

July 22, 2021

Delivered by email
regionalclerk@york.ca
paul.freeman@york.ca
paul.bottomley@york.ca

The Regional Municipality of York
17250 Yonge Street
Newmarket, ON
L3Y 6Z1

RE: Report No. DS-031-21 Comments on Region's Proposed 2051 Growth Forecast and Land Needs Assessment

Please be advised the above-noted matter was placed before Council at its meeting held on July 20, 2021 and the following resolution was passed:

- 1) That Council endorse Staff's comments on York Region's Proposed 2051 Growth Forecast and Land Needs Assessment as outlined in Report No. DS-031-21; and
- 2) That Council request the Bethesda Road lands identified in Report No. DS-031-21 be considered and prioritized by the Region of York in its Municipal Comprehensive Review for an urban settlement area expansion to the Community of Stouffville; and
- 3) That Council request the South Gormley Employment Expansion Area as identified in Report No. DS-027-20 be considered and prioritized by the Region of York in its Municipal Comprehensive Review for an employment urban settlement area expansion; and
- 4) That Council direct Staff to forward Report No. DS-031-21 to the Region of York as input to the Region's Municipal Comprehensive Review.

Please find attached a copy of Staff Report No. DS-031-21 Comments on Region's Proposed 2051 Growth Forecast and Land Needs Assessment.

If you have any questions, please contact Rob Adams, Acting Director, Development Services at rob.adams@townofws.ca or 905-640-1910 x2245.

Yours truly,



Kristina Soolepp, Council Coordinator
(905) 642-4130

Attachments



Subject: Comments on Region's Proposed 2051 Growth Forecast and Land Needs Assessment (D08)

Staff Report No. DS-031-21

Department: Development Services

Date: July 20, 2021

Recommendation:

- 1) That Council endorse Staff's comments on York Region's Proposed 2051 Growth Forecast and Land Needs Assessment as outlined in Report No. DS-031-21; and
- 2) That Council request the Bethesda Road lands identified in Report No. DS-031-21 be considered and prioritized by the Region of York in its Municipal Comprehensive Review for an urban settlement area expansion to the Community of Stouffville; and
- 3) That Council request the South Gormley Employment Expansion Area as identified in Report No. DS-027-20 be considered and prioritized by the Region of York in its Municipal Comprehensive Review for an employment urban settlement area expansion; and
- 4) That Council direct Staff to forward Report No. DS-031-21 to the Region of York as input to the Region's Municipal Comprehensive Review.

1. Purpose:

The purpose of this Report is to seek Council endorsement of Staff's comments on York Region's Proposed 2051 Growth Forecast and Land Needs Assessment, and direct staff to forward these comments to the Region of York for input to the Region's Municipal Comprehensive Review.

2. Executive Summary:

On March 18, 2021 Regional Council received a Staff Report regarding the Proposed 2051 Forecast and Land Needs Assessment (Region's Report). Regional Council directed staff to consult on the proposed forecast and land needs assessment, including the preliminary urban expansion areas as part of the Region's Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR), and report back to Council on phasing policies necessary to manage growth over the 2051 planning horizon.

On April 20, 2021, Staff presented Council with the Region's draft 2051 Growth Forecast and Land Needs Assessment for information, as outlined in Staff Report DS-012-21. Town Council directed Staff to use the Town's Draft 2051 Growth Forecasts for the Town's Master Plan updates, if necessary, pending the final approval of the 2051 Growth Forecasts by York Region Council; and to report back to Council with comments on the Region's Proposed 2051 Growth Forecasts and Land Needs Assessment.

The Region's Proposed 2051 Growth Forecasts anticipates that the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville is forecasted to grow to 92,900 persons and 31,900 jobs by 2051, and all of the Town's remaining Whitebelt lands (375 hectares) will be required to accommodate urban expansions. The Whitebelt lands comprise agricultural lands that are located outside of the Province's Greenbelt Area, and from a Provincial policy perspective, represent the most suitable lands for urban expansion areas.

Based on Town Staff's draft 2051 Growth Forecasts, the Region's Growth Forecast is fairly conservative. The Town's 2051 Growth Forecasts anticipate in the order of approximately 101,400 persons and 39,300 jobs. Town staff will continue consultations with the Region and stakeholders over the following months with respect to the Region's 2051 Growth Forecasts.

The purpose of this Report is to seek Council endorsement of Staff's comments on the Region's Proposed 2051 Growth Forecast and Land Needs Assessment, and direct staff to forward these comments to the Region of York for input to the Region's Municipal Comprehensive Review. It is anticipated that the Region will be bringing forward an update report on the 2051 Growth Forecast and Land Needs Assessment in September 2021, with the final draft being presented as part of the Region's new draft Official Plan anticipated in November 2021.

Town staff will be continuing work on the Town's Growth Forecasts and preliminary Growth Management Strategy, being undertaken by Watson and Associates, for public consultation in Fall 2021.

3. Background:

On March 18, 2021 Regional Council received a Staff Report regarding the Proposed 2051 Forecast and Land Needs Assessment (Region's Report). Regional Council directed staff to consult on the proposed forecast and land needs assessment, including the preliminary urban expansion areas as part of the Region's Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR), and report back to Council on phasing policies necessary to manage growth over the 2051 planning horizon.

