

Clause No. 11 in Report No. 11 of Committee of the Whole was adopted, without amendment, by the Council of The Regional Municipality of York at its meeting held on June 26, 2014.

11

MONITORING THE YORK REGION OFFICIAL PLAN

Committee of the Whole recommends:

1. Receipt of the presentation by Valerie Shuttleworth, Director, Long Range Planning and Karen Whitney, Director, Community Planning.
2. Adoption of the following recommendation contained in the report dated May 28, 2014 from the Executive Director, Corporate and Strategic Planning:

1. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that:

1. The Regional Clerk forward this report for information to the Ontario Growth Secretariat at the Ministry of Infrastructure and the local municipalities.

2. PURPOSE

This report provides results of indicators measuring and tracking progress towards meeting targets and policy objectives of the in-force *York Region Official Plan, 2010 (YROP-2010)*. It is the first report on monitoring of the *YROP-2010*.

3. BACKGROUND

Focus is shifting from defending the *YROP-2010* to implementation

The *YROP-2010* was approved by the Province with modifications in September 2010 and then appealed to the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB). Approximately 90% of the *YROP-2010* is now in-force. Since the majority of the Plan is approved, focus has shifted from defence of the Plan at the OMB, to implementation. A key part of implementation is monitoring progress towards meeting *YROP-2010* policy targets and objectives.

***YROP-2010* guides economic, environmental, healthy community and community building decisions in the Region**

The *YROP-2010* provides policy guidance on land use planning matters and is structured under the three major themes of:

1. Sustainable natural environment
2. Healthy communities
3. Economic vitality

In addition, the *YROP-2010* provides growth management policies on city building, complete communities, agricultural and rural areas and on infrastructure and service provision. Together with *Vision 2051*, the *YROP-2010* is one of the Region's key long range plans that collectively guide the Strategic Plan and individual departmental business plans and budgets.

The *YROP-2010* requires regular monitoring to track progress towards policy targets and objectives

Monitoring assists in measuring the success of policies and in tracking progress towards meeting specific targets. Monitoring also helps to identify emerging trends and related issues that could affect *YROP-2010* policies and will also inform the recently commenced Regional Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR). Results from an analysis of *YROP-2010* indicators can form part of the basis for an evidenced based approach to policy development for the review of the *YROP-2010*.

Chapter 8 of *YROP-2010* addresses implementation and sets out requirements related to monitoring and assessment of policies. Section 8.2 contains a number of specific requirements related to monitoring, stating that it is the policy of Council to:

- Develop indicators to measure the success of the *YROP-2010* based on the three themes of the Plan (as stated above);
- Produce regular monitoring reports that measure the success of the Plan; and,
- Develop, in co-operation with local municipalities, common measuring and reporting tools to monitor progress towards targets established in the *YROP-2010*.

The *YROP-2010* indicator targets referenced above include targets that are in the Provincial *Growth Plan* and are related to intensification and density requirements. In addition, reference is made in Section 8.2 of the *YROP-2010* to affordable housing targets, development density targets for the Regional Centres and for areas around future subway stations, energy and water efficiency standards and woodland cover.

Monitoring the effectiveness of *YROP-2010* policies complements other Regional monitoring initiatives and reporting

Monitoring of the *YROP-2010* complements other policy and program monitoring already being undertaken across a number of Regional departments and service areas. Other existing monitoring initiatives currently include:

- Implementation and Monitoring Plan for the *2011 to 2015 Strategic Plan*
- York Region Annual Report
- Greening Strategy Achievements Report
- Waste Diversion Report
- Annual Growth and Development Review report

While the indicators developed focus on policies in the *YROP-2010*, there are similarities with the data and indicators used in other current monitoring initiatives in terms of the types of data and information. The *YROP-2010* monitoring report is not intended to replace existing policy and program monitoring systems already in place at the Region.

Ongoing reporting of *YROP-2010* indicators will occur through the Annual Growth and Development Review and the Five Year Review MCR of the *YROP-2010*

Some of the *YROP-2010* indicator data is only available through the Census, which is conducted every five years. Other indicator results tend to show minimal changes from year to year while some indicators can be monitored on an annual basis. Given this, it is anticipated that the next full *YROP-2010* monitoring would occur ahead of the next five-year review of the *YROP-2010*. A Regional MCR and Regional Official Plan Review have just recently commenced. Sustainable natural environment indicators will continue to be reported annually through the Greening Strategy Achievements report. The intensification and affordable housing indicators will be reported on annually through the Growth and Development Review report. In addition, development progress in the Region's Centres and Corridors will be reported annually by the Community Planning Branch.

This report provides results for the initial set of *YROP-2010* indicators. Over time, these indicators may be refined and new indicators may be added as better data and information becomes available.

4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

YROP-2010 policies with specific targets as well as those with a policy direction are being monitored

A staff report before Council in May 2013 outlined the process for developing indicators to monitor progress towards meeting *YROP-2010* policy targets and objectives. The initial focus was on developing indicators for policies that contain measurable and quantifiable policy objectives. Two types of policies are being monitored:

- a) The first group are those with specific targets such as the policy that requires a minimum 25% of new housing units across the Region be affordable and distributed within each local municipality.
- b) The second broad policy group consists of policies that provide direction to achieve a desired result, rather than a target such as the housing policy which encourages the construction of new non-profit housing that does not have a specific numeric target.

YROP-2010 policies requiring local municipal conformity are not part of the indicators in this report since ensuring conformity with the *YROP-2010* is part of the regular work of the Community Planning Branch. Tracking progress towards meeting *YROP-2010* policy targets and objectives will also reveal emerging issues and trends which will inform the next review of the *YROP-2010*.

Indicators were refined through consultation with Regional departments and local municipalities.

In the summer and fall of 2013, Long Range Planning staff consulted with staff from local municipalities and Regional staff from Economic Strategy, Environmental Services, Transportation and Community Planning and Community and Health Services on the proposed set of indicators. Based on these discussions and further examination of potential data sources and measures, the proposed set of indicators was refined. *Table 1* lists the final set of indicators by major theme in the *YROP-2010*.

Table 1
 YROP-2010 Monitoring Indicators

Indicator by ROP Theme	Description
Chapter 2 - Sustainable Natural Environment	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tree and shrub plantings • Environmental land protection and preservation • Woodland cover 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual number of trees and shrubs planted through Greening Strategy initiatives • Area of environmental lands protected by the Region • Percentage of woodland cover in the Region
Chapter 3 - Healthy Communities	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing mix • Housing supply • Affordable housing • New non-profit housing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing mix of new housing completions in the Region in 2004-2008 and 2009-2013 • Ability of the Regional housing supply to meet the YROP-2010 policy requirements • Minimum 25% of new housing units be affordable • Minimum 35% of new housing units in Regional Centres and Key Development Areas be affordable • Construction of new non-profit housing
Chapter 4 – Economic Vitality	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Live/work ratio • Activity rate • Employment land conversion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percent of the Region’s labour force that both live and work in the Region • Ratio of employment to population • Annual area of employment land converted to non-employment uses
Chapter 5 – An Urbanizing Region: Building Cities and Complete Communities	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Population and employment forecasts • Designated Greenfield Area density • Sustainable buildings • Residential intensification • Development activity in Regional Centres and Corridors • Density of development in Regional Centres 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comparison of actual and forecast population and employment • Density (people and jobs per hectare) for a sample of communities in the Designated Greenfield Area • Annual number of LEED® silver, gold and platinum certified projects in York Region • Annual share of residential building permits within the built-up area in the Region • Existing, under construction and proposed development resulting in population and employment in the Regional Centres and Corridors • Floor Space Index (FSI) for a sample of buildings in the Regional Centres

Indicator by ROP Theme	Description
Chapter 6 – Agricultural and Rural Areas	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area farmed • Gross farm receipts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change in land area being farmed in the Region • Annual gross farm receipts
Chapter 7 – Servicing Our Population	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modal split • Wastewater inflow and infiltration • Water conservation • Waste diversion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage of total daily trips taken using transit, cycling and walking • Inflow and infiltration in Regional and local wastewater systems • Annual water consumption • Annual level of waste diversion from landfill

Indicator results show that York Region is on track for meeting most YROP-2010 policy targets and objectives

Data for the above indicators was collected and analyzed to assess the achievement of YROP-2010 policy targets and objectives. *Attachment 1* provides the detailed analysis of the indicators. The indicator results are summarized by major YROP-2010 theme below. A number of the indicators cannot be reported out on at this time as the work required to produce the indicator results is in progress (i.e. the Housing Supply indicator and the Affordable Housing indicator related to Regional Centres and Key Development Areas).

York Region’s natural environment continues to be enhanced through Greening Strategy initiatives

York Region’s rich natural environment plays an important role in the Region’s ecology and biodiversity. It also contributes to maintaining a high quality of life for the Region’s residents, employees and visitors. The YROP-2010 includes policies to identify, protect and enhance a Regional Greenlands System which preserves the Region’s natural heritage and hydrological features. The Regional Greening Strategy is one of the key mechanisms for protecting and enhancing the Regional Greenlands System. York Region has been successful in enhancing its natural environment as shown by the following results:

- The Regional Greenlands System continues to be enhanced through protection of environmental land (over 300 hectares since 2009) and the planting of trees and shrubs (over 400,000 trees and shrubs since 2009).
- The percentage of woodland cover was measured at 22.5% in 2009 with a preliminary estimate of 22.8% for 2012. The YROP-2010 target for woodland cover is 25%. Assessment of the Region’s forest cover indicates that there has been an increase of 569 hectares of forest since 2009.

