



YORK REGION **DRAFT** OFFICIAL PLAN  
**OPEN HOUSE ONE**  
Engagement Summary Report



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# Introduction

On January 25, 2022, York Region hosted a live, virtual Open House on the [draft York Region Official Plan](#). This Open House was an important part of the process to present the draft Plan, gather feedback, have discussions and answer questions from the public.

We wish to thank all participants for their time, engaging questions and comments. Through this document there are a number of questions and follow-up comments related to a variety of topics. A table of contents and symbols are used throughout to help navigate and differentiate specific questions or feedback from participants, as well as responses from York Region.

Ensuring representation from all areas of a very diverse Region is vital to seeing through the Region Official Plan. Thank you for your input in helping to build strong, caring and safe communities in York Region.

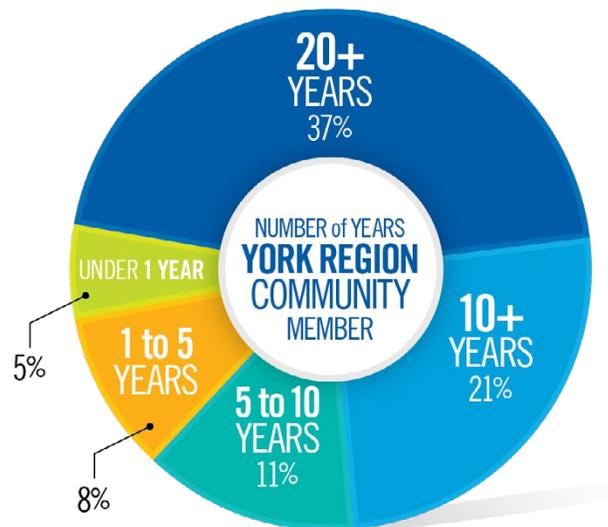
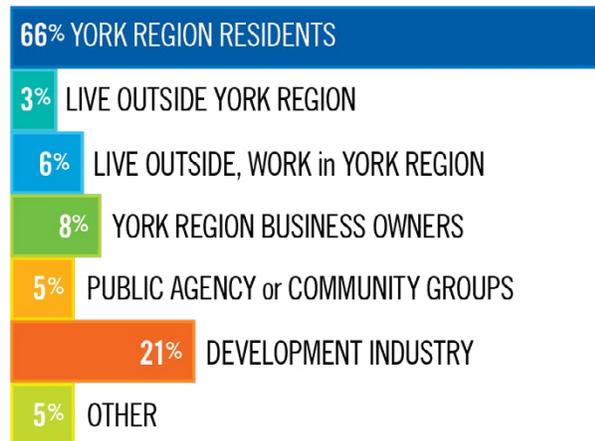


# Who attended?

The following is an overview of participants from the live open house on January 25, 2022. The number of responses does not contain information of all participants with 62% of attendees providing the information below.

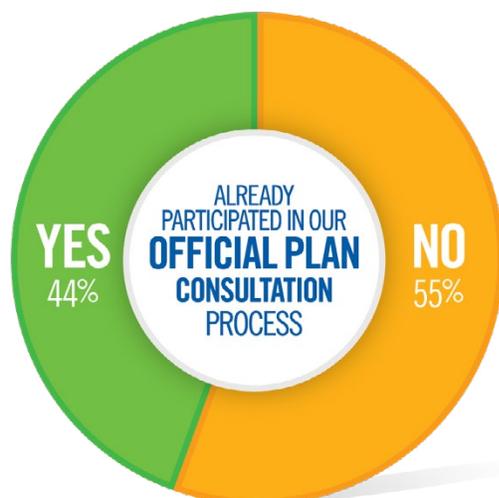
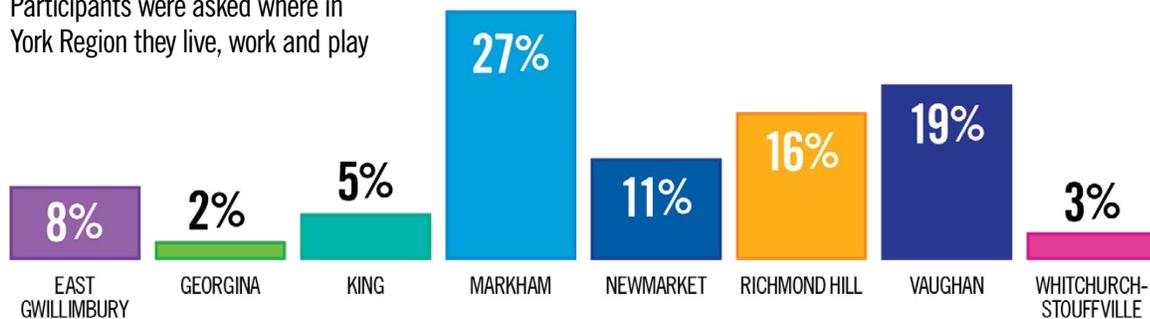
## HOW participants described themselves

Participants were asked to select multiple options



## WHERE participants live, work or spend their time

Participants were asked where in York Region they live, work and play



# Housing discussions



**?** What non-public housing programs have been considered to stimulate creation of needed quality rental housing in existing neighbourhoods?

“ York Region has endorsed Development Charge bylaw deferrals (from three years to 20 years) to stimulate development of purpose built rental housing, and it has been acted on. The upcoming Affordable Private Market Housing Implementation Plan will look to explore more tools as well.

Family-Sized condos would be greatly appreciated.

**?** I appreciate your commitment to affordable housing. Will you be developing an affordable housing strategy and how can we get involved?

“ The Affordable Private Market Housing Implementation Plan and Community Housing Master Plan are currently being worked on. These plans will look at various opportunities for partnerships, advocacy, and addressing delivery of affordable housing in the private and subsidized markets. Public consultation on housing will be forthcoming following the draft York Region Official Plan project, in 2023.

