

2019 **PLANNING** FOR  
**INTENSIFICATION**  
**BACKGROUND REPORT**  
YORK REGION'S MUNICIPAL COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW

APRIL 2019



## Key Findings

The 2017 Provincial Growth Plan requires the Region to prepare an Intensification Strategy as part of the Regional Municipal Comprehensive Review. This report provides the background analysis to support the development of this Strategy. The *Planning for Intensification Background Report*:

- Summarizes the Provincial, Regional and local municipal policy context for intensification;
- Assesses historic levels of intensification in York Region and changes in the Region's overall housing mix over time;
- Provides an update on development progress in the Region's Urban Growth Centres;
- Discusses key factors driving intensification in York Region;
- Identifies draft major transit station area (MTSA) and additional strategic growth area (SGA) delineations and minimum density targets; and
- Summarizes key policy directions for the forthcoming York Region Intensification Strategy.

The report includes the following highlights:

- The structure for intensification is already well-established through the Regional Centres and Corridors framework from the 1994 Regional Official Plan, the 2009 York Region 2031 Intensification Strategy, the current Regional Official Plan (ROP) policies on intensification as well as through local municipal intensification strategies, secondary plans and official plan policies. York Region's framework for intensification focuses on the Centres and Corridors and other key strategic intensification areas in the Region that allow for optimizing existing and planned infrastructure and service provision including investment in higher order transit.
- Intensification provides important benefits to the Region including more efficient use of land and existing infrastructure, increased housing options and opportunities for the provision of more affordable housing, support of a greater range of transportation options including transit and active transportation modes, contributing to climate change mitigation, creation of more complete communities as well as fiscal benefits to the Region and local municipalities.
- York Region is well-positioned to accommodate the Growth Plan's intensification targets of 50 percent to 2031 and 60 percent from 2031 to 2041 given the extensive investment in higher order transit, the planned system of centres and corridors and other intensification areas in the Region and the historical level of intensification in the Region.
- The housing market in the GTHA and York Region is shifting to higher density forms of housing. This trend is expected to continue in the future due to the aging of the population, housing affordability issues, the continuing maturation and diversification of the Region and the continuing development of the Region's intensification areas into complete communities.

- Development in the Region's Urban Growth Centres in Markham, Newmarket, Richmond Hill and Vaughan are progressing. All Urban Growth Centres (UGCs) are planned to reach or exceed the Growth Plan density target of 200 residents and jobs per hectare. Infrastructure investments are needed to fully reach this density target. In addition, reaching the Growth Plan density target for some of the UGCs will also be challenging due to the required pace of development over the 2019 to 2031 period.
- Proposed delineations and minimum density targets are provided for 57 MTSAs in priority transit corridors as well as for 13 additional MTSAs for a total of 70 MTSAs in the Region. Alternative density targets are proposed for two MTSAs which are unable to meet the minimum Growth Plan density targets. Draft delineations and density targets are also proposed for additional strategic growth areas. Consultation will be undertaken on the draft delineations and density targets which will be finalized for the Intensification Strategy.
- An updated Intensification Matrix that identifies strategic priority areas for intensification as well as an updated Key Attributes for Intensification Areas are provided as the foundation for development of the Region's Intensification Strategy. Key policy directions for updating the Regional Official Plan, consistent with the Growth Plan 2017 are also identified.
- Total Regional intensification units and allocation of these units to local municipalities will be undertaken as part of the forecast and land needs assessment work later in 2019.
- The full York Region Intensification Strategy will be developed later in the Regional Municipal Comprehensive Review, in the first quarter of 2020.

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## 1. Introduction

The Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2017 (the Growth Plan) requires municipalities to develop an Intensification Strategy to articulate how the Growth Plan minimum intensification target will be achieved. This report is a background report that will feed into the development of the Region's Intensification Strategy which is a component of the Regional Municipal Comprehensive Review. The *Planning for Intensification Background Report* contains the following:

- Summary of the Provincial, Regional and local municipal policy context for planning for intensification;
- Assessment of the historic levels of intensification in York Region;
- Development progress update for the Region's Urban Growth Centres;
- Key factors driving York Region's ability to meet the Growth Plan intensification targets;
- Draft major transit station area delineations and minimum density targets;
- Draft additional strategic growth area delineations and minimum density targets; and
- Key policy directions for York Region's Intensification Strategy and update of the Regional Official Plan.

This report will inform development of draft local municipal intensification targets, which will be provided in the Region's growth forecast report later in 2019. The Intensification Strategy is planned to be completed in the first quarter of 2020.

At the time this report was prepared, the Provincial Government was in the process of consulting on a proposed amendment to the 2017 Growth Plan (Amendment 1) as well as reviewing the Provincial Policy Statement, 2014 and the Planning Act. Unless stated otherwise, this report assumes the current in-force Provincial policy and legislative environment as of March 2019.

