retailers are reporting that these alternative retailing platforms complement the in-store sales experience and contribute to increasing the overall sales volumes of the retailer. Retail vacancy rates have not increased as a result of e-commerce. However it is anticipated that while retail space will continue to increase in the future, the rate of increase will be reduced from historic levels.

The supply of upper tier shopping formats is expected to continue to tighten in the future. Increases in the value of real estate, cost effectiveness and performance expectations are anticipated to significantly influence the types of development for new shopping centre supply. The best shopping locations, which have been largely established in the Region's Centres and Corridors, can be expected to remain at the top of the hierarchy. As demand for high quality retail locations continues to increase, and the associated value of these locations reach premium price levels, these locations have the greatest potential of being intensified with higher density mixed use development, a process which is already occurring and which is projected to increase.

All of these market trends are expected to continue to shape the future of the Region's retail sector.

### **Opportunities and Constraints Associated with Retail Mixed-Use Development**

Opportunities for mixed use development and more urban forms of retail development are most likely to be realized in the Region's 'Centres and Corridors'. These areas provide the most favourable combination of site and



location characteristics from the perspective of access, visibility, exposure, mobility and proximity to a sizable market. Also, these areas are most likely to achieve the highest land values needed to stimulate interest from the development industry to consider opportunities for mixed use formats.

As market conditions are becoming more favourable for mixed use development, the development industry has created plans for new mixed use projects. These are primarily in Regional Centres in York Region such as Markham Centre, and the Vaughan Metropolitan Centre (“VMC”), although there is also some evidence of such development in the southern part of the Yonge Street Corridor in Richmond Hill. In these locations there are various market and other incentives to promote interest in intensification.

In Markham Centre, the growing concentration of high density residential and office employment uses and improvements in transit connectivity are creating market conditions for retail intensification. In the VMC, the extension of the subway into York Region is expected to be a catalyst for a high density downtown core.

Mixed use retail formats will not be viable everywhere, although there is potential for it to occur. Insight from the shopping centre industry and commercial real estate development stakeholders interviewed for this study indicates that there are a number of challenges to developing and operating mixed use formats. These challenges include the limited number of retailers prepared to locate in such projects, the costs of development and potential for difficulties with financing, market constraints, and design and logistical challenges. More specifically:

- Mixed use development with ground floor retail does not work everywhere and is limited to locations offering the best site locations which in the foreseeable future will be the Region’s Centres and Corridors, particularly in the vicinity of transit nodes;
- There are a limited number of developers who are prepared to undertake such development and who see the benefits of creating an attractive, lifestyle oriented environment which will maximize the use of the land. However even such developers see the need for some flexibility in approach which will allow interim development to occur with intensification in the future; and,
- There are a range of barriers to the successful implementation of such projects including the reluctance of retail tenants to locate in such development particularly residential developments because of conflicts due to noise, odours, the lack of flexibility of the built form to accommodate prototype design and the high costs of development.



There was recognition that the Region and local municipalities can assist in encouraging greater mixed use development. This includes the provision of fiscal incentives, investment in infrastructure, consideration of operational features which could benefit development, review of parking standards and approaches and the development of policies that allow for interim development and the ability to respond to specific proposals in a more flexible manner.

In general, the progression of retail mixed use development in York Region is in its early stages. It is difficult to determine definitively a set of “rules for success” in the context of the York Region market. There are not enough local examples to determine what factors are influencing the development of these projects. However, looking at some examples of these types of development in various markets across the province and throughout Canada illustrates that:

- It is possible to finance and develop mixed use projects including projects of significant size and scale;
- Mixed use projects can occur both through redevelopment and on “greenfield” sites;
- Commercial development in a traditional single storey format usually forms the initial, and most significant, phase of development, particularly on greenfield sites, with residential and/or office development occurring in separate buildings in later phases of the development; and,
- Mixed use development appears to be occurring primarily horizontally, rather than vertically in Ontario, although there are some exceptions. These include the following examples from York Region, The World on Yonge, eko Markham, Liberty Square and St. Andrews Shopping Centre.

Overall, locations within the Region’s Centres and Corridors offering the best access and exposure characteristics have the potential for a variety of mixed use development opportunities. However, unlike Markham Centre and the VMC where local conditions are becoming conducive for mixed use development, generally land values and retail market rents elsewhere in York Region have yet to reach adequate levels for significant intensification opportunities to be viable. This situation is primarily due to a number of market conditions including, but not limited to the following:

- The supply characteristics of the Region’s existing retail network;
- The Region’s reliance on auto-oriented transportation infrastructure;
- The absence of a highly integrated regional transit option to effectively move large volumes of passenger traffic to central locations;



- The slow growth of high density, residential and employment areas; and,
- The availability of greenfield development sites to continue to add retail supply in the Region.