A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (Growth Plan) sets out population and employment forecasts and requires municipalities to plan to achieve these forecasts by 2051 through the Region's MCR. The Growth Plan requires the Region of York to plan to accommodate a forecasted population of 2.02 million people and 990,000 jobs to 2051, which represents an increase of approximately 800,000 people and 345,000 jobs between 2021 and 2051. York Region is forecast to attract the highest share of growth of any Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA) municipality by 2051, accounting for 22% of GTHA population growth. The Region is also forecast to accommodate 25% of employment growth.

The Region's Report presents the population and employment forecasts by local municipality and the results of the mandated provincial land needs assessment and identifies proposed settlement area boundary expansions that are required to accommodate the forecasted growth to 2051, as part of the Region's MCR.

3.1 Proposed 2051 Population and Employment Forecasts

Proposed 2051 population and employment forecasts for the nine local municipalities are shown in Table 1 below. The forecasts are the product of a number of assumptions based on recent demographic, market, and economic trends, housing and employment land supply, market demand for intensification, as well as regional and local policy. The Region's Proposed 2051 Growth Forecasts anticipate that the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville is forecasted to grow to 92,900 persons and 31,900 jobs by 2051, which represents an increase of 45,600 persons and 16,500 jobs from 2031 in 2016.

Table 1 – 2051 Population and Employment Forecasts by Local Municipality

| Municipality | 2051 Population | 2051 Employment |
|------------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| Aurora | 84,900 | 41,000 |
| East Gwillimbury | 105,100 | 37,400 |
| Georgina | 71,900 | 21,900 |
| King | 49,600 | 16,400 |
| Markham | 619,200 | 309,200 |
| Newmarket | 110,700 | 57,600 |
| Richmond Hill | 317,000 | 122,600 |
| Vaughan | 568,700 | 352,000 |
| Whitchurch Stouffville | 92,900 | 31,900 |
| Total | 2,020,000 | 990,000 |

Source: York Region Planning and Economic Development Branch

3.2 Proposed Urban Expansions

The Region's Report indicates that by applying the Provincial land needs assessment methodology to the Region's Growth Plan forecasts, it is determined that approximately 80% of Whitebelt lands are needed to accommodate forecasted growth to 2051. The Whitebelt lands comprise agricultural lands that are located outside of the Province's Greenbelt Plan and existing settlement areas, and represent the most suitable lands for urban expansions. In consultation with local municipal staff, these lands were classified into potential community and employment areas based on their connectivity to existing community/employment areas and prioritizing lands adjacent to or near existing or provincially planned 400 series highways for employment purposes.

Table 2 provides a breakdown of the available Whitebelt lands across the Region and the proposed urban expansion lands by local municipality. Region wide, a total of 3,400 hectares of Whitebelt lands are required to accommodate forecasted growth to 2051. The Region's Report proposes that all of the remaining Whitebelt lands in the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville be used for urban expansion. This includes a total of 375 hectares, of which 280 hectares are proposed for Community land and 95 hectares are proposed for Employment land, which are located in closest proximity to Highway 404. Community lands account for the most significant share of the settlement areas and are where the

majority of residential, personal services, retail, cultural, recreational and human services are located. Employment lands are where the majority of industrial, manufacturing, and warehousing uses are directed.

With the exception of East Gwillimbury, all the remaining Whitebelt lands in King, Markham, Vaughan and Whitchurch-Stouffville are proposed for urban expansion.

Table 2 – Proposed Urban Expansion by Municipality to 2051 (hectares)

| Municipality | Available Whitebelt | Proposed Urban Expansion | Community Land | Employment Land |
|------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| East Gwillimbury | 960 | 245 | 180 | 65 |
| King | 80 | 80 | 70 | 10 |
| Markham | 1,490 | 1,490 | 1,270 | 220 |
| Vaughan | 1,210 | 1,210 | 500 | 710 |
| Whitchurch Stouffville | 375 | 375 | 280 | 95 |
| Total | 4,115 | 3,400 | 2,300 | 1,100 |

Source: York Region Planning and Economic Development Branch

Figure 1 illustrates the extent of the proposed urban expansion lands within the southeastern municipalities (Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville and Markham). The geographical extent of the Greenbelt Plan results in non-contiguous and isolated pockets of Whitebelt lands that border the municipal boundary with Markham, which are proposed for urban expansion.

target is consistent with what the market has been delivering and supports infrastructure and financial planning. The Region has proposed a designated greenfield area density target of a minimum of 50 persons and jobs per hectare to 2051 for the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville.

- A greater emphasis on a collaborative and iterative approach to population and employment distribution wherein infrastructure capacity and timing considerations play a more prominent role in distributing growth to the local municipalities. The Region's Report indicates that regional water, wastewater, and transportation infrastructure costs per capita (at full buildout) of Whitebelt lands are lowest in the southeast (\$4,600), higher in the southwest (\$6,900), and highest in northern York Region (\$7,600). As such growth in the southeast (Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville and Markham) capitalizes on existing and planned infrastructure investments.
- The timing and uncertainty of servicing northern York Region through the Upper York Water Reclamation Centre was a key factor in informing the distribution of urban expansion land needs to 2051.