## 2. Background

### 2.1 Intensification provides important benefits to the Region

Growing through intensification and more compact development as opposed to lower density growth through development of mainly greenfield lands has a number of important benefits including making more efficient use of existing and planned infrastructure. In York Region, this means encouraging development in Centres and Corridors to support the over \$3 billion investment in transit infrastructure by all three levels of government including the Spadina subway extension to Vaughan Metropolitan Centre, the development of Bus Rapid Transit lines along Highway 7, Yonge and Davis Drive and other infrastructure investments.

Intensification also contributes to the development of complete communities in the Region by providing a greater range of housing and transportation choices by making public transit more viable. Increasing housing choice to allow for more medium and high density housing through intensification contributes to improved housing affordability. Higher density transit supportive development contributes to climate change mitigation by making more efficient use of land and infrastructure, better preserving agricultural lands, reducing automobile dependency and promoting active forms of transportation.

Intensification also has significant fiscal benefits through cost savings in Regional and local municipal infrastructure and services realized through more compact development. For example, growth through intensification as compared to greenfield development can provide savings in reduced road and other linear infrastructure costs. A fiscal analysis to be completed later in 2019 will inform the Region's growth forecast and land needs assessment as part of the Regional Municipal Comprehensive Review.

### 2.2 Province provides policy direction on intensification through the Provincial Policy Statement and Growth Plan

#### 2.2.1 Provincial Policy Statement, 2014

The Provincial Policy Statement, 2014 (*PPS*) provides direction on matters of provincial interest related to land use planning. Under the Planning Act, decisions affecting planning matters must be consistent with the PPS. The PPS defines intensification as:

The development of a property, site or area at a higher density than currently exists through:

- a) Redevelopment, including the reuse of brownfield sites;
- b) The development of vacant and/or underutilized lots within previously developed areas;
- c) Infill development; and
- d) The expansion or conversion of existing buildings.

The PPS provides policy directions related to intensification as outlined below.

Policy 1.1.1 states that healthy, liveable and safe communities are sustained by promoting efficient development and land use patterns, promoting cost-effective development patterns and standards to minimize land consumption and servicing costs.

Policy 1.1.2 addresses the need to provide sufficient land to accommodate an appropriate range and mix of land use to accommodate projected needs for up to 20 years. To meet this policy requirement, sufficient land is to be made available through intensification and redevelopment and if necessary, designated growth areas.

Policy 1.1.3.2 states that land use patterns within settlement areas are to be based on a range of uses and opportunities for intensification and redevelopment in accordance with criteria in Policy 1.1.3.3 and where this can be accommodated.

Municipalities are directed through Policy 1.1.3.3. to identify appropriate locations and promote opportunities for intensification and redevelopment where it can be accommodated taking into account the existing building stock or areas and the availability of existing or planned infrastructure and public service facilities to accommodate projected needs.

In addition, municipalities are required to develop intensification targets, as set out in Policy 1.1.3.5. In the case of York Region, the Growth Plan establishes the minimum target for intensification. PPS Policy 1.2.4 directs upper tier municipalities in consultation with lower tier municipalities to identify minimum targets for intensification and redevelopment within lower tier municipalities that should be met before settlement area boundary expansion is permitted.

The PPS also provides additional policies through Policy 1.1.3.7 related to establishing and implementing phasing policies to ensure meeting intensification targets, the orderly progression of development and the timely provision of infrastructure and public service facilities.

## 2.2.2 Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2017

The Growth Plan builds upon the policy foundation provided by the PPS, providing more specific land use planning policies for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (GGH). One of the overall guiding principles of the Growth Plan is to prioritize intensification and higher densities in order to make efficient use of land and infrastructure and support transit.