These conditions do not mean that concentrated higher density retail mixed uses and more urban forms of retail development are unachievable in the majority of the Region's Corridors, but rather that, in most cases, there is currently no strong incentive to transition to these forms of development outside of the Centres.

### **Land Budgeting For Major Retail Uses**

Land budgeting has long been used for the purposes of long range planning. It is a commonly used approach for converting growth forecasts into an estimated area of land. Generally land budgeting takes into account the existing vacant land supply of a settlement area boundary and converts growth forecasts to the amount of land area required to accommodate additional people and jobs.

Based on a review of various background studies relating to land budgeting methodologies in regional municipalities throughout the GTA, it is evident that other regional authorities are not specifically addressing Major Retail. Other regions rely on the local municipalities to account for Major Retail land needs through the population-related employment category. It is our opinion that Major Retail should no longer be a specific category in the York Region land budgeting process.

### **The Implementation Toolbox**

The challenges which the Region and the local municipalities face today in attempting "to shift the market and market the shift" with respect to mixed use development and more urban forms of retail development are as great or greater than the challenges which were faced in protecting and promoting traditional downtowns in response to suburban shopping centre development beginning in the 1970's.

These challenges, however, are the reason why both the development industry and the local municipalities see a need for the Region, working with their local municipal partners and the development industry, to take a strong role in finding the appropriate balance of policy, regulation and incentives. The achievement of this balance will help provide the incentives to allow for the successful implementation of mixed use and more urban forms of retail development to occur in the marketplace.

The public sector has started this process by directing a shift in the market through the introduction of a strong new policy framework. However, policy is





not sufficient on its own, even with some adjustments/clarifications. Other steps must be taken to support this change – to “market the shift”.

### **Built Up Areas**

The implementation “tool box” for the Region and the local municipalities which apply to intensification and redevelopment in the built up area includes:

- updated zoning regulations and approaches for mixed use development and intensification;
- development permit by-laws;
- community improvement plans;
- deferral of fees;
- parking strategies;
- bonusing;
- cultural heritage programs including loans and grants;
- expedited planning/development processes; and,
- municipal services corporations.

The Regional role includes the potential for:

- regional community improvement plans or involvement in local community improvement plans;
- participation in expedited planning/development processes;
- funding of a “model” development permit by-law;
- coordination of working sessions to allow exchange of experiences on zoning; and,
- participation in parking strategies.

### **Greenfield Areas and New Communities**

The implementation “tool box” for the Region and the local municipalities which apply to intensification and redevelopment in the greenfield areas and new communities includes:

- expedited planning/development processes;
- zoning regulations and approaches which permit/encourage mixed use and more intensive forms of development;
- development permit by-laws/bonusing; and,
- parking strategies.

The Regional role includes the potential for:

- participation in secondary plan processes;



- coordination of working sessions to allow the exchange of experiences on zoning; and,
- participation in parking strategies.

### **Other Implementation Tools**

- Coordination by the Region of stakeholder sessions to foster on-going information sharing and learning as well as the resolution of issues.
- Working with the local municipalities, the Region can assist in the development of a context specific approach to market impact studies through the establishment of standard terms of reference which reflect the current policy framework.

### **Conclusions**

York Region's retail sector has an extensive hierarchy of shopping formats which has developed based on reliance on the auto-oriented travel by its consumers. Demand for retail space is expected to continue in the future, although the rate of growth will occur at a slower pace as a result of the impact of online retailing.

There are indications that a shift in the market toward mixed use development and more urban forms of retail development is starting to occur. This change is in its early stages, with locations in the Region's Centres and Corridors offering the best access and exposure characteristics have the best potential for establishment of this new form of development. However, significant challenges remain before this shift in the market is accepted. These challenges are the reason why the development industry and local municipalities see a need for the Region, working with their local municipal partners and the industry, to take a strong role in finding the appropriate balance of policy, regulation and incentives to "shift the market and market the shift."



**Table 2  
Implementation Tool Box**

<b>Tool</b>	<b>Municipality</b>	<b>Status</b>
1. 1.Zoning By-law	All municipal OPs provide for the need to update their zoning bylaws. However, the nature of the specific techniques or approaches that will be used for mixed use and commercial development are not generally set out in the policies and will not be determined until the zoning bylaws have actually been approved.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- City of Markham has commenced an update of their zoning by-laws but it is in the early stages. However, their Markham Centre by-law provides specific techniques for transition to transit supportive development.</li> <li>-City of Vaughan has updated zoning standards for their Vaughan Metropolitan Centre for mixed use and intensification.</li> <li>-Town of Newmarket Zoning By-law includes a number of approaches for mixed use and intensification.</li> <li>-Town of Aurora is currently undertaking a review of their zoning by-law. The Town is considering an approach of adding additional uses and relaxed performance standards to mirror the permissions of the Promenade OP designations.</li> <li>-Town of East Gwillimbury is working on a zoning by-law review but the focus is to consolidate and revise the existing regulations. The Town is considering bringing some basic regulations into the By-law to allow for the facilitation of mixed use development.</li> <li>-Township of King is commencing work on a new zoning by-law for the Community of Nobleton.</li> <li>-Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville has a new zoning by-law which provides development standards for mixed use development.</li> <li>-Town of Georgina is currently reviewing their OP. Their zoning by-law has not been subject to review and currently does not include any general mixed use zones.</li> </ul>