Diversification of York Region's Housing Stock is contributing to enhancing healthy communities

Healthy communities offer affordable housing choices, access to transit, a range of quality human services, schools, public spaces and local amenities. Provision of a full mix and range of housing including affordable housing contributes to maintaining the Region's quality of life and a strong economy. The indicators developed for the *YROP-2010* policies on Healthy Communities relate to the provision of housing.

The following points summarize the indicator results for Healthy Communities:

- While the Region's existing housing stock has a large share in singles (66% as of year-end 2013), recent years have seen a shift in the share of new housing built towards medium and high density forms. From 2004 to 2008, apartments and rows were 32% of new housing completions in the Region, while in the most recent 5-year period, from 2009 to 2013, this share increased to 38%.
- Draft Implementation Guidelines for monitoring affordable housing targets were recently developed by Long Range Planning staff and are the subject of a separate staff report submitted to Committee of the Whole and Council in June 2014, titled "Draft Affordable Housing Implementation Guidelines", dated May 28, 2014. Based on an analysis of 2013 housing data in that report, it is estimated that approximately 40 percent of new housing units in the Region in 2013 were below the maximum affordable threshold. While the overall affordability target is being met for the Region, only 18 percent of new ground-related units were below the maximum affordable threshold and the location and type of units varies. .
- Over 500 housing units have been added to the Region's Social Housing Portfolio over the past 4 years.
- The Region's housing supply for both ground-related units and high density housing is being assessed as part of the recently commenced Regional MCR.

In the next round of *YROP-2010* monitoring, new Healthy Community indicators may be considered to measure progress towards achieving complete communities for Regional Centres and Corridors and New Communities. These indicators will potentially examine the range and types of public facilities, land use mix and other related types of data and information to measure the achievement of complete communities.

York Region's economy continues to show strong growth

York Region is fortunate to have a strong employment base that supports the Region's economy and provides job opportunities for residents. The *YROP-2010* policies related to economic vitality aim to foster a competitive and flexible economic environment that encourages investment and provides a range of employment opportunities.

The Region's live/work ratio measures the share of residents that both live and work in the Region. The ratio of employment to population (activity rate) tracks whether the Region continues to be a balanced community with sufficient employment opportunities for its residents. The Region's employment land base is a limited resource that provides locations for many businesses and significant employers in the Region. Minimizing conversions of employment land to other uses protects future economic growth opportunities. The following is a summary of the results from the economic development themed indicators:

- The proportion of residents who both live and work in the Region has increased slightly from 54.1% in 2001 to 55.4% in 2011 demonstrating a slight improvement in the match between labour force skills and employment opportunities in the Region.
- York Region's activity rate declined slightly after the economic recession in 2008-2009 but has been increasing over the past three years and currently stands at just one percent below the *YROP-2010* target of 50%.
- Conversions of employment land to non-employment uses have totalled 105 net hectares from 2005 to 2013. Pressures to convert employment lands to non-employment uses are anticipated to continue in the coming years.

Development in the Region's Centres is progressing and new and more compact sustainable communities are being developed

York Region is forecast to grow to a population of 1.5 million and 780,000 jobs by 2031. The policies in Chapter 5 of the *YROP-2010* establish the urban structure and policy framework for planning for growth in a sustainable way. New growth is to be accommodated in the Region's Centres and Corridors and other intensification areas as well as in more compact greenfield communities. The *YROP-2010* also encourages the development of more sustainable communities through incorporating green building technologies. A number of the indicators in this section relate to intensification and density policy targets in the Provincial Growth Plan. The following is a summary of the indicator results:

- York Region's population growth is on track with the current forecast in the *YROP-2010*; employment levels are lagging behind the forecast due to slower growth resulting from the 2008-2009 economic recession.
- Many of York Region's residential Designated Greenfield Areas (DGA) are close to achieving the target Growth Plan density of 50 residents and jobs combined per developable hectare. A sample of DGA communities has an average total density of approximately 46 people and jobs per hectare.
- York Region is seeing an increasing number of sustainable projects built to LEED® silver, gold and platinum certification standards.
- Intensification levels are approaching the 40% target level that is required by both the *YROP-2010* and the Provincial Growth Plan by 2015. In 2013, row and apartment

- unit building permits within the Built-Up Area comprised approximately 40% of the total residential building permits issued in the Region, based on a preliminary analysis of building permit data.
- Regional Centres are seeing increased levels of development activity and applications for new projects which are expected to increase in the coming years, especially with a number of new transit investments scheduled for completion. Markham Centre has seen the largest amount of development activity among the four Regional Centres. Further reporting on Regional Centres and Corridors has been submitted to Committee of the Whole and Council in June 2014 through the report titled “Regional Centres and Corridors Program Update”, dated May 28, 2014.
 - Development densities in the Regional Centres are meeting *YROP-2010* targets with many high density residential projects in Markham Centre and Richmond Hill Centre exceeding the 2.5 Floor Space Index density target.

York Region’s agricultural sector remains an important part of the Region

Agricultural and rural areas support the Region’s agricultural sector and enhance the Region’s economy and quality of life. Agriculture in York Region is known for the Holland Marsh, a designated Specialty Crop Area under the Provincial Greenbelt Plan, in addition to other market gardening areas. The overarching goal of Chapter 6 of the *YROP-2010* is to protect the Agriculture, Rural and Holland Marsh Specialty Crop Areas and support the agricultural industry as essential components of the Regional fabric.

- As the Region continues to experience growth in both population and employment, additional agricultural land may be converted to urban uses. This trend is reflected in the decline in the total area farmed in the Region as reported in the Census from approximately 71,200 hectares in 2001 to 62,100 hectares in 2011. Despite this trend, the value of gross farm receipts (adjusted for inflation) has increased by approximately \$34 million over this same period, illustrating the continued strength of the York Region agriculture industry.

York Region service and infrastructure provision is supporting sustainable communities

York Region provides a range of key services and infrastructure to its residents and businesses including transit, streets, water, wastewater, waste management and others that are needed to support the existing population and businesses as well as future growth. They also need to be provided in a sustainable manner. The *YROP-2010* indicators address transportation, water conservation, wastewater servicing and waste management.

- The share of trips taken by public transit has increased from 9.5% in 2006 to 9.9% in 2011. Transit ridership has also increased during this period, from 18 million annual revenue riders in 2009 to over 22 million in 2013.

- Over the past 3 years, York Region has continued to make progress in reducing inflow and infiltration. Since implementation of the Inflow and Infiltration Reduction Strategy in 2011, an overall 7.2 million litres of flow reduction over a 24-hour period under a 25-year storm event have been achieved. Of this total, 7.02 million litres is attributed to the York-Durham Sewage System which represents approximately 17% of the Strategy's target reduction by 2031.
- York Region's water consumption per capita continues to steadily decline as a result of water conservation programs; from 220 litres per capita per day in 2010 to 205 in 2013.
- The amount of waste diverted from landfill has increased from 75% in 2009 to 87% in 2013. The target for 2016 is to achieve over 90% diversion from landfill.

The Province is undertaking a Growth Plan monitoring program

The Province recently released preliminary performance indicators to monitor progress towards meeting policies in the Provincial *Growth Plan*. York Region comments on these draft indicators are the subject of a separate report before Committee of the Whole and Council in June 2014, titled Review of the Province's Preliminary Performance Indicators for the *Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2006*, dated May 28, 2014. Regional staff will work with Provincial staff as needed to develop commonly accepted methods for monitoring key Growth Plan policies.

Link to key Council-approved plans

The *YROP-2010* monitoring program implements Section 8.2 of the *YROP-2010* which requires the development of indicators to measure success of the Plan, regular monitoring reports and comprehensive reviews of York Regions Official Plan. In addition, the *YROP-2010* monitoring and indicators complement the *2011 to 2015 Strategic Plan* indicators of success.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Monitoring of the *YROP-2010* policies was conducted within the current allocated budgets of the various Regional departments that are involved in developing, tracking and reporting on performance indicators. It is not anticipated that there will be additional costs associated with data or other information that support indicator reporting.

6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

Effective monitoring of the *YROP-2010* allows the Region to track progress towards policy objectives and targets and helps ensure that the *YROP-2010* policies are having the desired impacts on the Region's natural environment, economy, development of healthy communities, city building and infrastructure and service provision. Local municipalities will in turn benefit from the successful implementation of the *YROP-2010* policies. The Region consulted with local municipal staff as part of developing the monitoring indicators.

7. CONCLUSION

Ongoing monitoring of the *YROP-2010* is needed to assess the effectiveness of policies in the Plan, identify emerging trends and issues and will inform future reviews of the *YROP-2010* and provide the basis for adjustments and updates where required. This report provides a summary of the results of the first Regional Official Plan monitoring exercise. A more detailed monitoring report is attached providing the indicator results. Overall, the indicator results show that the Region is on track for meeting most of the *YROP-2010* policy objectives that are being monitored.