... New developments seem to be either tiny units in high-rises or 3,000 square foot houses.

... Zoning needs to be addressed. We need to scrap exclusionary zoning to allow the missing middle.

... Thumbs up for eliminating exclusionary zoning!

“ The draft York Region Official Plan requires local municipal official plan and zoning bylaws permit a range of housing options, unit sizes, tenure and levels of affordability within each community, including consideration of inclusionary zoning.

... Thumbs up for ending exclusionary zoning. If developers are allowed to build a 4,000 square foot house, why can't they build a 4-unit apartment with 1,000 square foot units?

**?** Is there any plan for below or low-end of market rental housing? York Region's current definition of *affordable* as 125% of average rents still leaves many people without *affordable* (considered affordable according to the Provincial definition) housing. People making \$15-25 per hour cannot afford to pay \$1,600+ in affordable rent.

“ York Region administers and funds subsidized housing giving individuals, families and seniors with low to moderate incomes the opportunity to rent a home at a reduced (subsidized) rent. Additional information on the types of [housing and program supports](#) available to York Region residents can be found on [york.ca](#)





**Would secondary dwelling suites throughout York Region be encouraged in the new plan to provide more affordable housing and for population growth?**



The Plan provides for balanced residential and employment growth throughout York Region, directed to strategic growth areas, small-scale intensification in the form of infill and secondary suites, as well as new greenfield development with a mix of low, medium and high density-built forms. As per the [Planning Act](#), two secondary dwelling units are permitted per primary dwelling unit in most areas.



**Excellent work** to support more affordable housing.



I see multi-generational housing on the horizon.



Thank you for your comment. We recognize this takes partnerships and work with other levels of government and private partners. The plan contains policies for a mix and range of housing.



The only way to make a big dent in addressing housing needs is to build up along the intensification zones.



New rental and multi-unit dwellings need to be appropriately sized in designated urban growth areas, and also affordable. The draft Plan references “missing middle” housing, which is great, and should be further emphasized if anything. Aspiring homeowners and renters should not have to choose between shoeboxes and giant, inefficient McMansions for housing. There should also be efforts made within York Region’s abilities to enact rent controls to rental properties which are currently exempted from provincial controls.



Regarding encouragement of development, my question and comment is not addressed at large scale builders but digestible development by the “mom and pop” group. Reconfiguration of existing homes into multiplexes that need no new infrastructure and are in the midst of existing amenities. This is a no brainer and needs no further study. The panel needs to experience the sustainable neighbourhoods around Downsview Airport: single family homes mixed with duplexes, triplexes and quads have worked for 75 years and will continue to. What is old is new!



The task force for housing is barely working when costs for housing is going up by the hundreds of thousands every couple months.



Zoning is the key thing here that’s within the Regional Municipalities’ control. Opening up existing built areas to denser, well-connected, and affordable missing middle housing will do far more for affordability than the current approach.



I support the missing middle 100%.



There needs to be a public movement against nimbysm and the municipal councils supporting such. Intensification of existing neighbourhoods can provide needed near immediate solutions to the absolutely desperate needs of seniors, single adults, and anyone with physical challenges in a coveted community environment.



Townhouses can have yards!  
You don't need to build detached houses.



Look at the nice low-rise condos and towns in Cathedraltown Markham to address this need.



New community areas at 60+ people/hectare definitely have a lot of townhouses.



The 25% and 35% affordability targets were in the 2016 York Region Official Plan (ROP) also, and were not achieved. **What will change in the 2022 ROP and more detailed action plans?**



It is important to retain these housing targets as they are a reflection of need and York Regional Council has declared a housing crisis. York Region is taking a two pronged approach to developing more detailed action plans to help address the housing crisis. The Community Housing Master Plan will be a 40-year plan to fund and develop more community and non-profit homes. The Affordable Private Market Housing Implementation Plan will identify action, advocacy and partnership approaches to increasing the affordability of private market housing.



**Are there any plans for more Rent-Geared-to-Income housing?** The current pace of 100 to 300 units per year falls far short of the 1,000+ households added to the waitlist each year.



The Housing York Inc 2021 to 2024 Strategic Plan strives to double the rate of growth of the community housing stock. The Community Housing Master Plan, which is currently under development, will contemplate a 40-year plan to fund and development more community and non-profit homes across the Region. These initiatives will increase the number of subsidized units available to wait list applicants. York Region is also targeting limited portable rental benefits, such as the Canada-Ontario Housing Benefit, to eligible wait list applicants renting in the private market as an alternate option to waiting for a unit to become available.



**Has the task force discussed directly funding affordable housing as is City of Toronto?**



York Region currently funds affordable housing initiatives, with a strong track record in building new community housing for households with low and moderate income. Increasing the supply of affordable housing is a goal of [Housing Solutions](#), the Region's 10-year housing and homelessness plan. York Region is currently developing a [Community Housing Master Plan](#) and an Affordable Private Market Implementation Plan, which will identify further actions and assess funding sources to increase affordable housing supply in the Region.



When a complete application is submitted, if it included the budget resale price of the proposed units, it would stop some of the games being played. It would also clearly define what was being built in the way of affordability.



**Has the study group reviewed the latest New Zealand legislation that grants by right the ability to make any single family detached home into a 3 family unit?** Such legislation easily addresses “head on” rental affordability and sustainable growth issues sidestepped by our local governments.



Through the Affordable Housing Implementation Plan, staff will review and assess the feasibility of a wide range of actions to increase affordable housing supply in York Region.



Looking for stats on housing starts and approvals by city. Does York Region have that information?



The [Housing Supply Update](#) memo provides housing supply information as of December 2021.



Related to removal of exclusionary zoning, the idea that people would be allowed to add an as-of-right duplex or triplex on their house. **Is that in the ROP or should it be, or is that a municipal decision?**



The official plan does encourage a diverse mix and range of housing options, and encourages acting on those, in accordance with provincial policy, as these options do provide affordable housing.