The Region's Report indicates that planning for growth to meet the Provincial forecast of 2.02 million people and 990,000 to 2051 requires an average annual growth of 26,100 persons per year. To properly manage new growth, it is anticipated that phasing strategies for the urban expansion areas will be established in the new Regional Official Plan and coordinated with infrastructure Master Plans, as outlined in Regional Staff Report: Regional Official Plan Update Policy Directions Report, June 10, 2021.

It is anticipated that the Region will be bringing forward an update report on the 2051 Growth Forecast and Land Needs Assessment in September 2021, with the final draft being presented as part of the Region's new draft Official Plan, anticipated in November 2021. This has a direct impact to the Town's Official Plan Review as the updated growth forecasts and urban expansion areas will need to be implemented and conform to the Region's new Official Plan.

4. Analysis and Options:

4.1 Comments on the Region's Proposed 2051 Growth Forecast and Land Needs Assessment, March 18, 2021

In formulating the Town's comments on the Region's Proposed 2051 Growth Forecast and Land Needs Assessment, March 18, 2021, staff consulted with Watson and Associates, who are currently undertaking the Preliminary Growth Management Strategy, in support of the Town's Official Plan Review. Town Staff and Watson and Associates met virtually on June 29, 2021 with Regional staff to discuss and receive clarification on some of the Region's Growth Forecast assumptions, which have informed the Town's

comments. The Town's comments on the Region's Proposed 2051 Growth Forecast and Land Needs Assessment are included in Attachment 1 and summarized below.

General Comments:

- Staff are generally comfortable with the Region's assumptions with respect to persons per unit and dwelling type mix, but need to review at a local level, to ensure assumptions are reflected fairly for the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville.
- In staff's view, the Region's draft Growth Forecasts for the Town of 92,900 persons and 31,900 jobs to the year 2051 are fairly conservative in light of the increased growth and intensification pressures the Town is currently experiencing and anticipated over the long term. Based on the staff forecasts, the Town is expected to grow to accommodate a population of approximately 101,400 persons and 39,300 jobs to the year 2051. Staff recognize that the growth allocations are intended to be minimums but this may need to be highlighted more prominently as some communities are likely to grow at a faster pace than others.
- The primary factors driving increased growth in the Town, and specifically within the Community of Stouffville, relate to the following areas:
 - **Gateway and Western Approach Mixed Use Area** – higher than anticipated intensification within the Gateway and Western Approach Mixed Use Area (Stouffville Road), beyond which was planned through OPA 145;
 - **Lincolnvile GO Major Transit Station Area** – higher intensity development planned for the new Lincolnvile GO MTSA;
 - **Stouffville GO Major Transit Station Area** – increased development directed to the downtown Stouffville GO MTSA and Community Core Area;
 - **Highway 48 Corridor** – emerging opportunities for greater intensification along the Highway 48 Corridor, south of Stouffville Road, including approved Smart Centres and Corbridge employment area conversions at Hoover Park Drive and Highway 48, which will result in the development of more intensive mixed use and higher density residential and employment development, which was not previously contemplated through the employment designations.
 - **Minister Zoning Orders** – the recent issuance of two Minister Zoning Orders for development within the Whitebelt lands west of Highway 48 and south of Stouffville Road, abutting the Community of Stouffville, which were not previously contemplated.
- Notwithstanding the Region's forecasted allocation to the Town, section 5.2.4.5 of the Growth Plan is explicit in that, within delineated built-up areas, municipalities may plan for development beyond the horizon of the Growth Plan for *strategic growth areas* that are delineated in official plans and subject to minimum density targets, provided certain criteria related to the provision of infrastructure and public service facilities, and the achievement of complete communities are achieved. Staff will endeavour to work with York Region staff to achieve full consistency between the Region's and the Town's forecasts.

- There will be a need to consider housing types as they relate to affordability and the demographic needs.
- The residential growth forecast allocation for the Town over the 2021 to 2041 period is understated, while the residential growth for the 2041-2051 period is overstated.

Current Term:

With the stronger than anticipated building permit activity over the past five years, the Town's population is tracking higher than what is identified in the Region's MCR forecast.

2021 – 2041:

- The Region's MCR draft 2021-2041 housing forecast for Whitchurch-Stouffville is significantly lower than recent housing development trends, broader regional growth trends, and local housing units in the "supply pipeline" would suggest.
- Over the 2021-2041 period, the Region's MCR forecast forecasts housing unit growth of approximately 7,000 units (average of 350 units per year), is notably lower than the historical annual average.
- The residential supply opportunities identified suggests that over the 2021-2041 period, market driven housing growth potential in Whitchurch-Stouffville is more robust than presented in the Region's draft MCR forecast.

Longer Term to 2051:

- While the Region's draft MCR forecast assumes that all of the Town's remaining Whitebelt Lands will be utilized to accommodate the forecast growth through 2051, portions of the remaining Whitebelt Lands (totalling approx. 208 gross ha excluding those identified through the recent MZO's discussed above) are fragmented and not located in proximity to Regional/local services, existing transportation networks or the Town's settlement areas.