For more information on this report, please contact Paul Bottomley, Manager, Policy, Research and Forecasting at 905-830-4444, Ext. 71530 or Valerie Shuttleworth, Director, Long Range Planning at Ext. 71525.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.

Attachments (1)

Monitoring *the* York Region Official Plan



June 2014

INTRODUCTION

The *York Region Official Plan - 2010 (YROP-2010)* was approved by the Province with modifications in September 2010. The *YROP-2010* provides policy guidance on land use planning matters and is structured under the three major themes of:

1. Sustainable natural environment;
2. Healthy communities; and,
3. Economic vitality.

In addition, the *YROP-2010* provides growth management policies on city building, complete communities, agricultural and rural areas and on infrastructure and service provision. Together with *Vision 2051*, the *YROP-2010* is one of the Region's key long range plans that collectively guide the Strategic Plan and individual departmental business plans and budgets.

TRACKING OUR PROGRESS

A key part of *YROP-2010* implementation is monitoring progress towards meeting its policy targets and objectives. Monitoring assists in measuring the success of the policies in the *YROP-2010* and in tracking progress towards meeting specific targets. Monitoring also helps to identify emerging trends and related issues that could affect *YROP-2010* policies and will also inform Regional Official Plan (ROP) reviews.

Long Range Planning staff consulted with staff from various departments in the Region and local municipalities to finalize a list of indicators to monitor and report on. Over time, it is expected that the list of indicators will be further developed and expanded to include additional measures such as indicators to measure complete communities in Regional Centres and in New Community Areas.

PRINCIPLES FOR DEVELOPING INDICATORS

Five principles were used to develop the *YROP-2010* monitoring indicators. The ROP indicators are to be:

1. **Outcome-based**—the indicator measures whether a *YROP-2010* policy is achieving the desired objective(s)
2. **Measurable**—the indicator can be measured and where possible, is quantifiable
3. **Can be measured on an ongoing basis**—data for the indicator is available at a reasonable cost and is expected to continue to be available
4. **Directly linked to *YROP-2010* policies**—the indicator relates to factors that *YROP-2010* policies can affect; the focus is on areas where the Region can affect change
5. **Simple**—the indicators are easily understood by a wide audience

TIMING OF NEXT REPORTING OUT ON INDICATORS

This is the first report on *YROP-2010* indicators. Given the various data sources relied upon to track the progress of selected indicators, it is difficult to establish a regular timeframe for future reporting for all indicators. Some of the indicator data is only available through the Census (which is conducted every five years), while other indicators can be monitored on an annual basis. Where possible, indicators that can be reported on an annual basis will be done so through York Region's annual *Growth and Development Review (GDR)* report. Other departments within the Region will also likely be reporting on their own specific targets at various times. It is anticipated that the next full reporting on ROP indicators will occur just before the next five-year review of the ROP.

CHAPTER 2: A SUSTAINABLE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

York Region is rich in natural features that provide habitat for a variety of species that play an important role in the Region’s ecology and native biodiversity. The natural environment influences and shapes the Region’s history and structure and contributes to the Regional identity and a healthy sustainable community. The indicators below measure how the Region is contributing to a linked greenlands system.

Sustainable Natural Environment Goal: To protect and enhance the natural environment for current and future generations so that it will sustain life, maintain health and provide an improved quality of life.



Indicator: Tree and Shrub Plantings

Description: Number of trees and shrubs planted per year through Greening Strategy initiatives

ROP Policy 2.1.8: That enhancements to greenlands systems shall be the responsibility of all stakeholders and may include: Regional and local greening initiatives, public and private sector partnerships, infrastructure projects and urban development to achieve ecological gains for the systems.

Source of Data: Regional Greening Strategy, York Region

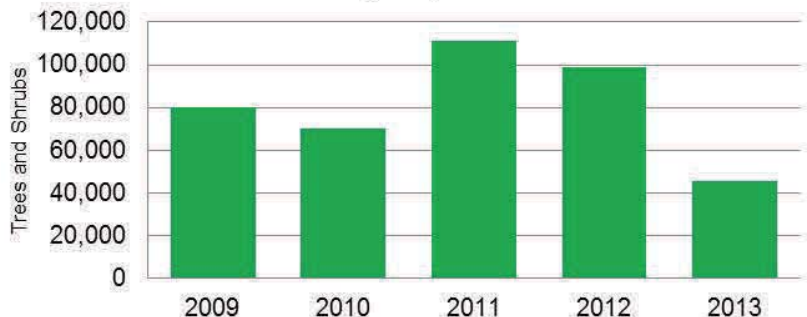
Why this is important: Tree and shrub planting is a key part of the Region’s Greening Strategy which contributes to strengthening the Region’s Greenlands System. A connected system of environmental features and linkages provided by the Regional Greenlands System is essential in preserving the Region’s key natural heritage and hydrologic features. In addition, the Provincial Policy Statement, 2014 states that green infrastructure should be promoted to complement infrastructure.

Results

In total, well over 400,000 trees and shrubs have been planted in the Region since 2009.

Since 2009, annual plantings have ranged from approximately 46,000 to over 110,000. These totals do not include tree plantings associated with infrastructure projects.

Number of Trees and Shrubs Planted, York Region, 2009-13



Indicator : Environmental Land Protection and Preservation

Description: Area (hectares) of environmental lands protected and preserved through the Regional Greening Strategy

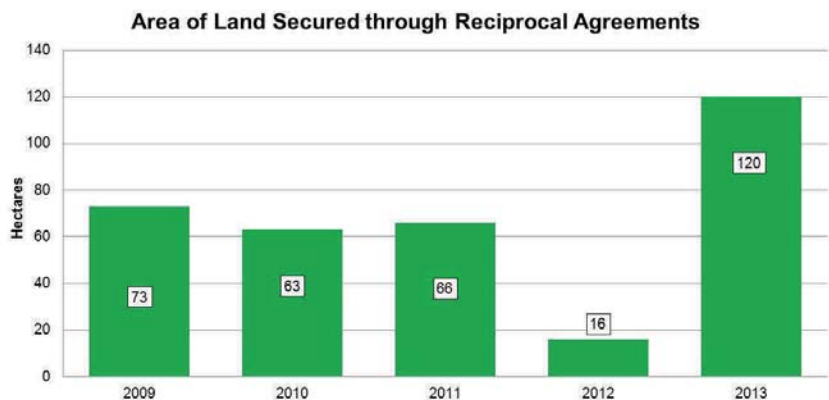
ROP Policy 2.1.14: To undertake land securement, with partners, focused primarily within the Regional Greenlands System. Land securement can include conservation easements, donations, or land purchases, education and stewardship promotion.

Source of Data: Regional Greening Strategy, York Region

Why this is important: Securing additional environmental lands contributes to strengthening the Region's Greenlands system. A healthy and connected system of features and linkages is essential to preserve the Region's natural heritage and biodiversity.

Results

Since 2009, York Region has protected and enhanced over 300 hectares of environmental lands through various methods including donations, purchases and conservation easements. During this time, the annual area of land secured has ranged from 16 to 120 hectares. Approximately 61% of the protected lands were a direct result of long-standing partnerships.



Indicator: Woodland Cover

Description: Percentage of forest cover in York Region

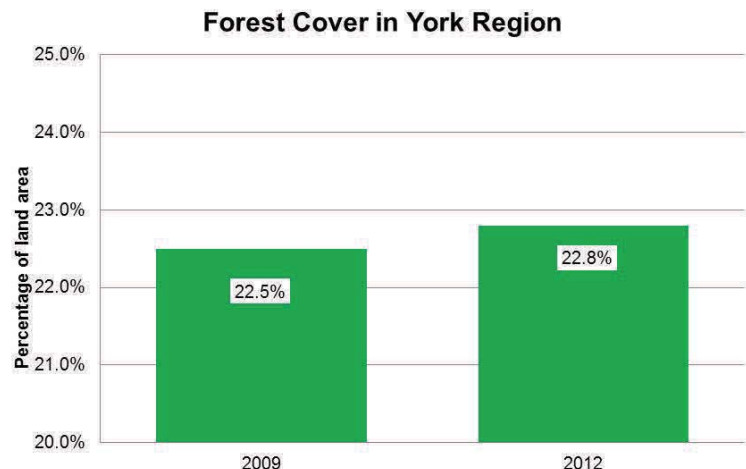
ROP Policy 2.2.43: To increase the woodland cover to a minimum of 25% of the Region's total land area.

Source of Data: York Region Forestry Branch

Why this is important: Woodlands provide a variety of important environmental, social and economic benefits including clean air and water, erosion prevention, water retention, provision of wildlife habitat, recreation and the sustainable harvest of woodland products.

Results

The ROP woodland cover target is a minimum of 25% of the Region's total land area. This indicator was measured to be 22.5% in 2009. A 2012 interim assessment indicates that forest cover has increased to 22.8% or 40,533 ha in the Region. This increase can be attributed to reforestation efforts. Impacts from invasive species and losses from the December 2013 ice storm provide challenges to further increases in woodland cover.