However, it is a local municipal tool - we can only go so far with the regional municipal plan. We will look to the municipalities to put the zoning in place.



In 2001, Richmond Hill approved 2,321 building starts. In 2019, we approved 891. Other places are building like crazy, we are not.



It is obvious that secondary suites, triplexes and the like are suitable options to address rentals and missing middle challenges in existing neighbourhoods.  
**What can be done to redirect local councils to address this as the priority?**



The draft York Region Official Plan (ROP) proposes policies to encourage this type of gentle density but cannot prescribe local municipal priorities.



I did not see information in the draft ROP about how affordable housing is defined in terms of resident income, etc. Please provide information.



**Affordable housing** as defined in the draft ROP: In the case of ownership housing, housing for which the purchase price results in annual accommodation costs not exceeding 30% of gross annual household income for low and moderate income households.

In the case of rental housing, a unit for which the rent is at or below 125% of the average market rent of a unit in the regional market area, by bedroom type.

For the purposes of this definition, “low and moderate income households” means the lesser of:

- a. households with incomes in the lowest 60% of the income distribution for the regional market area or,
- b. households with incomes in the lowest 60% of the income distribution for the local market area



We can intensify on major corridors. We can build mid-rise. E.g. 6 to 8 story buildings for 2 to 3 city blocks. Not single family homes.

We can build into the green belt. Then we can create rooming houses.



Mid-rise development should be allowed near arterial roads.



I saw reports on situations in the City of Vaughan where there were development plans and people had planned to move there, and then developers pulled out. **Are there any policies/actions to protect projects that will be undertaken when working through the planning process with developers?**



There are limitations on what York Region can do, but it's part of the affordable housing implementation plan. We will advocate to other levels of government so they can put controls in place using the tools they have available to them in order to prevent/minimize these types of things from happening. We will look at the full spectrum of options and report to York Regional Council on what can be done.

It is a provincial responsibility so it would require some provincial legislation to prohibit this from happening in the future.



**Is there any discussion of supportive affordable housing for those with physical or mental handicaps?**



We are consulting with the York Region Accessibility Advisory Committee on the draft York Region Official Plan (ROP). This type of housing can be encouraged at the Regional level but is generally a local municipal decision.



**Have garden suites been considered?**



Local municipal official plans can outline detailed forms of housing that are permitted. The draft ROP allows for a variety of housing options defined as:

A range of housing types such as, but not limited to single detached, semi-detached, rowhouses, townhouses, stacked townhouses, multiplexes, additional residential units, tiny homes, multi-residential buildings. The term can also refer to a variety of housing arrangements and forms such as, but not limited to life lease housing, co-ownership housing, co-operative housing, community land trusts, land lease community homes, affordable housing, housing for people with special needs, and housing related to employment, institutional or educational uses.



“Support” and “encourage” policies firstly need to ensure quick access to preliminary project review and streamlining of the permit process. How about dedicated small project permit departments to address infill housing projects?



**In the growth targets that you have, how do you plan for the circle of life of housing needs?**

Different demographics, singles, young families, empty nesters, etc.



York Region does a cohort survival forecast that looks at the age of the population, what type of housing those age groups typically would like to live in to identify the existing situation, and then forecast the next 30 years. This includes the future ages of families and non-families, and we anticipate what will be required.

We are also looking at the gaps. What are the affordability, tenure, accessibility, and location gaps? What are the short, immediate, and long term things that need to be addressed? It’s all part of background information in the planning work (i.e. accessibility, bedroom size, location, affordability, family type etc.).



**What is the current housing inventory in York Region?** How many boomers' houses will be coming on the market and adding to the housing inventory in the coming years?



York Region considers demographics including the impact of an aging population on housing supply and need. The [Housing Supply Update](#) memo provides most recent statistics on the Region's housing supply.



**What percentage of "Affordable Housing" is being set aside for seniors?** Seniors living alone on CPP & OAS cannot afford the suggested "low" rent of \$1,600 as "affordable" housing.



Local municipal official plans can allocate affordable housing to seniors or other populations. The Region Official Plan sets the Regional overall target for affordable housing.



Market rents are already unaffordable for many. Setting 125% of market rent as "affordable" ignores a large segment of the population.



Balance of housing, we need a diversified housing stock. **What percentage of housing right now in York Region is single and detached housing?** I believe it's around 75%. Our balance is off right now and we need to address that going forward to help us address affordability issues.

**What's the current housing supply of draft-approved units?** What is coming into the market in the next couple of years?



The current housing stock in York Region is 71% singles, semis and duplexes, 13% rows and 16% apartments. The total figure for registered unbuilt and draft-approved units is around 50,000 units. There is an even split between ground-related and apartments over the next 3 to 5 years. The demand for diverse structure type is experiencing a pretty significant shift in York Region.



Planners need to address the appropriateness of stacked townhouses over time. **What does a 65 year old do in a stacked town that has stairs from lower parking and at every floor?**



The draft York Region Official Plan identifies the need to provide a range of housing options for all ages, household sizes and abilities.

# Growth management discussions



**? What happens if residents in individual municipalities don't want growth principals?**

**“** We look at it in the context of quality of life in York Region, Ontario, and Canada. The federal government sets targets for new immigrants every year. People want to come here from all over the world. A large portion of those immigrants end up in the GTA and Hamilton area, and specifically, York region. We are obligated to plan for that growth in the context of the volume of people who want to move here and we are obliged to plan for conformity purposes of the provincial growth plan as well. The province sets growth targets and we must plan to accommodate that growth by 2051.

York Region is mandated to plan for population and employment growth in accordance with forecasts established by the province.

Through the Municipal Comprehensive Review, there has been extensive engagement on where and how forecast growth is to be accommodated. We have been working very closely with local municipal partners to ensure alignment with local municipal context and growth objectives, to the extent possible.