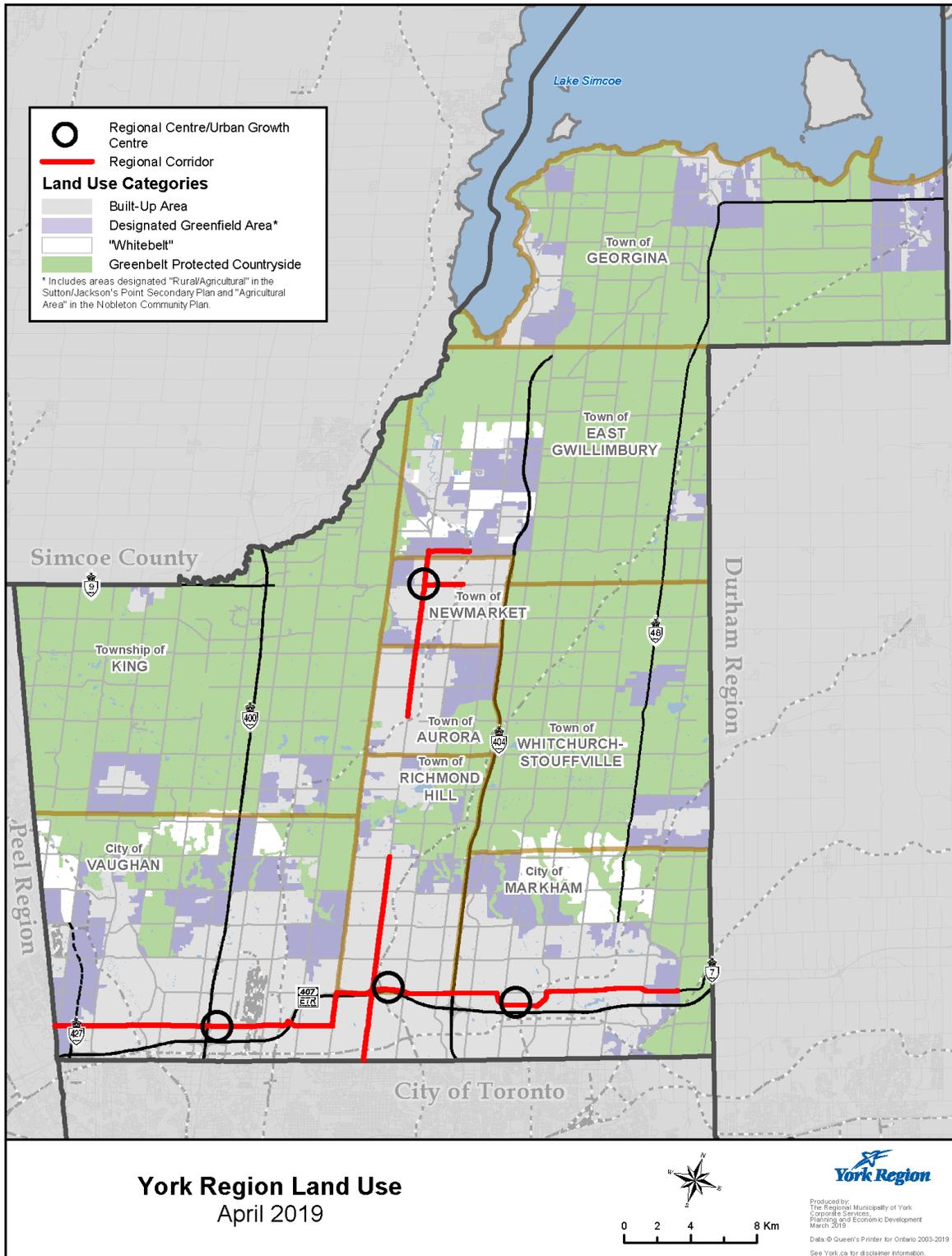
### 2.2.2.1 Growth Plan establishes minimum intensification targets for York Region

The Growth Plan contains specific policy targets for intensification:

- By the time of approval of the current Regional MCR and each year until 2031, a minimum of 50 per cent of all residential development occurring annually will be within the delineated built-up area.
- By 2031, and for each year thereafter to 2041, the intensification target increases to 60 per cent.

The delineated built-up area was developed by the Province as part of the 2006 Growth Plan. It is reflective of the general limits of the developed urban area as of 2006 and is shown in Map 1 as the grey area.

Map 1: York Region Land Use



Council may request an alternative target where it is demonstrated that the intensification target to 2031 cannot be achieved subject to a number of criteria including maintaining or improving on the current intensification target, accounting for existing infrastructure, consideration of the actual rate of intensification being achieved, supporting diversification of the total range and mix of housing options and others. The request for an alternative target only applies to the period until 2031.

While the majority of intensification units in the Region will be medium and high density housing units, any new residential units built within the Region's delineated built-up area count towards the intensification target, including low density residential development. Redevelopment of golf course lands including Glenway in Newmarket, York Downs in Markham, Highland Gate in Aurora and Copper Creek in Vaughan are providing significant ground-related housing supply within the built-up area and also count towards the Region's intensification units. In addition, more modest forms of intensification such as small infill projects and second suites also contribute to intensification in the Region. In total, since 2010, apartments have accounted for approximately 56 per cent of the Region's intensification units within the built-up area while ground-related units including single detached and row units comprised the remainder.

#### *2.2.2.2 Growth Plan requires York Region to prepare an Intensification Strategy*

Municipalities are required to develop a strategy to articulate how the minimum intensification will be achieved. The strategy is to:

- a) Encourage intensification generally to achieve the desired urban structure;
- b) Identify the appropriate type and scale of development and transition of built form to adjacent areas;
- c) Identify strategic growth areas to support achievement of the intensification target and recognize them as a key focus for development;
- d) Ensure lands are zoned and development is designed in a manner that supports the achievement of complete communities;
- e) Prioritize planning and investment in infrastructure and public service facilities that will support intensification; and
- f) Be implemented through official plan policies and designations, updated zoning and other supporting documents.