CHAPTER 3: HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

Healthy communities are places where people can live, work, play and learn in an accessible and safe environment. Communities that provide a strong sense of belonging and identity contribute to a high quality of life, health and well-being. Healthy communities offer affordable housing choices and access to transit, a range of quality human services, schools, public spaces, and local amenities. As York Region continues to grow there is a unique opportunity to create healthier, more sustainable and, compact communities.

Healthy Communities Goal: To improve the health and well-being of residents and workers in the Region by planning and developing sustainable active communities.



Indicator: Housing Mix

Description: Housing mix of new housing in York Region by five-year period

ROP Policy 3.5: To promote an appropriate mix and range of acceptable housing to meet the needs of residents and workers.

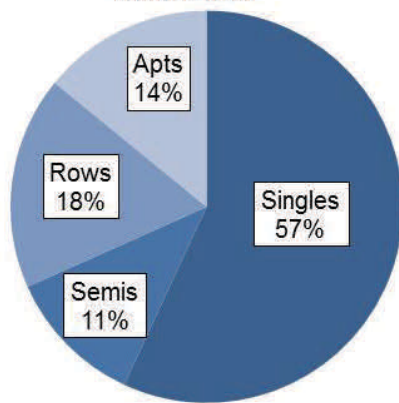
Source of Data: Housing completions, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC)

Why this is important: The Region's existing housing stock is heavily weighted to lower density forms of housing. As of year end 2013, nearly 66% of the Region's total housing stock comprised single detached units. In order to accommodate the increasing diversification of York Region's households, meet intensification targets and address housing affordability issues, the housing mix in the Region needs to shift to higher density forms of housing. New construction of high density housing forms will contribute to diversifying the Region's existing housing stock.

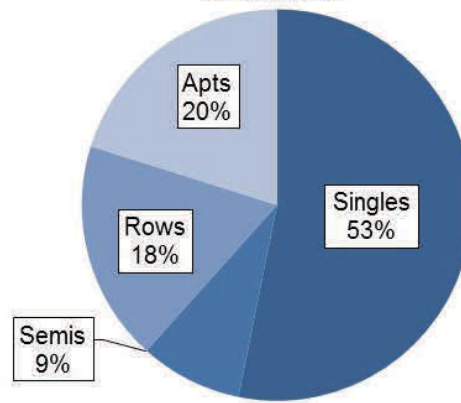
Results

There has been a clear shift in the development of new housing in York Region – in the mid 2000's, medium and high density housing accounted for 32% share of the total units completed in the Region while in the most recent period from 2009 to 2013, medium and high density housing forms has risen to a 38% share.

Housing Completions by Dwelling Type, 2004-2008



Housing Completions by Dwelling Type, 2009-2013



Indicator: Housing Supply

Description: Number of years supply of land for housing in the Region and number of years supply in registered and draft approved units.

ROP Policy 3.5.3: To ensure an adequate region-wide supply of housing by:

- maintaining a minimum 10-year supply of land designated for housing through intensification and redevelopment and in designated greenfield areas; and,
- maintaining a 3 to 7 year supply of registered and draft approved plans of subdivision, condominium plans and/or site plans.

Why this is important: Providing an adequate supply of land for housing allows for adequate choice for new housing and also contributes to providing more affordable housing options. A 10 year supply of housing across the Region is required by both the *YROP-2010* and the *Provincial Policy Statement, 2014*.

Results

A comprehensive Region-wide residential inventory is being undertaken as part of the recently commenced Regional Municipal Comprehensive Review. It is anticipated that a staff report on housing supply in the Region will be completed in early 2015.

Indicator: Affordable Housing

Description: Share of new units in the Region that meet the Region's affordability threshold

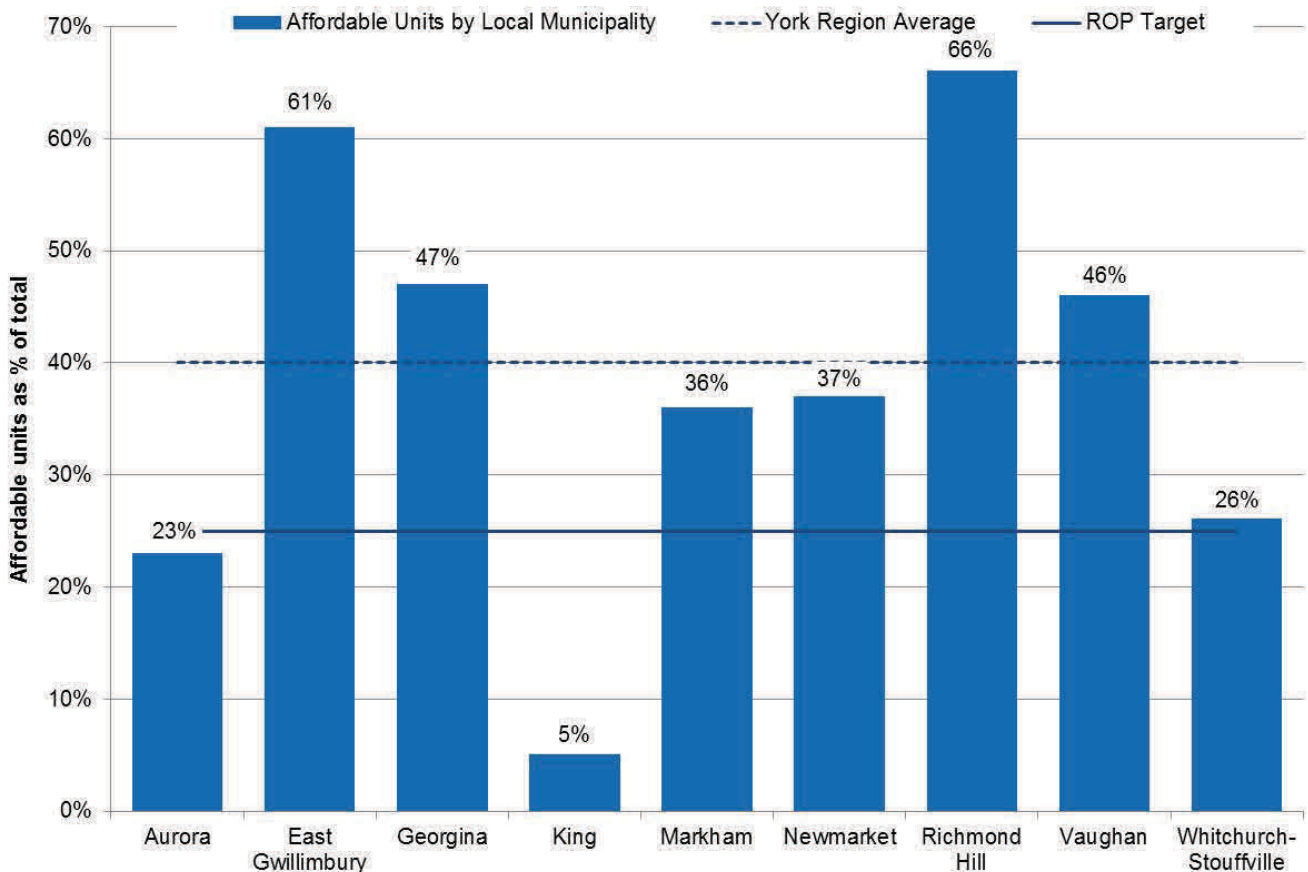
ROP Policies 3.5.6 & 3.5.7: That a minimum 25% of new housing units across the Region be affordable, be distributed within each local municipality and should be coordinated across applicable local planning areas including secondary plan and block plan areas. A portion of these units should be accessible for people with disabilities. Affordable housing units should include a mix and range of types, lot sizes, functions and tenures to provide opportunity for all household types, including larger families, seniors and residents with special needs.

That in addition to policy 3.5.6, a minimum of 35% of new housing units in Regional Centres and key development areas be affordable, offering a range of affordability for low and moderate income households.

Why this is important: A full range and mix of housing options, including affordable options, needs to be available to the Region's residents and workers. The Provincial Policy Statement, 2014 directs the establishment of minimum affordable housing targets. The Provincial Growth Plan reiterates the requirement that affordable housing targets be established and implemented.

Results

Draft Affordable Housing Implementation Guidelines for establishing affordable housing thresholds, securing affordable housing commitments and monitoring progress towards achieving affordable housing targets were recently developed by the Region. That report provides an initial analysis of new affordable housing units by local municipality. Once the Guidelines are finalized, the Region will report on progress towards YROP-2010 affordable housing targets on an annual basis through the year-end *Growth and Development Review* report. The results of a preliminary analysis indicate that 40% of new units in 2013 in the Region were below the maximum affordable threshold. Achievement of affordability ranged from five percent in King to 66% of new units in Richmond Hill. While the overall affordability target is being met for the Region, only 18% of new ground-related housing units were below the maximum affordable threshold.