York Regional Council has made decisions on these matters.

Residents are encouraged to provide input and comments on the draft York Region Official Plan by March 31, 2022. These comments will be provided to York Regional Council. Any comments suggested after March 31, 2022 can be emailed to [futureyork@york.ca](mailto:futureyork@york.ca)

**? Does the plan take into consideration the density in the Transit Oriented Community (TOC) of High Tech and Bridge?**

**“** The intensification target is a phased target of 50 to 55%. It represents around 162,000 units Region-wide. The TOC proposals came forward after the draft Official Plan was completed, so they don't include the extra uplift we would have assigned.

The province has proposed densities in these areas. A portion of the density proposed has been contemplated in the draft York Region Official Plan in alignment with local official plans in these areas. We anticipate that full build-out will take longer than 2051. York Region staff are engaged in on-going discussions about the amount and timing of growth in these areas.





**Where do growth numbers come from?** How are they derived? What is the percentage error or tolerance?

The population forecasts may be set in stone, how you accommodate the growth forecasts aren't set in stone. Does the projected housing mix meet the existing demand for housing types? Using historic trends to determine future growth may be problematic as it projects more detached and semi-detached single-family homes than reflected in current demand trends.



The 2051 forecast figures come from the provincial Growth Plan. The province hired consultants that examined many variables, including immigration, migration, birth and death rates to determine the forecast. There was consultation with municipalities in this process. We are obligated to plan for those figures. The detailed analysis can be found in this [report](#).



**What about hamlet designations where employment/ high density development is the New Vision?**



The amount of growth and servicing options within Hamlets in the Greenbelt Plan area are restricted by provincial plans. Broader visions of growth for these areas will require prior amendments to these plans by the province.



This is excellent. Great development in the East Gwillimbury area! Excited to see how it pans out!



We can't expand our development beyond what is already developed and expect to survive without a degraded and harsh life. We will go backwards in lifestyle. There will be increasing severe and weather events, including wide swings in temperature extremes. Trees moderate temperatures and help alleviate extreme flooding and drought. We need to intensify in a green and attractive way.



We need to intensify in already developed areas so that the integrity of large green areas can be maintained. Little pockets of green are nice, but large wetlands and large forests should not be fragmented. Likewise, we can't sacrifice farmland for the sake of low-density housing developments.



Growth targets are set by the province and we must plan for them. The draft York Region Official Plan (ROP) has an important role to plan properly for this growth and ensure successful communities, to get around, and mitigate climate change. York Region's Climate Change Action Plan outlines the priority action areas.

## Growth management discussions (continued)



How the existing transitions to the vision will happen, without impacting the current residents and our investment is an important question to be answered.

I believe there should be more development along the Lake Simcoe shoreline.

I disagree with development along the Lake Simcoe shoreline. Fiscal sustainability, climate change, health and environmental impact as well as provincial policy encourage development in existing urban areas and planned growth areas.

I believe there should NOT be more development along the Lake Simcoe shoreline.

Agreed!

No there should not. There are policies in place to protect the Lake Simcoe shoreline, and never allow another Friday Harbour type development because it is important to not mess up the shoreline. If we are going to save that lake that is a bad idea.

Barrie shoreline and Wasaga could be developed in a sustainable way while ensuring public access to beach front.

The growth plan is too aggressive. There is enough land to develop without the need to encroach on the whitebelt and our farms.

Good approach to phasing and monitoring in the draft plan. It's important to prioritize urban growth in existing urban areas within each municipality prior to greenfield growth. It would be good to add a prioritization policy to the phasing policies.

Having a lawn and a garage are not the only way to live. That is an insult to the hundreds of thousands of people who live contentedly in high rises.

Downtown Markham has done a good job at intensification. This area in Vaughan, Block 41, has a different outcome.

I am not sure 50% intensification could fairly be called prioritizing.

There are conversions approved Spring 2021 in Vaughan.



**Why would the Oak Ridges Moraine be allowed to be considered for development?**



York Regional Council's direction includes identifying some urban expansion on lands which are in the vicinity of Bethesda Road north of Stouffville and south of the Hamlet of Gormley.

These areas are Oak Ridges Moraine protected countryside lands so Council has requested that the province amend the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan to decide on these urban expansions. In the event the province does not make the necessary modifications; growth will be redirected to the Whitchurch-Stouffville whitebelt lands.



One of Richmond Hill's mayor candidates said there was a proposal for 70+ towers at two other sites. There's 66 projects already digging.

That sounds like hitting the growth target of 100,000 people already, not even contemplating any future development, infill, or low rise. Is there such a thing as too much intensification and how do we hold that back to within the scale?



York Region has a phased intensification target of 50% until 2041 and increases to 55% until 2051.

We are obligated to plan for a minimum of 50% by the provincial Growth Plan, and we've gone a little higher than that in recent years. All the targets we've assigned are minimum targets and likely we will not reach those before 2051.

We believe this is the right balance in terms of how to achieve the 50% intensification rate in the Growth Plan.



If we build at Yonge Street and Highway 7 going north, infrastructure is the most important factor to consider.



**Regarding the "growth" question, what were the forecasts in the past and what actually happened?** How does this historical data compare and/or drive the new forecasts?



At the March 2020 Council Education session, slide 13 of the [presentation](#) outlines the forecasted and actual growth in York Region. Please reach out to [futureyork@york.ca](mailto:futureyork@york.ca) for further information.



### Have urban expansion lands from the 2010 Regional Official Plan been developed yet?

If not, why does the Region need to expand the urban boundary?



Lands brought into the urban boundary in 2010 are not fully developed but will only accommodate growth to approximately 2031. Additional urban expansion lands are required to meet growth needs to 2051 as mandated by the province.