Intensification strategy requirements are implemented through the York Region Intensification Strategy, local municipal intensification strategies and through other Regional and local municipal land use planning policy, decisions on land use planning matters as well as infrastructure investment and service planning decisions.

#### *2.2.2.3 Growth Plan directs that infrastructure investment support growth through intensification*

There are a number of Growth Plan policies that speak to the need for infrastructure investment decisions to support intensification.

Section 3.2.1.2 references leveraging infrastructure investment to direct growth and development including the achievement of intensification targets as well as providing sufficient servicing capacity in strategic growth areas. Similarly, Section 3.2.1.3 addresses the use of

infrastructure and other implementation tools to facilitate intensification and higher density development in strategic growth areas. Through Section 3.2.3, the Growth Plan directs municipalities to prioritize areas with existing or planned higher densities for transit investment to also increase the capacity of existing transit systems to support strategic growth areas.

*2.2.2.4 Urban Growth Centres are to be planned to achieve a density of 200 residents and jobs per hectare by 2031*

Urban Growth Centres are to be planned to accommodate significant population and employment growth and be the focal points for investment in public services facilities. They are to accommodate commercial, recreational, cultural and entertainment uses, support the regional transit network and serve as high density major employment centres. York Region's four urban growth centres – Vaughan Metropolitan Centre, Richmond Hill Centre/Langstaff Gateway, Markham Centre and Newmarket Centre – are required to achieve a minimum density target of 200 residents and jobs combined per hectare by 2031. Map 1 shows the location of the Region's Urban Growth Centres which are located within the boundaries of the four Regional Centres.

Strategic growth area is an umbrella term in the Growth Plan that includes Urban Growth Centres, major transit station areas and other strategic growth areas (Figure 1).

**Figure 1: Components of Strategic Growth Areas**



### 2.2.2.5 *Major transit station areas on priority transit corridors are to be delineated and assigned minimum density targets*

Upper tier municipalities, in consultation with lower tier municipalities, are required to delineate the boundaries of major transit station areas (MTSAs) and to set minimum density targets for MTSAs located on priority transit corridors. A MTSA is defined as:

*The area including and around any existing or planned higher order transit station or stop within a settlement area including around a major bus depot in an urban core. Major transit station areas generally are defined as the area within an approximate 500 metre radius of a transit station, representing about a 10-minute walk.*

Priority transit corridors are identified in Schedule 5 of the Growth Plan. York Region's Priority Transit Corridors are shown on Map 2 and generally consist of the portions of the Highway 7 and Yonge Corridors with funded Bus Rapid Transit, the Barrie GO rail line north to the Aurora GO station, the Stouffville GO line to Markham Centre and the three stations of the Spadina subway line located in York Region.

MTSAs are to be planned for 200 residents and jobs combined per hectare for subway stations, 160 for bus rapid or light rail transit or 150 for GO rail stations. There is no timing requirement in the Growth Plan for MTSAs to achieve these densities; they are long term density targets that may not be achieved until after 2041.