Employment Lands:

- As identified by Watson & Associates, the Region's employment growth outlook to 2051 is generally appropriate for the Town. However, the amount and location of designated and serviceable employment land remains a significant issue for the Town. As per Council's recommendations of October 22, 2019 (Staff Report DS-052-19), Council supports adjustments to the Greenbelt Area to accommodate additional employment growth along the Highway 404 corridor and the addition of lands to the urban settlement area. Furthermore, as per Council's

recommendations of July 21, 2020 (Staff Report DS-027-20: South Gormley Employment Area Expansion and Greenbelt Enhancement Options), Council directed staff to pursue the designation of additional employment area lands in the proposed South Gormley Employment Expansion Area and settlement area boundary expansion through the Region's MCR. This is further supported by numerous Town Council resolutions and the Regional Council resolution of March 21, 2019, to identify certain areas along the Highway 404 corridor as Provincially Significant Employment Zones. On April 6, 2021, Council endorsed Staff Report DS-010-21: Gormley Industrial Area and Potential Gormley Urban Expansion Area, which outlines the potential economic benefits and development charges that may be generated through the development of the existing Gormley Industrial Area and the Potential Gormley Employment Expansion Area on the basis of full municipal services. The Town continues to prioritize the Highway 404 corridor for employment land opportunities. It is recommended that the Gormley Industrial Secondary Plan Area and the South Gormley Employment Expansion Area be designated as an Urban Area (Employment) in the Region's Official Plan.

- The Region's Proposed 2051 Growth Forecast and Land Needs Assessment currently identifies **95 ha of Whitebelt lands** to be designated as Employment. In Staff's view the designation of additional employment lands is required to accommodate the Town's forecasted employment growth to 2051. As previously identified, Staff recommend that the lands abutting the Gormley Secondary Plan area to the south be considered for settlement area expansion and designated as Employment Area through the Region's ongoing MCR. These lands are currently designated ORM Countryside Area in the Town's Official Plan. The Implementation section of the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan states that an upper-tier municipality may consider the need to change or refine the boundaries of a Settlement Area as part of a municipal comprehensive review undertaken in accordance with policy 2.2.8 of the Growth Plan.
- As part of the Town's on-going Official Plan Review, Watson and Associates Economists Ltd. is undertaking a Growth Management Assessment to identify population and employment forecasts and updated land needs for the Town to the 2051 planning horizon. The updated preliminary employment land needs for the Town were forecasted to be approximately **167 gross hectares** of serviced employment land that is required to the **2041 planning horizon**. Further updates to the Town's land needs are being undertaken to the **2051 planning horizon**, which is anticipated to result in an even greater employment land deficiency. As such, all lands proposed to be designated employment in the Town, should remain, and opportunities for designating additional employment lands should be considered, particularly within the Gormley area.
- Staff also recommends that Strategic Employment Lands be identified, for employment growth beyond 2051, as provided for through the Provincial Policy Statement. Strategic Employment Lands should be identified along the Highway 404 Corridor in the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville, consistent with York Region

Council and Town Councils directions and the Region's Report on Potential For Employment Lands Along 400 Series Highways, October 8, 2020.

Bethesda Road Lands (Community of Stouffville Settlement Area Expansion):

As noted above, all of the Town's Whitebelt lands are proposed by the Region to be used to accommodate growth to 2051. Further to this point, staff are of the opinion that the timing allocated by the Region does not correlate with the rate of development that the Town has experienced in recent years and will continue to experience in the short term. The current Whitebelt lands are non-contiguous parcels that run east-west along the Town's southern boundary and may not represent the most efficient and appropriate use of resources and infrastructure.

In order to accommodate the growth expected to 2041, it is recommended that other lands be considered for urban development ahead of some of the Town's Whitebelt lands. Attachment 2 to this report identifies lands along the Bethesda Road frontage from Tenth Line to Ninth Line that could accommodate growth in this shorter term and would be a more efficient use of existing infrastructure and resources.

The Bethesda lands identified in Attachment 2 are contiguous parcels that are currently in line with the Community of Stouffville settlement area boundary. They total approximately 61.6 hectares and represent a logical extension of the Town's settlement area. The lands can be easily accessed by services that are already in place for the Community of Stouffville. Further to that, these lands are in very close proximity to the new Lincolnville GO Station and will represent an efficiency of both servicing and transportation infrastructure, while also providing better opportunities for creating a complete community. Attachment 3 to this Report is a letter from Metrolinx indicating the preference that the layover facility on the north side of Bethesda Road be designated for high density mixed-use purposes through the Lincolnville Land Use Study. This further demonstrates future development interest and need for lands along the Bethesda Road corridor.

The lands identified in Attachment 2 are located in the Oak Ridges Moraine and are designated ORM Countryside Area in the Town's Official Plan. The Implementation section of the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan states that an upper-tier municipality may consider the need to change or refine the boundaries of a Settlement Area as part of a municipal comprehensive review undertaken in accordance with policy 2.2.8 of the Growth Plan. Settlement Area boundaries are not permitted to expand into Natural Core Areas or Natural Linkage Areas.