### Is there more/new information in regard to the Green Lane Secondary Plan in East Gwillimbury?



The most current information on this plan should be obtained from the Town of East Gwillimbury since secondary plans are led at the local municipal level.



**What if the land can't accept the growth?** The various Acts that were put in place to protect the Greenbelt, Oak Ridges Moraine, Lake Simcoe Watershed, etc. What is the actual limit that mother earth can sustain? Is this taken into account or do developers trump all?



A considerable amount of work has been done, including watershed planning to determine how growth can occur in a sustainable manner and additional technical work is to be undertaken in support of further planning at the local level. These studies determine more specifically how and where growth will occur and which lands are inappropriate for urban uses.



Beachfront Main streets, restaurants and resorts would be great along Lake Simcoe if built sustainably. Think about the economic opportunities for the Region. There could also be better and more attractive boardwalks.



The plan includes a target for new community area of 65 residents and jobs and a minimum target of 18 residential units per hectare. **How do these targets interact since 18 units per hectare seems low (detached)??**



The relationship between the 65 people/jobs per hectare and 18 units per hectare is based on a person per unit assumption and a range of jobs per hectare. Communities include both residents and jobs (i.e. people working in retail/services employment sectors as well as work at home.)



**If the MTSAs can accommodate population growth beyond 2051 then why do all the greenfields still need to be developed?**



The forecast and land needs work strives for balance in satisfying market demand between the desire to purchase a ground related home versus an apartment/condominium. Many families will continue to move into York Region with a desire to purchase a ground related home. The apartment market is a different type of market and although many family households will purchase or rent an apartment, market demand for this built form also includes people living alone and non-family households.



**What are some of the community facilities that are being considered at the Yonge Street and Highway 407 development or along the Yonge Street corridor. For example, with the 2026 FIFA World Cup coming to Toronto, and there being a pro soccer team in the Region with York United FC, does York Regional Council have an interest in helping build a mid-sized soccer stadium to take advantage of the growing popularity of soccer in Canada, and to grow a sense of community within York Region?**



York Region is making sure we put the land use and infrastructure in place in order to set the stage for the private sector to establish partnerships. We need to have the transit to move people and attract these major facilities.

It has to be a proposal brought forth by someone. York Region would work along local municipalities, the province and the federal government if the idea was brought up. It would add to the cultural environment in York Region and the broader GTA.

We do have past experience delivering sporting events in partnership with the province and the federal government through the PanAm games as the local municipalities built community facilities. Many departments across York Region were involved in executing the event and ensuring the facility was built. It would be a multi-level governmental effort to support this kind of initiative.



Local soccer fields yes!



**There are existing neighborhoods/areas/properties with historical value, and there has been rezoning in certain properties that may have a negative impact on that heritage area. What is York Region doing to protect heritage areas? What can we do as residents?**



There are archaeological and cultural resource policies in the York Region Official Plan. We are at arms length from cultural areas as they are identified and designated by local municipalities. It's governed by the Heritage Act and there is little we can do except for providing the framework. Any additional concerns should be taken up with the local municipality.

# Transportation, walkability and connectivity discussions



?

**Who decides the details on how the Yonge Street/Highway 7 to Yonge Street /Bernard Avenue intensification will proceed?** Will it follow a similar model to Yonge Street/Sheppard Avenue/Finch Avenue model in the City of Toronto? Yonge Street/Sheppard Avenue/Finch Avenue has increased density 5 times in last 30 years. People who live there experience less traffic and enjoy a ring road flowing traffic through the area.

“

York Region plans at a higher level using Major Transit Station Areas (MTSA) and local municipalities are assigned to do the detailed day-to-day planning to determine how to achieve minimum growth targets within MTSA.

If local municipalities want to put in maximum building heights, for example, all details for each intensification area and MTSA will be determined at the local level.

?

Is the density required in the MTSA and Transit Oriented Community (TOC) reflected in the draft Official Plan, expected to be built during the 30 year planning horizon? If so, how is this being identified? How would phasing work if it's not within the planning horizon. **How would we, as residents, understand what's within this planning horizon and what will be happening after?**

“

The targets that are in the York Region Official Plan are minimum targets, it is unlikely they will be built out by 2051. All our MTSA's with the potential growth lead to a high figure that is not achievable by 2051. They don't have to be achieved, but have to be planned out.

In planning for MTSA's, York Region is able to consider density targets that will be achieved beyond the 2051 planning horizon. The minimum targets mandate that there must be a plan to achieve minimum targets by 2051, meaning the zoning has to be in place, and the detailed planning work at the local level has to be in place. In both the MTSA's and TOC's, we do anticipate that full build out of these areas will extend beyond 2051.

?

The only convenient way to access transit at Richmond Hill Centre is by car unless you are within a 5 minute walk to Yonge Street and Garden Ave/Highway 7 on-ramp. The transit terminal is maybe another 10 minute walk and won't be changed with the subway. **Can the subway alignment be moved closer to Yonge Street or have an entrance at Yonge Street?**

“

While York Region and local municipalities have provided input, the ultimate alignment of the subway is the jurisdiction of the province through Metrolinx.

## Transportation, walkability and connectivity discussions (continued)



More walking communities! And start building the missing middle.



Complete community policies in the draft York Region Official Plan prioritize pedestrian and active transportation. In addition, housing policies and work with Housing Task Force will further develop missing middle opportunities.



Living in Newmarket as a student, I can't afford a car. Main issue I find regarding decreasing greenhouse gas emissions and encouraging more use of the transit system is a reluctance to go on transit because cars are more convenient. If you live deep in a neighbourhood, you have to walk 20 to 30 minutes to the bus stop and wait 15 to 20 minutes at the station. It is inaccessible for many people. It is much more convenient to use a car.



Providing transit in our communities is a key theme in the plan. York Regional Council has been forward-looking when it comes to implementing transit. We were the first Region in the 905 area to have an amalgamated system and there is a significant amount of dollars invested in bus rapid transit. We have an existing subway route, and additional routes that will see fruition.