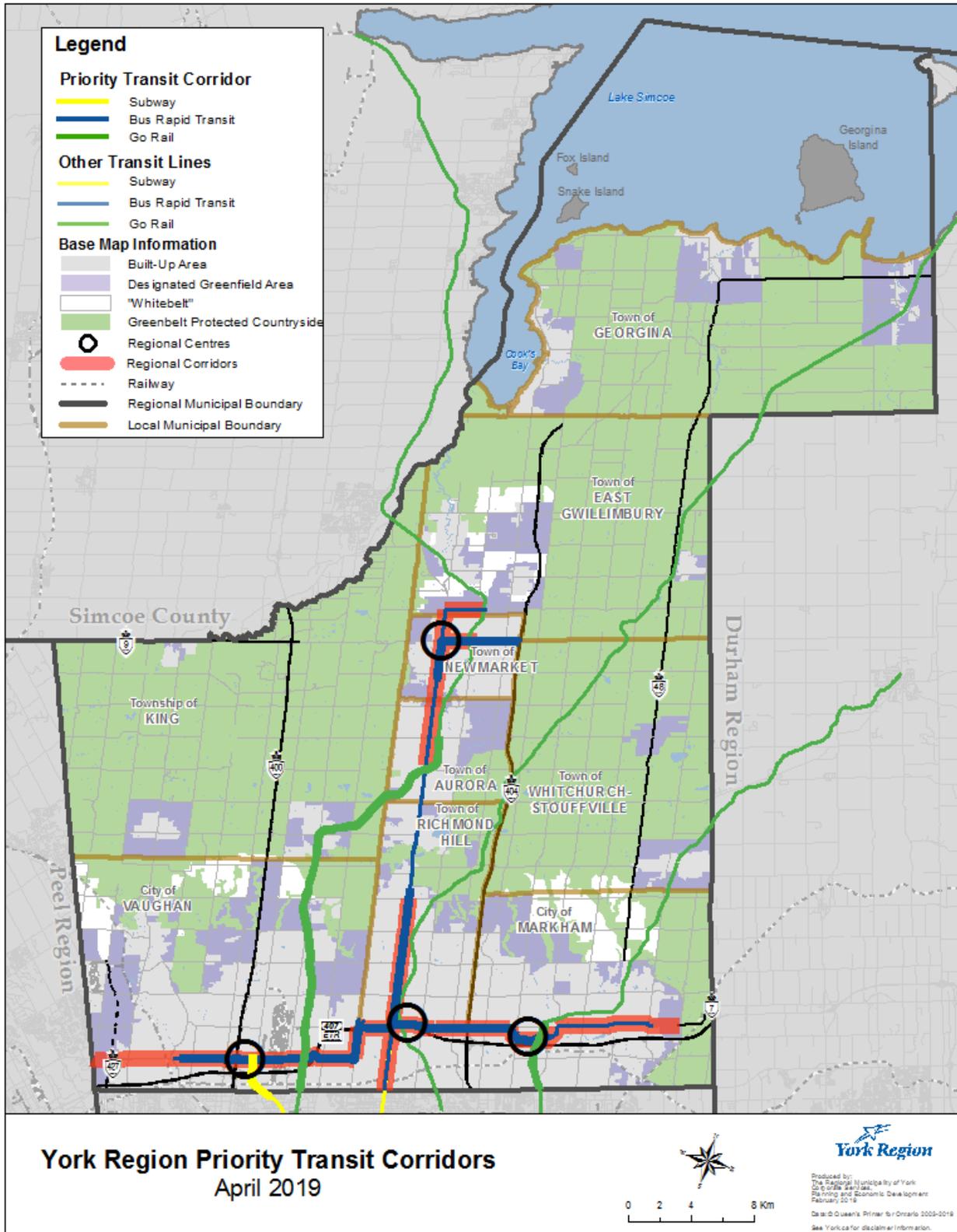
Where there are four or more MTSAs along the same priority transit corridor, the average of the targets established for those MTSAs must meet or exceed the applicable minimum density target for that corridor.

For any given MTSA, the Region has the ability to request to the Minister an alternative target to the Growth Plan minimum density targets listed above, subject to requirements. It must be demonstrated that the density target cannot be achieved because of development restrictions and/or significantly limited redevelopment potential. There are also additional criteria related to supporting a more compact built form, maximizing the potential transit users, increasing the existing density of the MTSA and others.

The Region has the option to identify additional MTSAs beyond Priority Transit Corridors. Additional MTSAs also require delineation and minimum density targets but are not subject to the Growth Plan minimum density targets.

All MTSAs are to be planned and designed to be transit supportive, supportive of active transportation and accommodate a range and mix of land uses and activities. For MTSAs located within employment areas, the mix of land uses refers to different types of employment uses.

Map 2: Priority Transit Corridors in York Region



Section 16 of the *Planning Act* provides for restricting official plan and zoning appeals for the areas that are identified as Protected MTSAs at both the Regional and local municipal levels in relation to density, building height and land use. The Region is required to identify which MTSAs are protected in order for them to receive protection from appeals under the *Planning Act*.

#### 2.2.2.6 Additional Strategic Growth Areas can be identified by the Region

Strategic Growth Areas are defined in the Growth Plan as areas within settlement areas, nodes, corridors and other areas that have been identified by municipalities or the Province to be the focus for accommodating intensification and higher density mixed uses in a more compact built form. Strategic growth areas include Urban Growth Centres, Major transit station areas and other major intensification opportunities which can be located in either the Built-up area or the Designated Greenfield Area. Additional strategic growth areas beyond UGCs and MTSAs that are identified in the Regional Official Plan (ROP) are required to be delineated and to have a minimum density target. The Growth Plan provides flexibility in terms of the extent of identifying additional SGAs beyond UGCs and MTSAs. Section 5.2.4.5 of the Growth Plan states that municipalities may plan for development beyond 2041 for strategic growth areas that are delineated and subject to minimum density targets.

### 2.3 York Region has a well-established policy base for intensification

#### 2.3.1 York Region 2031 Intensification Strategy established a framework for intensification

The York Region 2031 Intensification Strategy was adopted by Council in 2009. It provided a long-term framework for creating sustainable and quality compact communities focused on the Region's Centres and Corridors and also demonstrated the ability of the Region to meet the 2006 Growth Plan intensification target.

The Strategy established a series of principles for intensification related to connecting centers and corridors with rapid transit, built form, walkability, provision of quality public spaces, improving the live work relationship, ensuring a range of housing options and affordability, following the Region's Transit Oriented Development Guidelines along with other principles.