Staff are of the opinion that the Bethesda lands represent a logical area for an urban settlement area expansion. Based on the Region's land needs assessment, these lands may be more appropriate from a priority perspective for development as there is servicing and transportation infrastructure already in place. Staff recommend that the Region be requested to consider an urban settlement area expansion for the Bethesda lands as part

of its current MCR, and further to that point, that the phasing of these lands should be prioritized.

Should the Region recommend not proceeding with the Bethesda lands expansion, staff recommend they be identified in the Region's Official Plan as "Future Urban Area" or an overlay designation that identifies that these lands will be prioritized for future urban development.

5. Financial Implications:

None

6. Alignment with Strategic Plan:

2. Expanding the tax base through a growing, diversified economy
Building and maintaining a tax base that supports the highest quality program and service delivery.
 - Focus on servicing and development of Provincially Significant Employment Zones
 - Identify expansion areas for Industrial / Commercial growth

4. Asset Planning, Maintenance and Development
Successful stewardship of the infrastructure and facilities required to support a growing community and vibrant economy.
 - Address / plan for maintenance of existing assets & infrastructure; Create new infrastructure

7. Attachments:

- Attachment 1: Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville Comments on the Region's Proposed 2051 Growth Forecast and Land Needs Assessment, Watson and Associates Memo dated July 13, 2021.
- Attachment 2: Proposed Bethesda Settlement Area Expansion Lands
- Attachment 3: Letter from Metrolinx

8. Related Reports:

DS-052-19: Gormley Urban Settlement Area Boundary Expansion for Employment Growth and Greenbelt Enhancement, October 22, 2019

DS-027-20: South Gormley Employment Area Expansion and Greenbelt Enhancement Options, July 21, 2020

DS-045-20: Request for Emergency Extension of Full Municipal Services to Gormley, October 20, 2020

DS-010-21: Gormley Industrial Area and Potential Gormley Urban Expansion Area, April 6, 2021

DS-012-21: Draft 2051 Growth Forecast and Land Needs Assessment, April 20, 2021

Authors: Randall Roth, Senior Policy Planner
Meaghan Craven, Manager Policy Planning

For further information on this report, please contact the Chief Administrative Officer: Rob Adams, at 905-640-1910 or 1-855-642-8697 ext. 2245 or via email at rob.adams@townofws.ca

Technical Memorandum

| | |
|-------------|--|
| To | Meaghan Craven, Randall Roth |
| From | Erik Karvinen, Jamie Cook |
| Date | July 13, 2021 |
| Re: | Review and Comment on Region of York M.C.R. Draft 2051 Growth Allocations for Whitchurch-Stouffville |

Fax Courier Mail Email

Watson & Associates Economists Ltd. (Watson) was retained by The Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville to prepare a Preliminary Growth Management Strategy in support of its Official Plan Update. This assignment includes a review of the York Region's Municipal Comprehensive Review (M.C.R.) draft growth projections and allocations to the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville within the context of a detailed local examination of recent growth, development trends, and opportunities to accommodate future growth within Whitchurch-Stouffville.

York Region is currently developing long-term (i.e. to 2051) growth allocations for the area municipalities, including Whitchurch-Stouffville, through its M.C.R. process. Given the importance of these projections in guiding planning decisions, regional/local infrastructure requirements, municipal service delivery and municipal finances, it is necessary that Whitchurch-Stouffville's long-term population and employment potential is comprehensively reviewed and tested. It is also necessary that the details associated with anticipated residential and non-residential growth are examined with respect to typology, phasing, and geographic distribution.

Watson has reviewed the Region's latest draft 2051 population, housing and employment growth projections presented to Regional Council in March 2021. The following provides a summary of our comments on this review.

General Observations

- The long-term (i.e. 2051) population and household growth forecast for the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville represents an appropriate minimum growth allocation within the context of local and regional trends.
- We have reviewed the Town's residential growth outlook over the near-term, medium-term and longer-term within the context of the following:
 - The broader residential growth outlook for York Region and the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (G.T.H.A.);