A fair amount has been done with much more being planned and highlighted in the draft York Region Official Plan. It takes time to encourage a lifestyle change for someone to park their car and rely on transit.

The two major components are accommodating growth in centers and MTSAs, as well as building transit-supportive and walkable new communities.

York Region is working on planning for the first and last mile of residents' commutes. We are also exploring a tool to measure the 15 Minute City. It will show our success in accessing food, taking your child to school, access greenspace, and more within a 15-minute walk.



I agree



Definitely need to get more cars off roads and to encourage more transit.



I agree. More needs to be done.



Transit seems to be moving backward. Frequencies on major bus routes even before COVID are poor and worse than a decade ago. Ridership is stagnant or dropping. Fare coordination with the TTC is long overdue.

Agreed! We need more ways to get to transit stations (including protected bike lanes and "last mile" connections)



Years ago you could go from Highway 7 in Markham/Richmond Hill to York University in Toronto on a single bus for one fare. Now it takes 3 separate trips and 2 to 3 fares.



Yes, we have to get a one fare system to encourage transit use.

## Transportation, walkability and connectivity discussions (continued)



I absolutely agree on fare integration. This would be huge. I live an arm's length from Steeles Avenue, and it's a \$3.25 penalty if I choose to cross over by transit, which makes me prefer to make short trips by car. I know that there are talks in place with Metrolinx to better integrate fares between all regional municipalities; getting this done would make a huge difference for residents of York Region and surrounding areas



Metrolinx governs the coordination of fares across different transit systems across the Greater Toronto Hamilton Area, including TTC, GO Transit, YRT, and several others. They continue to work on fare coordination among transit systems when paying by PRESTO.



Beyond TTC and York Region Transit, we now need GTT (Greater Toronto Transit) to bring about one fare.



Instead of adding more funds into car centric highways, we need to fund more transit options to get more people onto transit. Not only will it save so much money for families and people in terms of not having to pay for a car, insurance, gas, maintenance, etc., but it will also help fight climate change and have a significant role in saving our environment.



We need to build more transit hubs like transit city in Vaughan. Richmond Hill is getting one, but I think Markham should as well to increase transit usage as well as increasing funding for existing lines.



Look to Seoul South Korea for a great subway plan



Our subway system in the GTA is inferior on a global scale. If we want to continue being a world class city, why would we not focus on building more subways? It would be amazing if YRT started building a subway system of our own to propel the growth that is planned, at the same time as addressing traffic congestion and pollution.



My interest is active transportation and making it terminate in useful locations, like public transit stations.



**Can you map the areas that you think will achieve 15 minute or better bus service by 2030, 2040, 2050?**



York Region transit routes and schedules are reviewed periodically and may change given our growing communities. York Region's transit [service plans](#) outlines upcoming improvements.

## Transportation, walkability and connectivity discussions (continued)



Pedestrian safety should be addressed too. Large intersections need to be made safer for pedestrians. Busy roads need sidewalks. Highway 7 in Markham near Markville Mall forces pedestrians to walk on the shoulder inches away from cars.



**Why is there no plan to provide pedestrian access from West Gormley Subdivision to the Gormley GO station?**



These types of pedestrian linkages crossing extensive land under varied ownership would likely require partnership discussions between the province, York Region and local municipalities.

# Proposed Highway 413 and Bradford Bypass discussions



## **If it is out of the hands of York Region, why does Council have a motion supporting both Highway 413 and Bradford Bypass?**

York Region council is not listening to residents about Highway 413 and Bradford Bypass. They should be demanding for updated environmental impact studies and traffic studies that justify the highway plans.

How updated are traffic studies that guide roadways and their planning/estimation? Are they available for review? My question stems from the comments made by the government and MTO always talking about “gridlock” as a reason for Highway 413 and Bradford Bypass projects.

Would like to see the principles of sustainability taken further. For GHG, affordability, quality of life and salt pollution reasons, the future urban areas need to be planned as transit friendly. The Bradford Bypass hasn't met the test of being able to help support this, or the complete community aims being discussed tonight. New traffic studies and road improvement studies should consider the “no Bradford Bypass” option. What else could be built, where and how, to better support the environment and affordability?

Vaughan and King Councils oppose the highway 413. The two most impacted lower tier municipalities. Markham also passed a motion opposing.



It is the province's decision, and York Regional Council are able to offer an opinion as a stakeholder. While York Region and local municipalities provide comments to the province on these potential highways, the province is responsible for the process confirming need, alignment, mitigation measures, etc.

York Regional Council has expressed an interest in both Highway 413 and the Bradford Bypass from an employment and goods movement perspective. We also recognize that these would impact sensitive landscapes. Both the province and the federal government are taking a comprehensive look into these highways to determine if they are necessary. If it is determined that they are not necessary, Council will pivot in response, but as of right now they have indicated a desire for them, particularly for employment development and goods movement.

York Region will continue to work with all levels of governments and environmental partners on the advancement of projects supporting population and employment growth, improved goods movement, improved mobility and reduced traffic on Regional roads.

# Policy alignment discussions



It is great to say to “make the communities walkable” but the Municipalities approve subdivisions without sidewalks.

Climate change needs to align with agriculture policies.

It's important to ensure infrastructure is aligned with growth to support fiscal sustainability. **Will the Region prioritize intensification areas and transit supportive communities over greenfield growth?** Will you be monitoring and updating land and housing forecasts regularly to ensure the Region is meeting and achieving needed housing types.

York Region prioritizes intensification with 50% intensification. The transit investment we have made sets the stage for promoting that growth. We've committed over \$1 billion funding to the subway investment, we have also committed funding to extensions to the rapid bus transit system. There is additional work done locally as well, including secondary plans for regional centers to intensify. Vaughan, Markham, and Richmond Hill are all reviewing their targets. We need a balance in how we accommodate growth - not everyone wants to live in a condo, for example. Some families who locate to the Region and prefer to live in a ground-related built form.