To contribute to the development of complete communities, key attributes of intensification areas were outlined in the 2009 Strategy and addressed issues such as transit supportive and mixed use development, built form, housing options, natural heritage and open space, culture, energy planning, parking and other factors. The key attributes were incorporated into the ROP policies related to intensification.

The 2009 Intensification Strategy established the York Region Intensification Matrix which became part of the ROP policy framework for intensification. The matrix identifies key strategic areas where intensification can be best accommodated with respect to efficient and cost effective infrastructure, transit and human service provision.

The matrix in Figure 2 shows the hierarchy of intensification for the Region from the 2009 Intensification Strategy. The inverse triangular shape of the matrix signifies that densities and built form types will vary. Greater densities and building heights are expected to continue to occur in Regional Centres and Corridors relative to other key strategic areas.

**Figure 2: 2009 Regional Intensification Matrix**

### 2.3.2 York Region Official Plan contains policies to implement the Region's Intensification Strategy

The Regional Official Plan (ROP) set outs the policy direction for achieving the Growth Plan intensification target. Sections 5.3, 5.4 and 5.5 contain policies related to intensification, Regional Centres and Corridors and Local Centres and Corridors. Intensification is to occur in strategic areas in the Region's built-up area to maximize efficiencies in infrastructure delivery, human services provision and transit. The strategic locations are based on an intensification framework that places priority on the Regional Centres, followed by the Regional Corridors and then local municipal centres and corridors.

Policies in the ROP address land use planning and urban design in intensification areas to ensure the provision of well-designed public open spaces, opportunities for active transportation and the achievement of an appropriate transition of built form to adjacent areas. The ROP encourages human services and affordable housing to locate in intensification areas.

Table 1 in the ROP sets local municipal intensification targets for 2006 to 2031 to meet the 2006 Growth Plan intensification target of 40 percent which was equivalent to 90,700 total intensification units in the Region. The ROP directed local municipalities to prepare their own intensification strategies based on the Regional Intensification Strategy and the Region's Intensification Guide to meet or exceed the ROP local municipal intensification targets.

The ROP establishes the Regional Centres and Corridors as the foundation of the Region's urban structure and city building approach to development to realize the vision of a vibrant and liveable urban environment. Regional Centres and Corridors are to be the primary location for the most intensive and greatest mix of development in the Region containing residential, office and other commercial development. York Region's four Urban Growth Centres discussed above are contained within the four Regional Centres. Vaughan Metropolitan Centre contains the terminal station for the Spadina subway line and Richmond Hill Centre/Langstaff Gateway is planned for the Yonge Street subway extension terminal station.

The Regional Corridors – Yonge Street, Highway 7, Davis Drive and Green Lane – connect the Regional Centres and other key intensification areas in the Region and form the main arteries of the Region’s urban structure.

### 2.3.3 Other York Region Initiatives Support Intensification

Focusing growth and infrastructure investment in the Regional Centres and Corridors has been a key component of the Regional Official Plan since its initial adoption in 1994. In addition to the ROP policies, the Region has also undertaken the following initiatives to promote and measure intensification:

- In 2003, the York Region Centres and Corridors Study, titled, “Making it Happen!” set out recommended actions and initiatives by all levels of government and the private sector to implement the envisioned system of Regional Centres and Corridors.
- In 2004, Regional Council adopted the Centres and Corridors Strategy which is an action plan to implement the above Centres and Corridor Study with key recommendations in the areas of policy, financial policy and tools, infrastructure investment and supportive programs.
- In 2006, Regional Council adopted the *Transit-Oriented Development Guidelines* that emphasize the need for an urban form that supports transit investment along the Regional network of Centres and Corridors.
- In 2008, Regional Council adopted a plan to implement a policy to provide 20-40% increase in servicing allocation for development proposals that meet specific criteria that include, among others:
  - Minimum LEED silver standard
  - Location within a Regional Centre or Corridor, or Local Centre
  - Meet the Regional *Transit-Oriented Development Guidelines*
- Since 2013, Regional staff has provided Council with annual progress updates on the Centres and Corridors program.
- The York Region Office Space Financial/Market Analysis and Marketing Plan Study from 2015 aims to attract office development in the Region, particularly in Centres and Corridors.
- Regional Council endorsed the Supporting High Density Development within Identified Intensification Areas Report in 2015, which authorized Regional staff to appear before the Ontario Municipal Board in support of the Region’s position, as required, for all development proposals that seek to reduce approved densities within intensification areas.
- In 2016, the Centres and Corridors Program partnered with the York Link office attraction campaign to showcase the relationship between economic development and city building.

The objective of this new marketing and communications strategy is to facilitate office development and employment growth in York Region, primarily in Centres and Corridors.