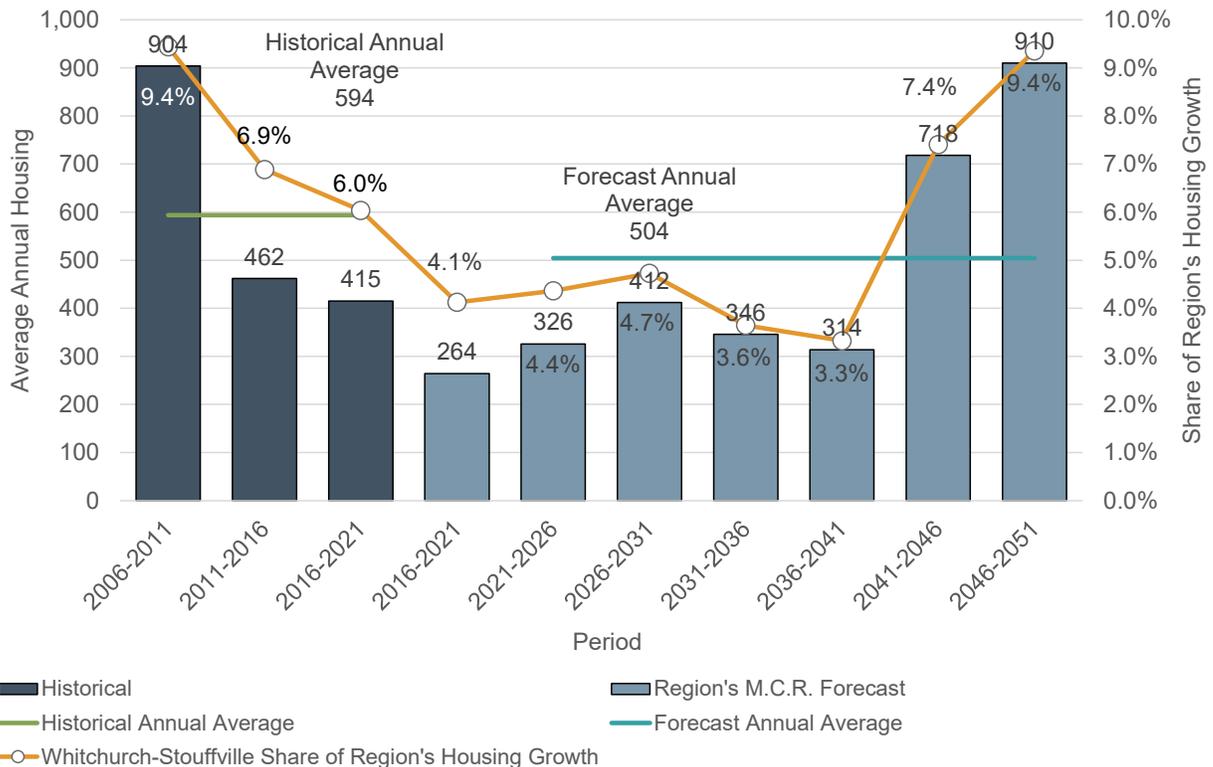
- Housing trends over the past two decades within the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville;
- Recent upward demand on residential building permits issued in 2020/2021 (year-to-date) within the Town resulting from COVID-19;
- Potential residential development within active development approvals;
- Review of expanded opportunities to accommodate residential growth in the Town including two recent Minister's Zoning Orders (M.Z.O.) and recommended employment conversions;
- available municipal water and wastewater servicing capacity.
- In light of this review, the rationale for the Region's housing forecast presented in Figure 1 is unclear. It is our opinion that the residential growth forecast allocation for the Town over the 2021 to 2041 period is understated while residential growth for the 2041-2051 period is overstated. It is critical that the Town's forecast reflect a more balanced housing outlook over the short to medium and longer term so that the Region and Town can be positioned to proactively plan, service and develop its urban structure and not unduly constrain local growth.
- With respect to forecast employment, we are generally in agreement with the employment growth outlook identified for Whitchurch-Stouffville through 2051. However, it is noted that we are currently reviewing the Town's long-term Employment Area land needs in accordance with the revised 2051 employment allocations for the Town.

Housing and Population Growth

- The Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville has historically exhibited strong housing growth, averaging 594 units per year over past 15 years (2006-2021), as illustrated in Figure 1, due to favourable market opportunities for housing. Over the period, Whitchurch-Stouffville has accounted for an estimated 7.5% of the Region's housing growth, ranging from a high of 9.4% from 2006-2011 to a low of 6.0% from 2016-2021.



Figure 1
Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville
Average Annual Housing Growth – Historical and Forecast
2006 to 2051



Source: 2006 to 2016 data based on Statistics Canada Census, 2016 to 2021 growth based on building permit data 2016-2020 provided by the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville. 2021 to 2051 data derived from York Region MCR draft forecast for the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville summarized by Watson & Associates Economists Ltd., 2021.

Near-Term Housing and Population Growth to 2021

- The Region’s M.C.R. forecast assumes housing growth of 1,320 units for Whitchurch-Stouffville, averaging 264 units per year between 2016-2021. In comparison, building permit activity over the 2016-2020 period has averaged 415 units per year, 57% higher. New residential construction in 2020 was notably stronger than in earlier years, with 628 units generated from building permit activity and this trend is expected to continue in 2021.^[1]
- With the stronger than anticipated building permit activity over the past five years, the Town’s population is tracking higher than what is identified in the Region’s M.C.R. forecast. We estimate the Town’s 2021 population to be approximately

^[1] January – April, 2021 building permit activity generated 232 units, extrapolated for the year, 2021 total anticipated to total 696 units.