There is a lack of clarity around the sewage system and water quality (Upper York Sewage System, Bradford Bypass). **How do you consider phasing in that context?** How much is York Region prioritizing environmental considerations (climate change, GHG goals). The targets are good, but it looks like single family homes that are not transit-friendly have been approved.

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**What is the status of the Upper-York servicing system, and how much of an impact will it have on the projections of this plan if it is not completed or addressed within the 2051 forecast?**



In October 2021, the provincial government enacted the [York Region Wastewater Act, 2021](#). This legislation puts an indefinite hold on any decision by the Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks on the Upper York Sewage Solutions (UYSS) environmental assessment, prevents any further action being taken by York Region to advance this project and seeks to limit the province's liability for taking these steps. The province has also appointed the York Region Wastewater Advisory Panel to provide confidential advice on options to address wastewater servicing capacity needs in the upper parts of York Region.

The Region will continue to plan for UYSS until receiving direction otherwise. Should the province issue further direction, additional assessment will be undertaken beyond the timelines of the current growth management work plan. For more information on the UYSS project, visit the [project website](#).



**Will phasing development surrounding a Major Transit Station Area (MTSA) be coordinated with delivery of transit?**



All MTSA's identified in the draft ROP are located around existing or future planned transit infrastructure.

# Regional Official Plan Amendment (ROPA) 7 and Natural Areas discussions



The best way to support agriculture is to not expand the urban boundary.



**Has any planning been done to look at the output from local farming, and to see if that output is still possible when the large amount of whitebelt is redesignated as developable?**



Through this update, York Region implemented a systems approach to protection of agricultural lands rather than assessing productivity or output. Some of York Region's most productive agricultural lands are located in the Holland Marsh Specialty Crop Area which continue to be protected.



It's unfortunate that Council failed to understand the importance of Regional Greenlands system connectivity when they chose to ignore staff, the public, the TRCA and Greenbelt Foundation and endorsed ROPA 7 downgrading Greenbelt protection from agricultural to rural.



ROPA 7 puts the Greenbelt, agricultural land and the Regional Greenlands system at risk.



**Are there more greenbelt fingers? Where does the responsibility lie?**



The 2010 plan affected specific lands that resulted in "green fingers" in urban areas. York Region recognized that the implications of how we treat those fingers warrant the same treatment for the fingers that would occur as we plan to extend growth up to 2051. We want to be as transparent as possible about Regional Official Plan Amendment (ROPA) 7 so that we can approach most of the green fingers consistently.

The as-of-right, permitted uses are pretty limited: passive recreation, natural environmental and protective restoration, and compatible urban agriculture. ROPA 7 asks for additional active park uses and recreational uses. The Region Official Plan will permit those, as per the decision of Council, as long as they are assessed through the local planning process and the local municipality deems them appropriate. There will be additional local decision-making to determine if this is appropriate.

There will be additional assessment of those green finger areas that were not addressed to ensure we identify finger-type areas, so as to prevent inadvertently fragmenting larger agricultural areas and creating isolated pockets of agricultural land.

## Regional Official Plan Amendment (ROPA) 7 and Natural Areas discussions (continued)



Good explanation on ROPA-7 and implications and what local municipalities can/cannot do.



I am still concerned. Especially after the outcome for Block 41 in Vaughan.



I'm not happy about ROPA-7, but very helpful explanation.



Very concerned about ROPA 7, Greenbelt (which is also being undercut by the Bradford Bypass) protection, ORM protection. I also do understand that Council made the decision to support these. Staff, keep providing good advice please.



The draft plan is very promising and needs to be aggressive in providing housing and walkable neighbourhoods in urban areas. The greenbelt/Oak Ridges Moraine should stay untouched as there's plenty of space to build up without encroaching in natural areas/groundwater recharge areas

# Employment Areas discussions



**?** Several employment conversions were approved in Vaughan and Markham after the forecasted land needs was endorsed. **How are these incorporated into the draft York Region Official Plan as currently endorsed?**

**“** The employment conversion report was brought to York Regional Council in 2020. All those decisions were incorporated into our forecast work and accounted for.

**?** **If employment lands are designated for an area that is already residential, how does that transition actually occur?**

**“** It is important to protect employment areas adjacent to or in the vicinity of residential areas as some essential and highly profitable sectors include disruptive operations which may be noisy, create emissions, and or operate 24 hours a day. While not integrated with residential uses, it is important that there are many employment areas across the Region so residents have these job opportunities close to home.

There may be some situations where a residential dwelling exists in a residential zoned area within an employment/commercial official plan designation at the local municipal level. The Region’s new employment designation may also include residential homes on existing farmland or rural land that over time may be sold and demolished.

**•••** Warehousing and logistics is a service - they don’t produce wealth like making and selling products, whatever they may be.



# Climate Change discussions



On page 23 of draft York Region Official Plan, Section 2.3.1.4 establishes GHG reductions and implement reduction strategies. **Where are those targets and when would community stakeholders and local municipalities have visibility to those targets?** Are they not fundamental to much of what forms this Official Plan? Especially given that number 10 of the priorities is a full cost approach which involves environmental, social, and economic cost. This goes hand-in-hand.



York Region is working on a Climate Change Action Plan. We have established a long-term strategic goal of net zero GHG emissions by 2050. We have plans to address corporate emissions with interim targets that will be reported on annually. We are also undertaking a community energy and emissions plan and looking at current emissions and future emissions forecasts. We have not set interim targets yet, they will follow the post-draft Official Plan. We have a high-level framework set in the official plan and hope to have official targets through the energy and emissions plan with potential updates to the Official Plan if necessary.

There will be opportunities for public input into the Climate Change Action Plan in the future.