- To date over \$3 billion has been invested in transit projects in York Region by all three levels of government including:
  - The Spadina subway extension to VMC which opened in December 2017
  - 36 km VIVA Bus Rapid Transit System
  - Road and streetscape improvements

In addition to the above, the Region and Province have made significant financial investments in transit to support intensification in the Regional Centres and Corridors as well as to ensure water-wastewater infrastructure is available to support these areas. Water and wastewater capacity availability for intensification areas will be addressed on a case by case basis. Priority will be given to locations where existing capacity exists.

#### 2.4 Local Municipalities have intensification strategies and official plan policies in place

The ROP directs local municipalities to prepare intensification strategies based on the Region's Strategy and guiding principles. The Region produced a guide in 2008 to assist local municipalities. The objectives of the local intensification strategies were to:

- Demonstrate how the Region's local municipal intensification assignment will be met in terms of unit potential, density and design as well as identify and map the locations and amount of intensification;
- Identify the key attributes for creating, high quality, sustainable compact communities
- Promote communication to raise awareness of intensification; and
- Develop a monitoring system to track progress to meeting the intensification vision, key attributes and targets.

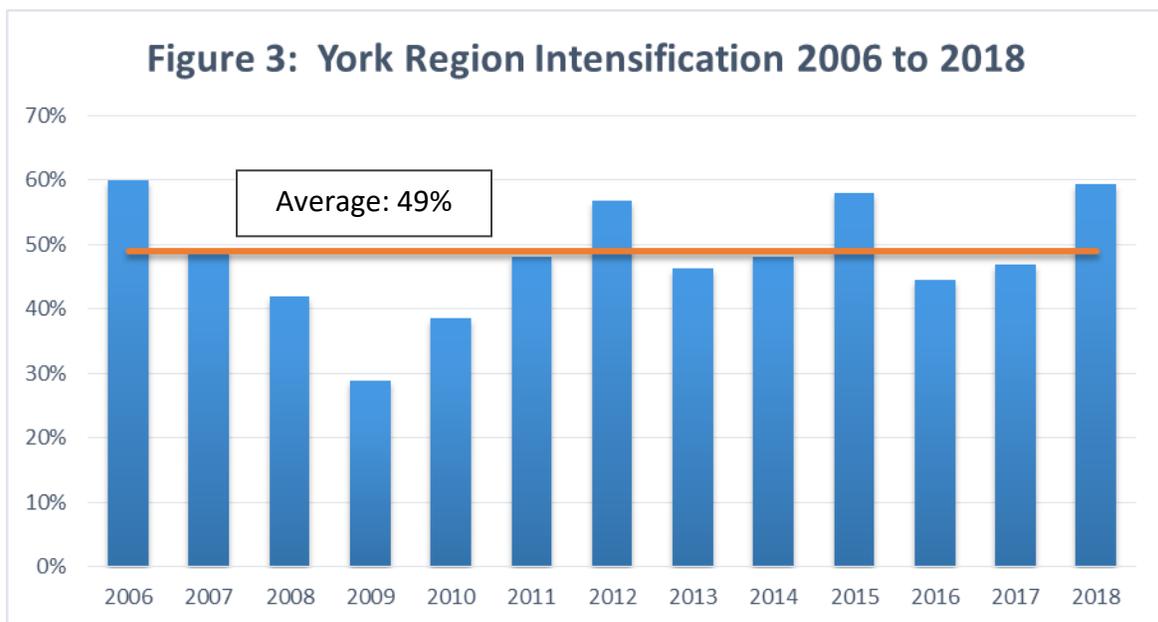
Since 2010 when the ROP was approved, local municipalities have produced either stand-alone intensification strategies or have incorporated elements of the intensification strategy through their respective official plan reviews. All have identified or are in the process of identifying the appropriate locations to accommodate the Region's 2031 intensification targets. These locations include Regional Centres and Corridors, local centers and corridors, infill development and other locations. The following is a summary of the current local municipal intensification areas.