Indicator: New Non-Profit Housing

Description: Total number of rental units in the York Region social housing portfolio

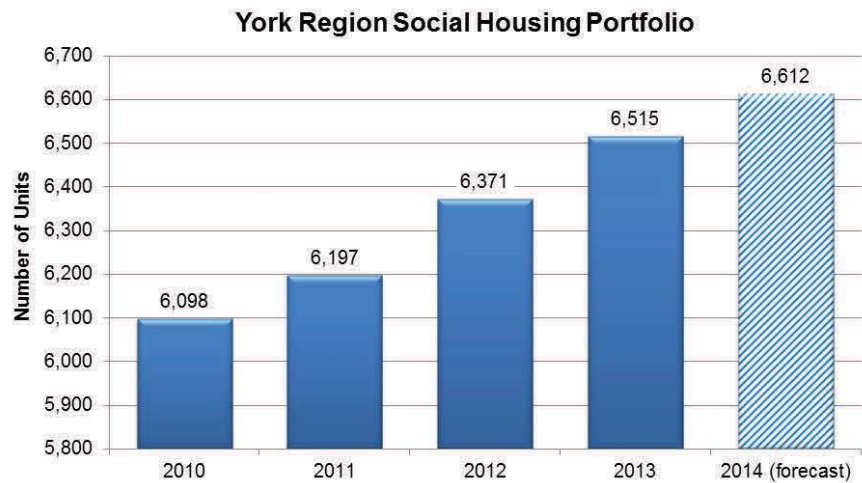
ROP Policy 3.5.13: To encourage the construction of new non-profit housing.

Source of Data: York Region Community and Health Services

Why this is important: Social housing and Affordable Housing Program units provide affordable housing options to people whose income, age, social or health needs prevent them from attaining adequate housing in the private market. These units form the majority of units that are used to deliver housing assistance.

Results

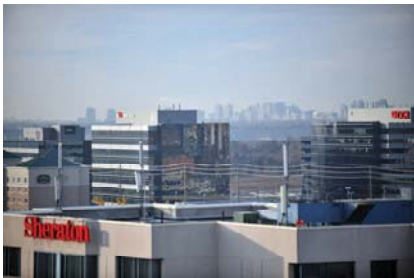
Over the past 4 years, the units in the Social Housing Portfolio in the Region have increased from 6,098 units to 6,515 units in 2013. Based on projects under development, 6,612 units are projected for 2014.



CHAPTER 4: ECONOMIC VITALITY

A strong and stable economy is essential to a healthy and prosperous Region. Strengthening the links between the natural environment, healthy communities and the economy is required to improve the overall well-being of York Region's residents and businesses in a sustainable manner.

Economic Vitality Goal: To create a competitive and flexible economic environment that encourages investment and a diversity of employment opportunities.



Indicator: Live/Work Ratio

Description: York Region live/work ratio

ROP Policy 4.1: To encourage and accommodate economic activities that diversify and strengthen the Region's economic base, employment opportunities for residents and competitive advantage for its businesses.

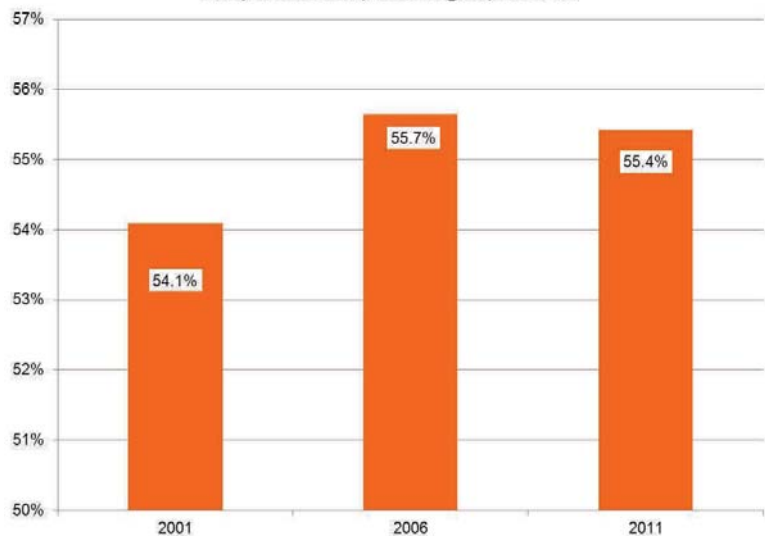
Source of Data: Statistics Canada, 2001 and 2006 Census and 2011 National Household Survey

Why this is important: The live/work ratio measures the percent of York Region's labour force that both live and work in York Region. A strong live/work ratio has a number of positive implications on transportation and the economy. Shorter commute times, less traffic congestion on roads, will improve the quality of life and strengthen the York Region economy.

Results

York Region's live/work ratio of 55.4% (excluding those with no fixed place of work) in 2011 is slightly lower than the estimate for 2006 but higher than the estimate for 2001. The live/work ratio can be improved by creating jobs in the Region that match the skill sets of its residents. Providing affordable housing options is also critical in attracting and retaining both businesses and residents in the Region, thereby contributing to the improvement of the live/work ratio in the Region.

Live/Work Ratio, York Region, 2001-11



Indicator: Activity Rate

Description: York Region activity rate—ratio of employment to population

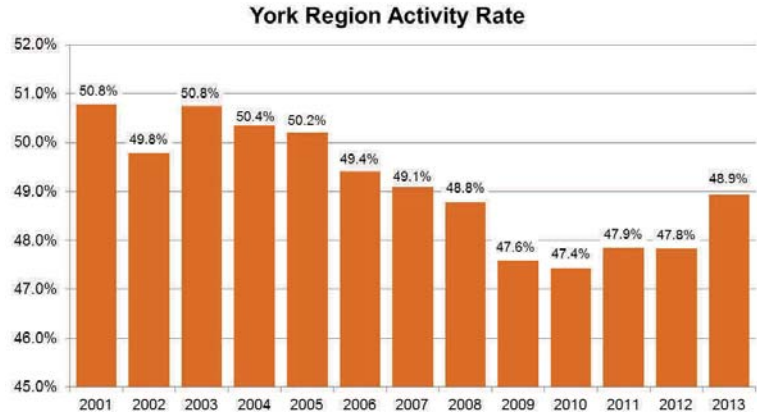
ROP Policy 4.1.2: To create high-quality employment opportunities for residents with the goal of 1 job for every 2 residents.

Source of Data: York Region monthly population estimates, Statistics Canada, Census of Population, and York Region Employment Survey

Why this is important: Providing sufficient high quality employment opportunities in the Region contributes to reducing traffic congestion, shorter commute times and improves the quality of life for residents. The goal of providing 1 job for every 2 residents is derived from the objective of providing job opportunities for every member of York Region's workforce (which is estimated at 50% of the population). An activity rate of 50% equates to providing 1 job for every 2 residents.

Results

York Region's activity rate (ratio of jobs to residents) has declined slightly from 50%, which was last reached in 2005. An activity rate of 50% is consistent with the ROP target. The Region's activity rate declined slightly during the years after the 2008-2009 economic recession as job growth lagged behind population growth but has been increasing since 2012.



Indicator: Employment Land Conversion

Description: Hectares of converted employment land

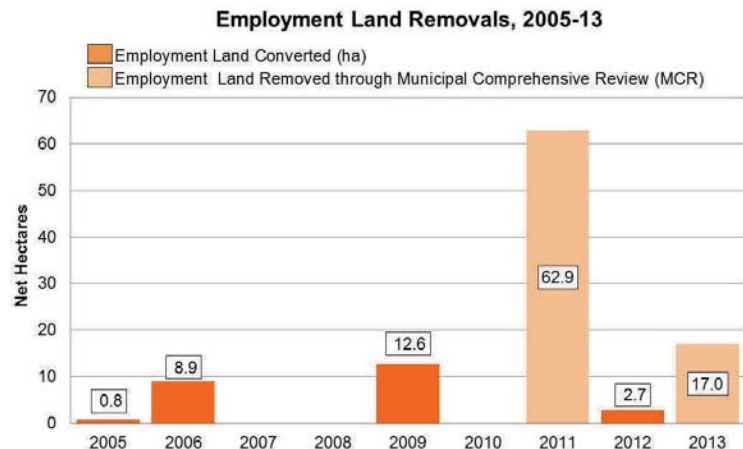
ROP Policy 4.3.2: That a sufficient supply of employment lands based on the applicable municipal comprehensive review will be maintained to accommodate the employment growth forecasts in Table 1 of the York Region Official Plan.

Source of Data: York Region Transportation and Community Planning Branch and Long Range Planning Branch

Why this is important: The York Region employment forecast assumes that a significant share of the Region's employment growth will occur on employment lands. Employment lands typically accommodate industrial, commercial and business uses that benefit from good access to 400 series highways along with ancillary retail and service uses. It is important for the Region to maintain its supply of employment lands since many of the types of uses that occur on employment lands cannot be accommodated in other locations.

Results

Between 2005 and 2013, approximately 25 net hectares have been converted from employment land use to non-employment uses including residential and major retail uses. This does not include lands that were removed from the inventory through local municipal comprehensive reviews. Removals through MCRs accounted for 80 net hectares of employment land between 2011 and 2013. It is anticipated that the pressure to convert employment land uses across the Region will continue.



CHAPTER 5

AN URBANIZING REGION: BUILDING CITIES AND COMPLETE COMMUNITIES

In the next 17 years, York Region will continue to accommodate significant growth. It is anticipated that the Region will reach a population of 1.5 million people and 780,000 jobs by 2031. The Region is committed to plan for this growth in a sustainable way while providing a high quality of life for its residents. The Region's urban structure has evolved and is composed of a series of centres and corridors surrounded by the Urban Area, and a number of rural towns, villages, and hamlets.