**Table 2  
Implementation Tool Box**

<b>Tool</b>	<b>Municipality</b>	<b>Status</b>
2. Development Permit Bylaws	The potential for development permit bylaws is provided for in most municipal plans in York. However, no municipality has proceeded with such an approach in York.	While no municipality in York has proceeded with the use of a development permit bylaw, a development permit bylaw has been adopted for the City of Brampton's Main North "Character Area" within the Downtown Brampton precinct. A number of other municipalities are also considering the use of this tool (e.g. Toronto, Milton, and Ajax).
3. Community Improvement Plans	All municipalities, including the Region, identify the potential for the use of community improvement plans and most of the local municipalities have adopted such plans for existing centres and corridors to encourage intensification and redevelopment.	-Traditional Cores and Corridors: Community of Stouffville Core Area and Downtown Newmarket; Uptown Keswick, Sutton/ Jackson's Point; Mount Albert King City, Schomberg and Nobleton -Mixed Use Areas: City of Vaughan Steeles Corridor from Jane to Keele and Town of Aurora Promenade Area; - Office Development: Town of Richmond Hill and City of Vaughan
4. Deferral of Fees	Many municipalities examine the deferral of fees and charges through a community improvement plan. However, the Town of Newmarket has identified this as a separate tool.	Newmarket, Davis Drive –deferral of development charges and planning fees to stimulate mixed use development.
5. Parking Strategies	Parking is a critical component of any approach to intensification and mixed use development. This is recognized in the ROP policies.	A comprehensive approach to parking in mixed use areas has not been developed in York Region. However, the Markham Centre Zoning Bylaw does provide for some unique approaches to parking. In other areas (e.g. North Oakville Parking Strategy Part A Parking Management Principles & On Street Parking Policies) there are examples where the development of a comprehensive approach to parking in major mixed use areas is mandated in the OP.



**Table 2  
Implementation Tool Box**

<b>Tool</b>	<b>Municipality</b>	<b>Status</b>
6. Bonusing Provisions	The Planning Act (Section 37) allows the use of bonus provisions to permit additional height and density in return for specific initiatives. Many municipalities provide for the use of such provisions in their OP and the City of Toronto makes extensive use of this tool.	All municipalities in York provide for the use of this tool
7. Cultural Heritage	There are a range of tools available to assist with rejuvenation of heritage properties and areas, many of which are in mixed use areas.	The City of Markham makes extensive use of the following: -Heritage Property Tax Reduction Program -Heritage Loan Fund -Commercial Façade Improvement Program -Commercial Signage Replacement Grant Information -Designated Heritage Property Grant Program -Heritage Reserve Fund
8. Expedited Planning/ Development Processes	A number of municipalities have put in place expedited processes or special committees that deal with implementation issues. The Region was involved in one such process involving the Richmond Hill/Langstaff Gateway Urban Growth Centre which relates to an area in more than one jurisdiction and which requires significant Regional infrastructure.	-Vaughan Metropolitan Centre Implementation Team was established to facilitate high quality and timely development of the VMC. -Markham Centre Advisory Group reviews and confirms the principles and objectives of the Markham Centre Plan and develops and evaluates the performance of the implementation measures to realize Markham Centre. -The Region led a study of the Richmond Hill/Langstaff Gateway Urban Growth Centre which led to an ROP amendment to provide a framework for the provision of needed infrastructure in a timely fashion, as a basis for the Centre's development.



**Table 2  
Implementation Tool Box**

<b>Tool</b>	<b>Municipality</b>	<b>Status</b>
9. 9. Municipal Services Corporation	<p>The City of Markham has also considered, but not implemented, the use of a municipal services corporation for Markham Centre under Section 203 of the Municipal Act. Such an entity can be established to provide economic development services which include acquisition, development and disposal of sites for residential, industrial, commercial and institutional uses, provision of residential housing, and provision of general parking facilities. A community improvement plan allows municipalities to provide incentives to private landowners. A Municipal Services Corporation (MSC) can form partnerships with private entities to provide facilities and infrastructure to meet municipal objectives. The MSC can transfer assets, and loans and grants, at less than fair market value, to private entities to improve the viability of projects.</p>	