# Other comments and discussions



Tourism in York Region would benefit due to further funding added to the shoreline. Similar to Barrie.

York Region is also located on the traditional territory of the Huron Wendat.

“ Thank you for your comment. We are currently using the Land Acknowledgement used during York Regional Council meetings. Process is underway to review and potentially update this land acknowledgement.

I'm really excited to get started! Hopefully we can identify issues and discuss or suggest possible improvement, most importantly, the transport system in Newmarket.

Newmarket, let's go!

We need a new brand identity for York Region!

Yes, we have to learn from planning mistakes made in other jurisdictions.

We have gone beyond NIMBY (Not In My Backyard) to BANANA (Build Absolutely Nothing Anywhere Near Anyone)

## The engagement process

That is why the province should extend the deadline by a year. The public must be able to participate.

“ The province has set a deadline of July 1, 2022. Online engagement has been well attended during the York Region Official Plan review for all topics including Major Transit Station Areas, employment conversions, growth management and natural heritage system/agricultural areas. There also have been many delegations to council as well. In fact, virtual engagement has resulted in greater participation levels than in-person engagement.

? **Will you be hosting another session?** I know one person who tried to sign in and got response sold out.

“ Our website contains an Online Open House to view the meeting recording, presentation slides, Q&A and a form to ask a planner any further questions. The statutory public meeting and open house #2 is anticipated to be held in May 2022. Further commenting opportunities are online at [york.ca/haveyoursay](http://york.ca/haveyoursay) or email at [futureyork@york.ca](mailto:futureyork@york.ca)





## About planning



**What would be allowed to be developed at the Buttonville Airport and when?**



The Buttonville Airport lands are predominantly designated as Employment Area with some opportunity for Community Area in the draft York Region Official Plan. These lands would be subject to more detailed planning at the local level to determine more specific land use permissions and timing of development.



**What happens if York Region does not submit an Official Plan in July 2022?**



The province has established a deadline of July 1, 2022 for the York Region Official Plan (ROP) to be in conformity with current provincial plans. Using an outdated ROP will have implications for development application review and implementation of policies. The 2010 ROP would continue to be used which lacks policies on Major Transit Station Areas, Regional employment areas, and uses outdated population and employment forecasts as well as intensification rates. In essence, staff would be using an outdated ROP to approve development.

Another issue is potential delays to Local Municipal Official Plan reviews; since local municipal Official Plans need to conform with the ROP within a one-year timeframe, there would be additional delays to these local official plan revisions and approvals.

Finally, timing of upcoming elections will also have an impact:

- The next provincial election is anticipated in June 2022. A potential new political party may revise provincial plans
- Municipal elections are anticipated in October 2022. A new Council may potentially have different opinions/direction on the draft ROP which could further delay the process of an adopted ROP



**Why is the area east of Highway 404, north of Richmond Hill not designated for urbanization in the future plan?**



The lands located east of Highway 404 and north of 19th Avenue are located within the Oak Ridges Moraine (and Greenbelt Plan Area) as Countryside Area and not intended to accommodate future urban growth.



### About planning (continued)



**Regarding information “from the public” - is there a report that documents how people were asked questions with demographic information to qualify the data?**



The public has been invited to provide information and input throughout the process to update the York Region Official Plan. Regular updates on what was heard has been communicated to York Regional Council through several reports in [October 2019](#), [June 2021](#) (Attachment 3), and [November 2021](#) (Attachment 3).



**If the development was not shovel ready why did lower tier Councils endorse Minister’s Zoning Orders (MZO)? Is it because they can’t be appealed? I appreciate these are beyond staff’s control and that York Region likely was not consulted prior to endorsement by lower tiers and approval by Minister Clark.**



Local municipalities are best positioned to identify rationale for endorsing specific MZOs.



**Phased approach to new land that Council decided should be brought into urban boundary. **There is a fair amount of detail on how phasing will proceed, but how do MZOs affect responsible phasing?** How do we mitigate major risk?**



We are asking local official plans to identify development and phasing in more detail within their Official Plan work. There are criteria in the plan on how phasing should proceed. Discussion is still ongoing with municipal staff and the general public.

If an MZO is located in an area with planned infrastructure, there shouldn’t be any issues accommodating growth. If the area doesn’t necessarily have infrastructure planned within 5 to 10 years, it doesn’t necessarily mean that MZO is prioritized. This is currently being addressed further. There is plenty of growth being planned in York Region with an ample amount of existing infrastructure and room for growth.



**What kind of influence does the Regional Municipality have on local municipalities’ zoning bylaws?**



York Region has indirect influence over local municipal zoning bylaws through review and approval of local official plans and amendments.



### About planning (continued)

**?** Are there further updates in regard to Secondary Plans, either currently underway or future Secondary Plan Areas?

“

York Region provides information on active development applications including secondary plans which can be accessed on the [York Region - Development Application Status](#) dashboard. You can also obtain information on the status of development applications from the local municipality.

**?** Who is responsible for communicating to the residents in Municipalities about the York Region Official Plan?

“

York Region will continue to communicate these changes, using opportunities like an Open House. We appreciate everyone attending. We use social media, our website, and various means to communicate. We encourage residents to share information amongst their networks as well.

York Regional Council, local municipal staff including Planning Commissioners and Directors, stakeholders and agencies have also been engaged to develop the draft plan.

**?** Are there any future plans for amalgamations in York Region between now and 2051?

“

We are not aware of any current provincial considerations for amalgamation.



YORK REGION **DRAFT** OFFICIAL PLAN  
**OPEN HOUSE ONE**  
Engagement Summary Report

For more information about the York Region Official Plan update and process, please visit [york.ca/haveyoursay](http://york.ca/haveyoursay)

For questions please contact Long Range Planning at [futureyork@york.ca](mailto:futureyork@york.ca) or 1-877-464-9675.