51,400, about 2% (1,100 people) higher than the Region's M.C.R. estimate of 50,300.^[1]

Medium and Long-Term Housing and Population Growth 2021-2041

- The Region's M.C.R. draft 2021-2041 housing forecast for Whitchurch-Stouffville is significantly lower than recent housing development trends, broader regional growth trends, and local housing units in the "supply pipeline" would suggest.
- Over the 2021-2041 period, the Region's M.C.R. forecast forecasts housing unit growth of approximately 7,000 units (average of 350 units per year), is notably lower than the historical annual average. The forecast housing growth for the Town represents 4.0% of the Region's total housing growth over the 2021-2041 period, significantly lower than the 6.0 to 6.9% share of housing growth achieved over the past decade (2011-2021).
- The Town has a significant residential supply pipeline comprised of approximately 14,600 units, representing a diverse range of housing market choice, which is anticipated to be largely absorbed over the 2021-2041 period. This includes approximately:
 - 5,100 units in development approvals process (registered unbuilt, draft approved, proposed)
 - 2,200 units associated within the Lincolnville GO Station secondary plan area
 - 2,900 potential unit yield of two recent recommended employment conversion sites^[2]
 - 2,100 units from two recent M.Z.O.s^[3]
- The residential supply opportunities identified suggests that over the 2021-2041 period, market driven housing growth potential in Whitchurch-Stouffville is more robust than presented in the Region's draft M.C.R. forecast. However, the forecast housing mix is likely to be comprised of a moderately greater share of higher density units (i.e. townhouses, stacked townhouses and apartments) than presented in the draft M.C.R. forecast.

^[1] Population figures a net Census undercount estimated at approximately 3.1%.

^[2] First employment conversion site is located at 12049 Highway 48 and covers approximately 27 gross acres. The second employment conversion site is located on the southeast portion of Hoover Park Drive and Highway 48 covering 11 gross hectares.

^[3] A M.Z.O. was submitted for 11776 Highway 48 and was approved and is currently in the draft plan approvals process. Another M.Z.O application was submitted for 11776 and 11882 Highway 48, and currently seeking a M.Z.O. for the subject lands, but no decision has been made as identified in Staff Report DS-035-20.