An Urbanizing Region Goal: To enhance the Region's urban structure through city building, intensification, and compact and complete communities.

Indicator: Population and Employment Forecasts

Description: York Region population and employment forecasts in comparison to observed Census population and York Region Employment Survey employment

ROP Policy 5.1.11: That forecasts in Table 1 be monitored annually and reviewed at least every 5 years, taking the following into account:

- a) the latest population and employment forecasts for the Region;
- b) the fiscal policies in Section 4.5 of this Plan;
- c) the York Region Water and Wastewater Master Plan;
- d) the York Region 10-Year Capital Plan; and
- e) the pace of growth and shifts in the marketplace.

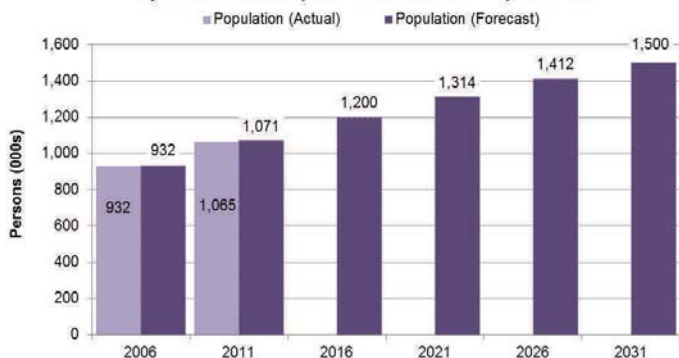
Source of Data: York Region Long Range Planning Branch

Why this is important: Population and employment growth forecasts form the basis for determining urban land needs, infrastructure and service planning and financial planning, including determining development charges. The Region's forecasts are comprehensively reviewed as part of a Regional Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR). The next Regional MCR was recently initiated and will take place over the next 3 years.

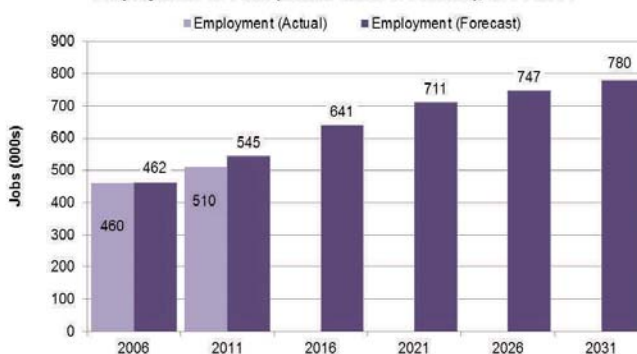
Results

York Region's total population in 2011 is estimated at 1,065,500 (based on 2011 Census, adjusted for the undercount) which is only 0.5% lower than the Region's forecast of 1,071,100. Because of the 2008-2009 economic recession, employment levels are lagging behind the Regional projection. In 2011, York Region's employment was approximately 509,900 while the forecast 2011 employment was 544,600. Strong employment growth in recent years is putting the Region back on track to meet the 2031 employment forecast of 780,000.

Population Growth (Actual and Forecasted), 2006-2031



Employment Growth (Actual and Forecasted), 2006-2031



Indicator: Designated Greenfield Area (DGA) Density

Description: People and jobs combined per developable hectare in selected designated greenfield areas

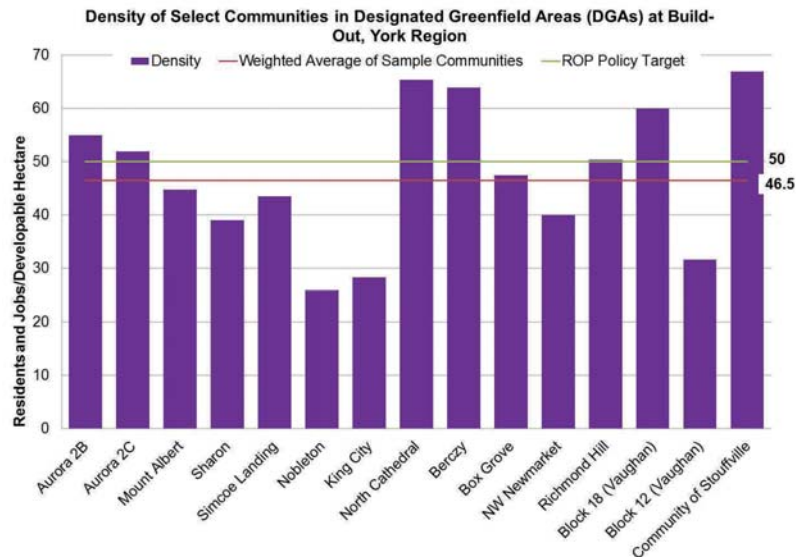
ROP Policy 5.2.14: To require that the designated greenfield area achieve an average minimum density that is not less than 50 residents and jobs combined in the developable area.

Source of Data: York Region Long Range Planning Branch

Why this is important: This policy is a requirement of the Provincial Growth Plan and is meant to promote the development of more compact, efficient and complete communities that are of a sufficient density to support higher level public transit service.

Results

The adjacent graph illustrates Designated Greenfield Area (DGA) densities for a sample of York Region communities. This sample represents approximately 23% of the total forecast units for the DGA from 2006 to 2031 as set out in the York Region land budget. The densities range from 26 to nearly 70 people and jobs per developable hectare. Overall, the total density achieved in these communities is about 46 people and jobs per developable hectare, just below the target of 50. It should be noted that most of these sample developments were planned before the Provincial Growth Plan came into effect.



Indicator: Sustainable Buildings

Description: Annual number of buildings that have achieved LEED® Silver, Gold or Platinum standards

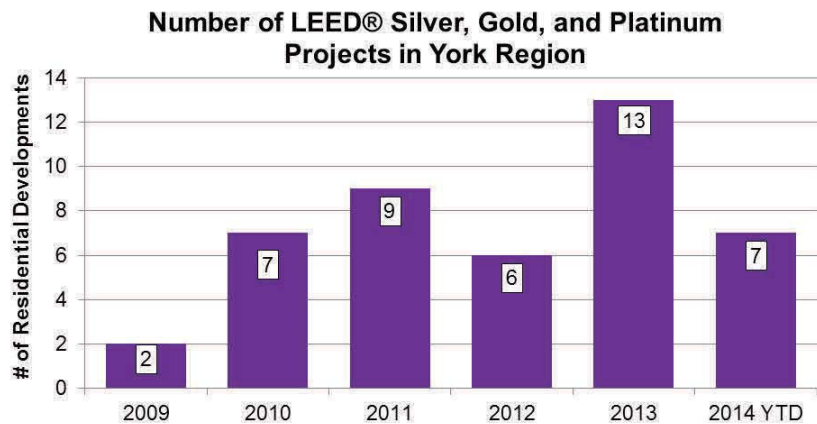
ROP Policy 5.2.24: To encourage that new buildings be designed and certified to the LEED® Silver, Gold or Platinum standards, and to provide complementary incentive programs to achieve the successful implementation of LEED® buildings across York Region.

Source of Data: Canada Green Building Council

Why this is important: Sustainable building standards such as LEED® (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) will help to create more sustainable communities by incorporating green building technologies as well as renewable and alternative energy options.

Results

Since 2009, an average of just over 8 projects per year have been LEED® certified. In 2013, 13 projects were certified Silver, Gold, or Platinum, and it appears that 2014 may see a similar level. The projects include both residential and non-residential developments in different parts of the Region. Since 2008, 7 high density residential projects have signed agreements based on the Region's Sustainable Development through LEED® program.



Note: An additional six projects were LEED® certified during this period.

Indicator: Residential Intensification

Description: Annual percent of row house and apartment units as a share of total housing units built within York Region's built-up area.

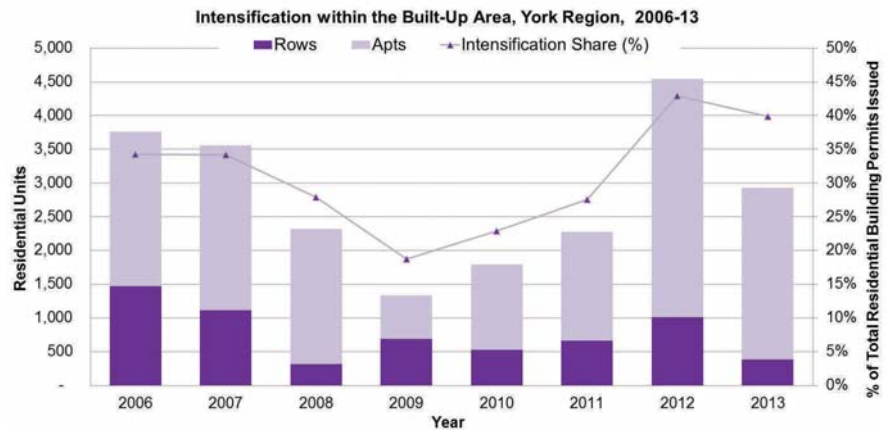
ROP Policy 5.3.1: That by the year 2015 and each year thereafter, a minimum of 40% of all residential development will occur within the built-up area as defined by the Province's Built Boundary in Places to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe

Source of Data: York Region residential building permit data

Why this is important: This ROP policy aligns with the Provincial Growth Plan policy on intensification which sets a target for accommodating growth within existing urban areas as opposed to greenfield locations. Accommodating higher shares of growth through intensification will result in decreased consumption of agricultural land for urban development and better support of investment in public transit and other services.

Results

Based on a preliminary analysis, since 2006, York Region's intensification share within the built-up area has ranged from 19% to 43% which was achieved in 2012. The continuing development of the Region's Centres and Corridors and other intensification areas will contribute to achieving the intensification target.



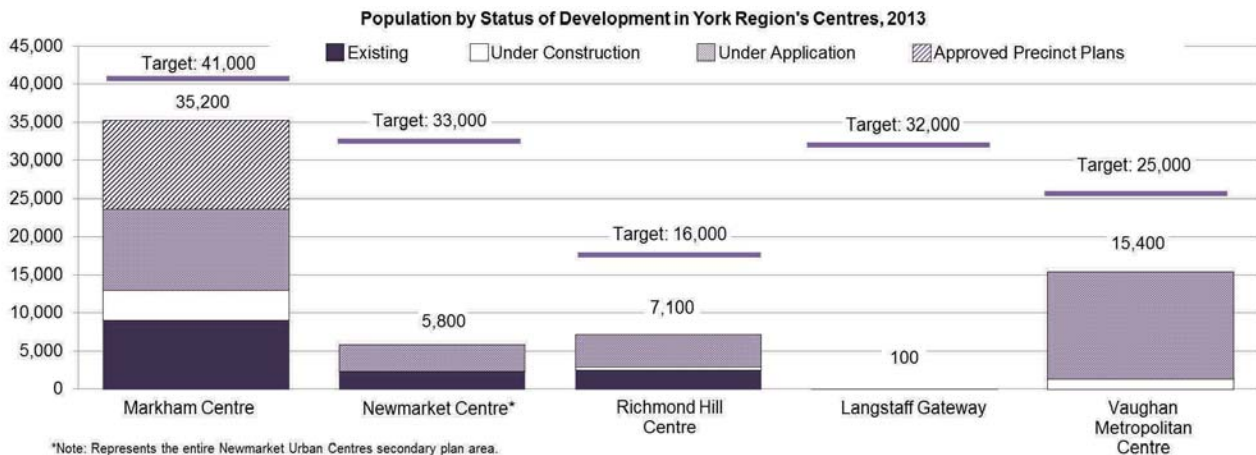
Indicator: Development Activity in Regional Centres and Corridors

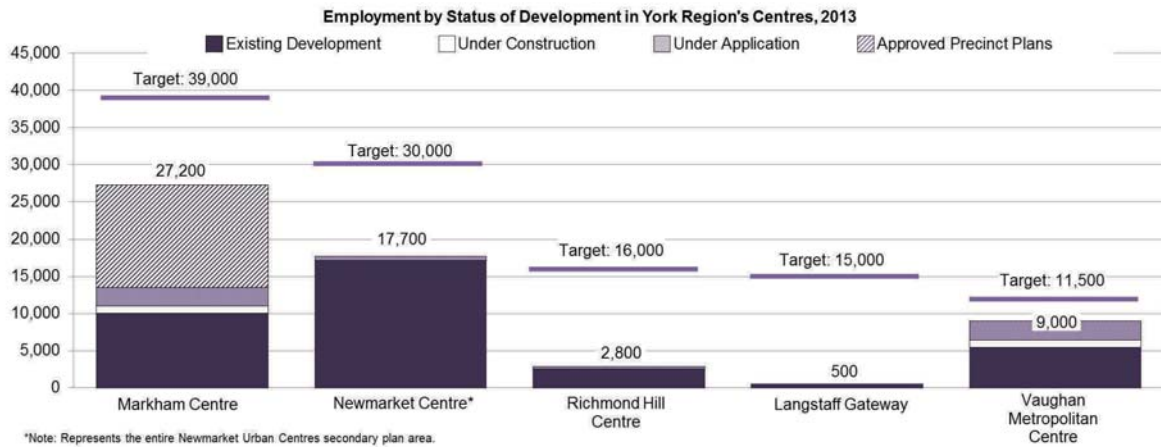
Description: Population and employment from existing, under construction and proposed residential and non-residential development projects in the Regional Centres (Regional Corridors to be reported on in future monitoring)

ROP Policy 5.4.13: To work with local municipalities to regularly monitor and report on planning and development activity within the Regional Centres and Corridors.

Source of Data: York Region Community Planning Branch and local municipal information

Why this is important: Regional Centres are intended to be the primary locations for the most intensive concentrations of development within the Region. They are to be vibrant urban places for living, working, shopping, entertainment, cultural identity and human services. Portions of the Regional Centres are also designated Urban Growth Centres under the Provincial Growth Plan which are to be planned to achieve a density of 200 people and jobs per hectare.





Results

To date, the majority of the development activity in the Regional Centres has been residential but there has been major office and retail development in Markham Centre and a new office building is under construction in VMC. Markham Centre is the most advanced of the Regional Centres, having had a local municipal planning framework in place since the mid 1990s. Active development applications in all four Regional Centres are anticipated to result in new population and employment in the next few years. The completion of the University/Spadina subway line extension, scheduled for completion in 2016 is anticipated to result in increased levels of development interest in the VMC.

Indicator: Density of Development in Regional Centres

Description: Floor space index of sample of buildings in the Regional Centres

ROP Policy 5.4.23: That the Regional Centres contain the highest development densities and the greatest mix of uses in the Region, and shall achieve a minimum density of:

- 2.5 floor space index per development block. This requirement meets and exceeds the Places to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe gross minimum density requirement of 200 residents and jobs combined per hectare; and,
- 3.5 floor space index per development block, at, and adjacent to, the Vaughan Metropolitan Centre Station on the Spadina Subway Extension, and the Langstaff/Longbridge and Richmond Hill stations on the Yonge Subway Extension.

Source of Data: York Region residential building permit data

Why this is important: This policy measures progress towards achieving higher intensity uses in the Regional Centres. The Regional Centres are intended to be the centres of the highest intensity and mix of uses and support higher forms of public transit in the Region. Floor Space Index = total building area divided by site area.

Results

Because the majority of the Regional Centres are at their early stages of development, the indicator examines the site densities achieved for a sample of buildings in the Regional Centres. The results show that all of the sample buildings have achieved a site Floor Space Index higher than 2.5.

Address	Municipality	FSI
8228 Birchmount Road & 1 Uptown Drive	Markham	4.44
111, 131 and 151 Upper Duke Crescent	Markham	4.35
50 Clegg Road and 60 South Town Centre Blvd.	Markham	4.17
55 and 75 South Town Centre Blvd. & 30 and 32 Clegg Road	Markham	4.14
18 and 28 Uptown Drive	Markham	4.12
1 and 21 Upper Duke Crescent	Markham	3.48
11 and 23 Oneida Crescent	Richmond Hill	3.49

CHAPTER 6: AGRICULTURAL AND RURAL AREAS

Agricultural and Rural Areas form 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. Agricultural production is an important part of the Region's economy, providing jobs and agricultural products.

Agricultural and Rural Areas Goal: To protect the Agricultural, Rural, and Holland Marsh Specialty Crop Areas and support the agricultural industry as essential components of the Regional fabric.



Indicator: Area Farmed and Gross Farm Receipts

Description: Area farmed and gross farm receipts (adjusted for inflation)

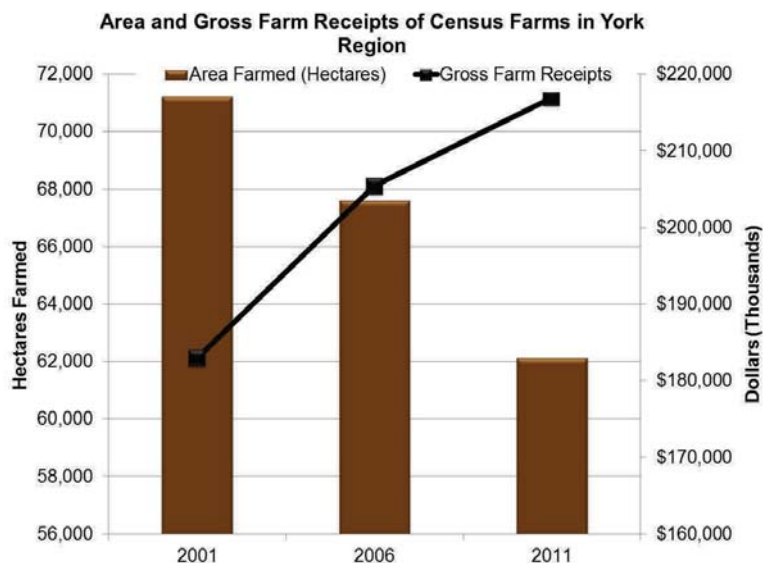
ROP Policy 6.3: To protect Agricultural and Holland Marsh Specialty Crop Areas for the future to ensure a sustainable agricultural industry.