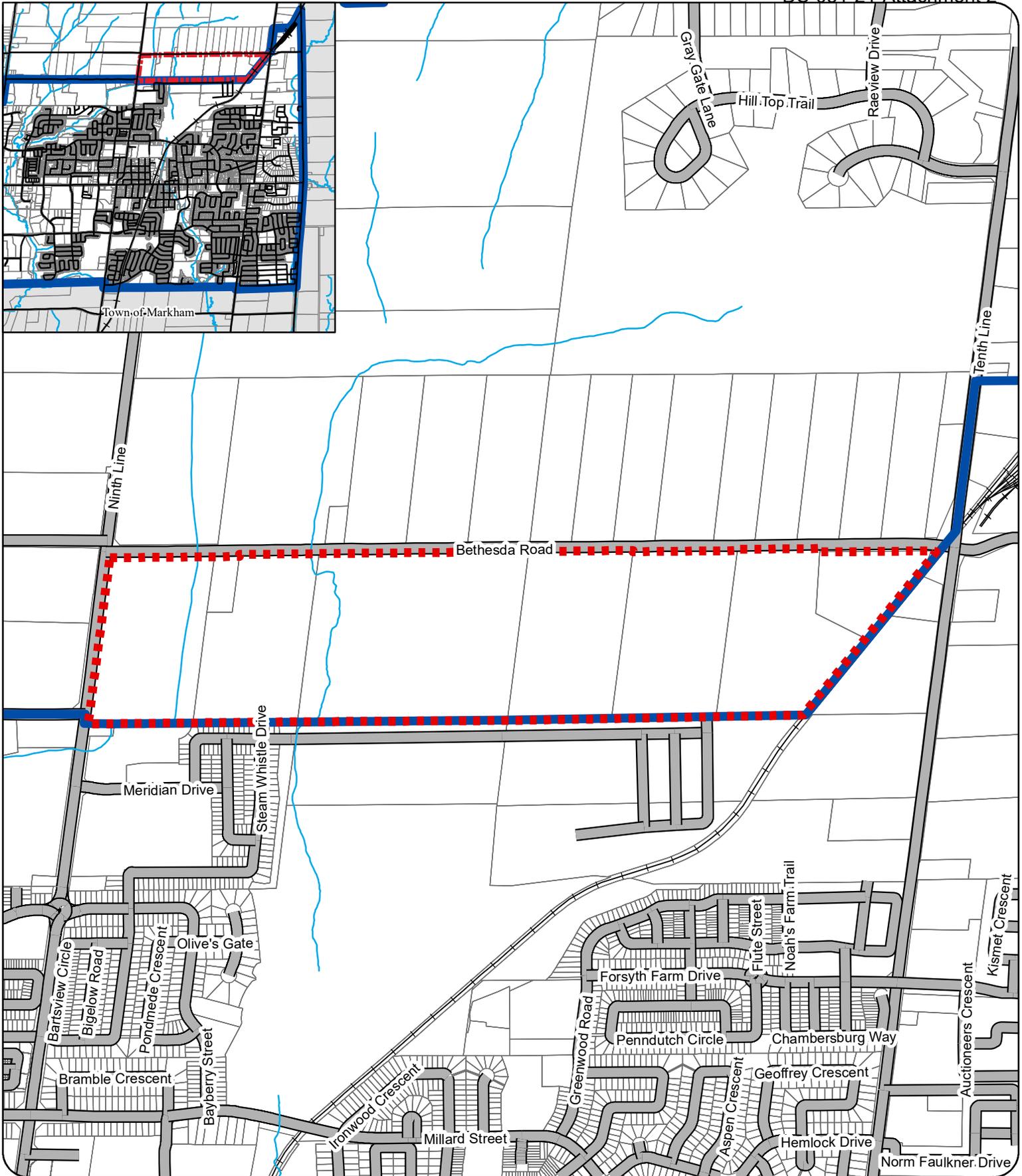


Long-Term Residential Land Needs through 2051

- We agree with the Region that the Town has an insufficient supply of designated greenfield supply opportunities to meet forecast housing growth over the 2051 period and an urban boundary expansion will be required to address this deficit, requiring at a minimum the equivalent of the Town's remaining Whitebelt Lands to meet future land needs.
- While the Region's draft M.C.R. forecast assumes that all of the Town's remaining Whitebelt Lands will be utilized to accommodate the forecast growth through 2051, portions of the remaining Whitebelt Lands (totalling approx. 208 gross ha excluding those identified through the recent M.Z.O.s discussed above) are fragmented and not located in proximity to Regional/local services, existing transportation networks or the Town's settlement areas.^[1]
- It is our understanding that the Town is requesting the Region for a settlement area boundary expansion in Stouffville to serve as a possible alternative location to a portion of the Whitebelt Lands to accommodate future residential growth.^[2]
- Based on our preliminary market assessment, the requested settlement area boundary expansion area is considered favourable for future residential growth due to its contiguous configuration, proximity to existing and emerging growth areas in Whitchurch-Stouffville (Phase 3 lands and Lincolnville GO), and proximity to existing servicing. This preliminary assessment has not considered Provincial, Regional or local policy planning considerations which may impact its potential for development.

^[1] York Region has identified 280 gross hectares of Whitebelt Lands for Community Areas. The Town's two M.Z.O.'s represent a combined area of approximately 72 hectares, resulting in a residual of 208 hectares of Whitebelt Lands.

^[2] The subject area covers a gross developable area of approximately 62 hectares immediately north of the Phase 3 lands bound to the west by Ninth Line, Bethesda Road to the north and Stouffville GO rail line.



Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville
Proposed Settlement Area Expansion

 Proposed Settlement Area Boundary Expansion

 Settlement Area Boundary





June 22, 2021

Rob Adams, Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)
Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville
111 Sandiford Drive
Ontario L4A 0Z8

Dear Rob,

Re: Lincolnville GO Station - Transit Oriented Community (TOC) Opportunities

As you know, Metrolinx has provided GO service to the Lincolnville community since 2008. Metrolinx currently owns 3 parcels of land totalling 30 acres that are presently used for the Lincolnville GO Station, including a layover facility, northeast of the intersection of 10th Line and Bethesda Side Road. To accommodate the Lincolnville Layover Expansion Project and relocate the Lincolnville GO Station, Metrolinx acquired 2 additional parcels of land in 2017 totalling 13.2 acres southwest of 10th Line and Bethesda Side Road. See attached map for reference.

Metrolinx's future Lincolnville GO Station lands are currently the subject of an ongoing Major Transit Station Area (MTSA) study, which is recommending a High-Density Mixed Use designation for Metrolinx's lands. Although the lands are intended to be used for a GO Station and ancillary facilities, we fully support and encourage a High-Density Mixed Use designation for these lands. This would enable future opportunities for TOC projects as we continuously assess our transit assets for ways to more efficiently deliver infrastructure and encourage integrated mixed-use communities surrounding GO Stations.

Metrolinx's current Lincolnville GO Station lands are currently designated as Industrial/Employment per OPA 137, which restricts any conversion of the lands to non-employment uses outside of a Municipal Comprehensive Review process (MCR). As the MCR process is currently underway, we see this as an excellent opportunity to re-assess the use of these lands as they will not be required for a station in the future and demonstrate high potential for a future Transit Oriented Community (TOC) project. Similar to the on-going MTSA work referenced above, we believe these parcels, in close proximity to a GO Station, would also be appropriately designated at High-Density Mixed Use.

We would be very happy to arrange a time to discuss how we may better support the on-going MTSA and MCR work taking place and thank you for time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Phil Verster", with a checkmark-like flourish at the end.

Phil Verster, President and CEO, Metrolinx

CC

Michael Norton, Chief of Development, Metrolinx
Karla Avis-Birch, Chief Planning Officer

Lincolville GO Station & Layover Facility



Property Information

Property 1 (*Layover Facility*)

Address:
- 13190 York Durham Line
PIN:
- 037060158
Planning Framework:
- Industrial/Employment (OP)

Property 2 (*Layover Facility*)

Address:
- 13120 York Durham Line
PIN:
- 037060150
Planning Framework:
- Industrial/Employment (OP)

Property 3 (*Current GO Station*)

Address:
- N/A
PIN:
- 037060277
Planning Framework:
- Industrial/Employment (OP)

Property 4 (*Future GO Station*)

Address:
- 12958 Tenth Line
PIN:
- 037080586
Planning Framework:
- High-Density Mixed-Use
(ongoing MTSA)

Property 5 (*Future GO Station*)

Address:
- 12902 Tenth Line
PIN:
- 037080587
Planning Framework:
- High-Density Mixed-Use
(ongoing MTSA)