Source of Data: Statistics Canada, Census of Agriculture

Why this is important: The agricultural industry is an important part of the Region's economy, providing both jobs and agricultural products. In 2006, approximately 38% of the Region's land base was devoted to farm activities. Agricultural areas further contribute to the quality of life in the Region by providing recreational, environmental, educational and heritage opportunities. The York Region agricultural industry is known for the Holland Marsh area which is a designated Specialty Crop Area as well as for market gardening areas.

Results

As the Region continues to experience growth in both population and employment, agricultural land has been converted to urban uses which is reflected in the decline in the total area farmed in the Region from 2001 to 2011. In addition, with continued expansion of urban areas in the Region, there will be increasing pressures on farm operations that are in close proximity to urban areas. Despite this trend, the value of gross farm receipts continues to increase over this same period indicating the continued high value of the Holland Marsh Specialty Crop Area and the value of cash crops and other products by other agricultural operations in the Region.



CHAPTER 7: SERVICING OUR POPULATION

York Region is committed to providing state-of-the-art infrastructure and services for both residents and businesses, which are vital to maintaining and improving quality of life and economic competitiveness. Infrastructure and 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.

Servicing Our Population Goal: To provide the services required to support the Region's residents and businesses to 2031 and beyond, in a sustainable manner.

Indicator: Modal Split

Description: Percent of trips by mode of transportation over a 24-hour period for 2006 and 2011

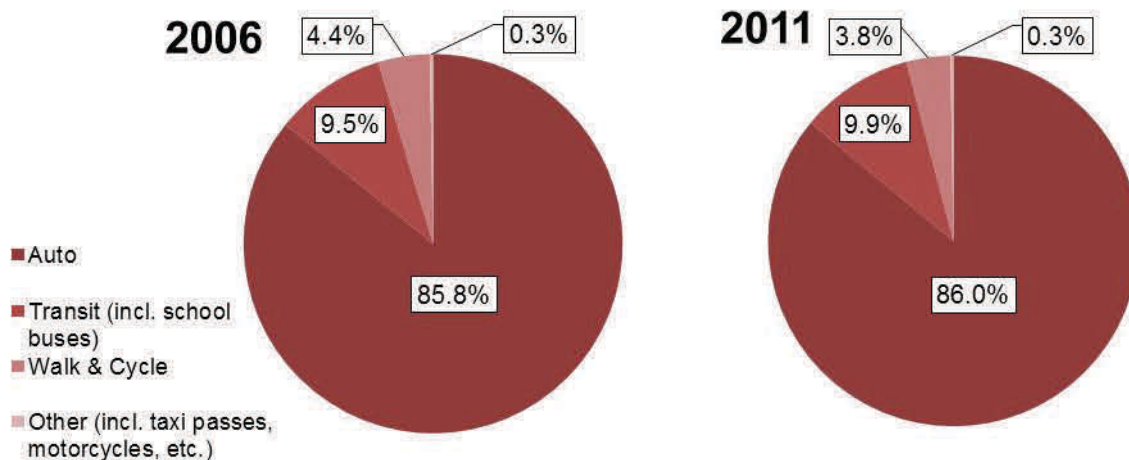
ROP Policy 7.1: To reduce automobile dependence by enhancing opportunities for residents and workers to walk, cycle, take transit, and carpool.

Source of Data: Transportation Tomorrow Survey

Why this is important: Multi-modal transportation choices supports both population and employment growth in the Region, by relieving congestion and improving goods movements along the Region's major road networks. The provision of these transportation options for both residents and workers in York Region also promotes an active lifestyle and overall community well-being and supports sustainability objectives.

Results

Between 2006 and 2011, little has changed in terms of overall automobile dependence by York Region residents. Over 85% of the Region's population aged 16 years and over continue to use the automobile as their primary mode of transportation. That being said, the share of population using public transportation (which include school buses) has increased over the 5-year period, from 9.5% in 2006 to 9.9% in 2011. Annual revenue ridership on York Region Transit (YRT) and VIVA buses have increased to over 22 million trips in 2013 from 18 million trips in 2009. Continued investments in transportation, including the Spadina Subway Extension into York Region, will provide more linkages and multi-modal transportation choices for York Region's residents and workers in the years to come.



Indicator: Wastewater inflow and infiltration

Description: Reduction in inflow and infiltration

ROP Policy 7.3.24: To work with local municipalities to reduce the amount of inflow and infiltration in both local and Regional wastewater systems.

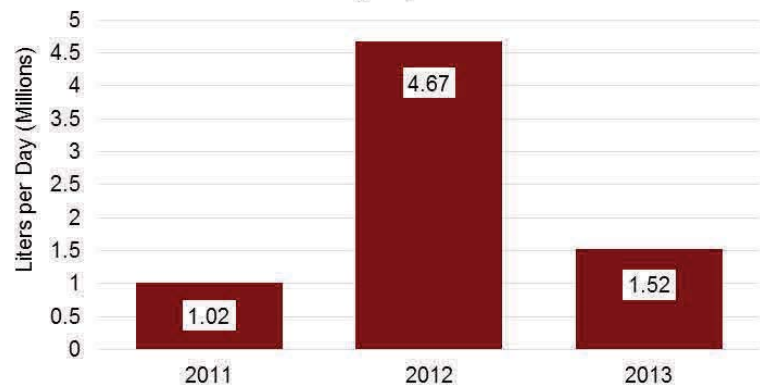
Source of Data: York Region Long Term Water Conservation Strategy and Inflow and Infiltration Reduction Strategy Annual Report

Why this is important: Inflow and infiltration reduce the capacity of the sewage system leaving less capacity for existing residents and future growth. It also makes sewage treatment less efficient and increases infrastructure operating costs. In addition, it may also result in sewage overflows or overwhelm treatment plants leading to health risks and/or property and environmental damage.

Results

Over the past 3 years, inflow and infiltration reduction projects across York Region has continued to make progress in reducing inflow and infiltration. Since implementation of the Inflow and Infiltration Reduction Strategy in 2011, remedial works across the entire Region achieved an overall 7.2 million litres of flow reduction over a 24-hour period under a 25-year storm event. Of the 7.2 million litres of flow reduction, 7.02 million litres is tributary to YDSS. The achieved 7.02 million litres flow reduction in YDSS represents approximately 17% of the Inflow and Infiltration Reduction Strategy's target reduction by 2031.

Reduction in Wastewater Inflow and Infiltration, York Region, 2011-13



Indicator: Water Conservation

Description: Water consumption per capita

ROP Policies 7.1.19 to 7.1.24: To ensure adequate water resources for today's residents and future generations, through conservation and efficiency.

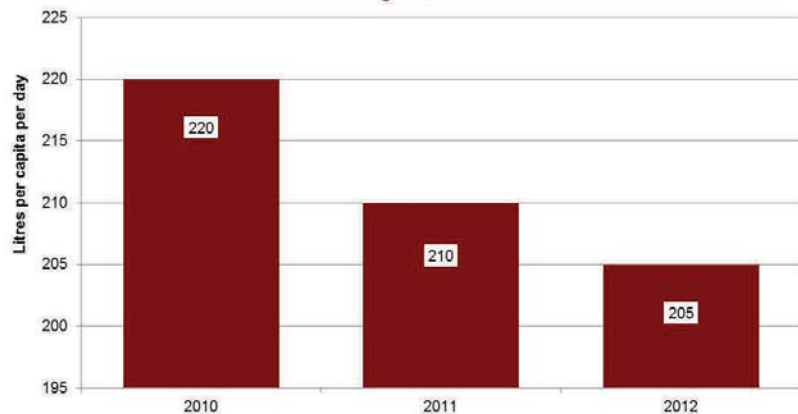
Source of Data: York Region Environmental Services Department

Why this is important: Water conservation contributes to creating more sustainable communities and also leverages capacity available in the existing infrastructure. The Long Term Water Conservation Strategy which was endorsed by Regional Council in 2011 identifies programs to implement the Region's water conservation goals. The YROP-2010 makes reference to promoting water conservation and efficiency.

Results

Residential water consumption per capita has declined from 220 litres per capita per day in 2010 to 205 in 2012. Through York Region's Water for Tomorrow program, a number of initiatives are being undertaken to reduce water consumption including rebates and incentives, education, improved maintenance of water infrastructure systems and others.

Estimated Residential Water Consumption, York Region, 2010-12



Indicator: Waste Diversion

Description: Percentage of solid waste diverted from landfill (including energy-from-waste)

ROP Policy 7.4.2: To surpass waste management regulatory requirements by:

- a) achieving at least 80% diversion from landfill by 2010;
- b) achieving over 90% diversion from landfill by 2016; and,
- c) eliminating the disposal of unprocessed waste in landfill by 2010.

Source of Data: Annual Diversion Report (York Region Solid Waste Management)

Why this is important: Sustainable waste management is a key component of achieving public health and sustainable environment goals. *YROP-2010* policies related to waste management focus on achieving an efficient waste management system that minimizes material entering the waste stream. Waste diversion from landfill is an important element of the Region's waste management planning.

Results

Solid waste diversion from landfill has increased from 75% in 2009 to 87% in 2013. The *YROP-2010* target for 2016 is to achieve over 90% diversion.

**Percent Solid Waste Diverted from Landfill
(Including Energy From Waste)**