**Table 1: Summary of Local Municipal Intensification Areas**

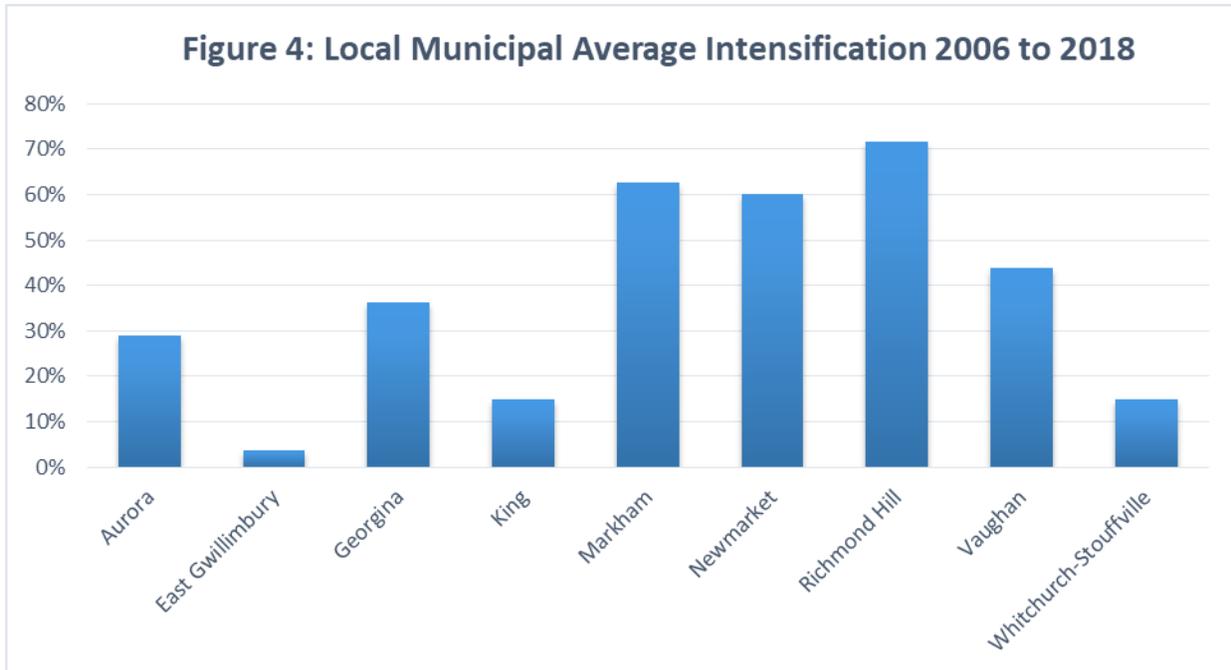
Municipality	Intensification Areas
Aurora	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aurora Promenade is the prime intensification area in Aurora, consisting of the Yonge and Wellington Street corridors including the GO station</li> <li>• Additional intensification population growth is also anticipated through secondary suites</li> </ul>
East Gwillimbury	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Directs intensification to centres and corridors within the built boundary identified in the local official plan</li> <li>• Intensification units are allocated by community to Holland Landing, Mount Albert, Queensville and Sharon</li> </ul>
Georgina	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Directs intensification primarily within the serviced urban communities of Keswick and Sutton/Jackson's Point</li> <li>• Secondary plans identify specific centres and corridors as the primary locations for intensification and infill</li> </ul>
King	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draft official plan work allocates remaining intensification units to King City and Schomberg</li> <li>• Intensification is to occur along Regional Roads and within close proximity to the existing core areas</li> </ul>
Markham	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Official plan establishes a target of 60 percent intensification for Markham</li> <li>• Priority intensification areas are the 2 Regional Centres, 6 Key Development Areas and local centres and corridors</li> </ul>
Newmarket	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intensification is primarily directed to the Newmarket Urban Centres Secondary Plan area which includes the Newmarket Urban Growth Centre and encompasses large sections of the Yonge and Davis Drive corridors in Newmarket and has build-out targets of 33,000 residents and 32,000 jobs</li> <li>• Historic downtown centre is anticipated to accommodate modest levels of intensification</li> </ul>
Richmond Hill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intensification hierarchy consists of Richmond Hill Centre, Bernard and Carrville Key Development Areas and Regional Corridors, Local Centres, Local Development Areas and Local Corridors, Neighbourhood Infill and Secondary Suites</li> </ul>
Vaughan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Official plan establishes a 45 percent intensification target for Vaughan</li> <li>• Intensification hierarchy consists of Vaughan Metropolitan Centre, Regional Intensification Corridors, Primary Centres, Local Centres and Primary Intensification Corridors</li> </ul>
Whitchurch-Stouffville	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Gateway Mixed Use and Western Approach Areas in Stouffville and the Stouffville Core Area are the prime intensification areas</li> <li>• Town's Growth Management Strategy and the Community of Stouffville secondary plan sets an intensification target of 2,020 units (exceeds the Region's target)</li> </ul>

### 3. York Region Average Intensification

Since the first Growth Plan was released in 2006, York Region has averaged approximately 49% intensification from 2006 to 2018 (see Figure 3). The per cent intensification refers to the residential units built within the delineated built-up area as a share of the total building permits for that year. Any type of new residential units, including both low and high density units, count towards intensification. In the years just after 2006, a portion of the intensification units built in the Region were related to the completion of greenfield subdivisions at the edge of the built-up area boundary. However, since this time, the majority of the intensification units are apartment and row units. Since 2006, the intensification percentage has ranged from 29 to 60 percent.



Each local municipality in the Region contributes in different ways to the Region's overall intensification target. Historically, Richmond Hill, Markham and Newmarket have showed the highest average intensification levels (see Figure 4). This can be attributed to a number of factors including the amount of delineated built-up area land and intensification opportunities in Regional Centres and Corridors and other intensification areas in these municipalities in relation to greenfield development.

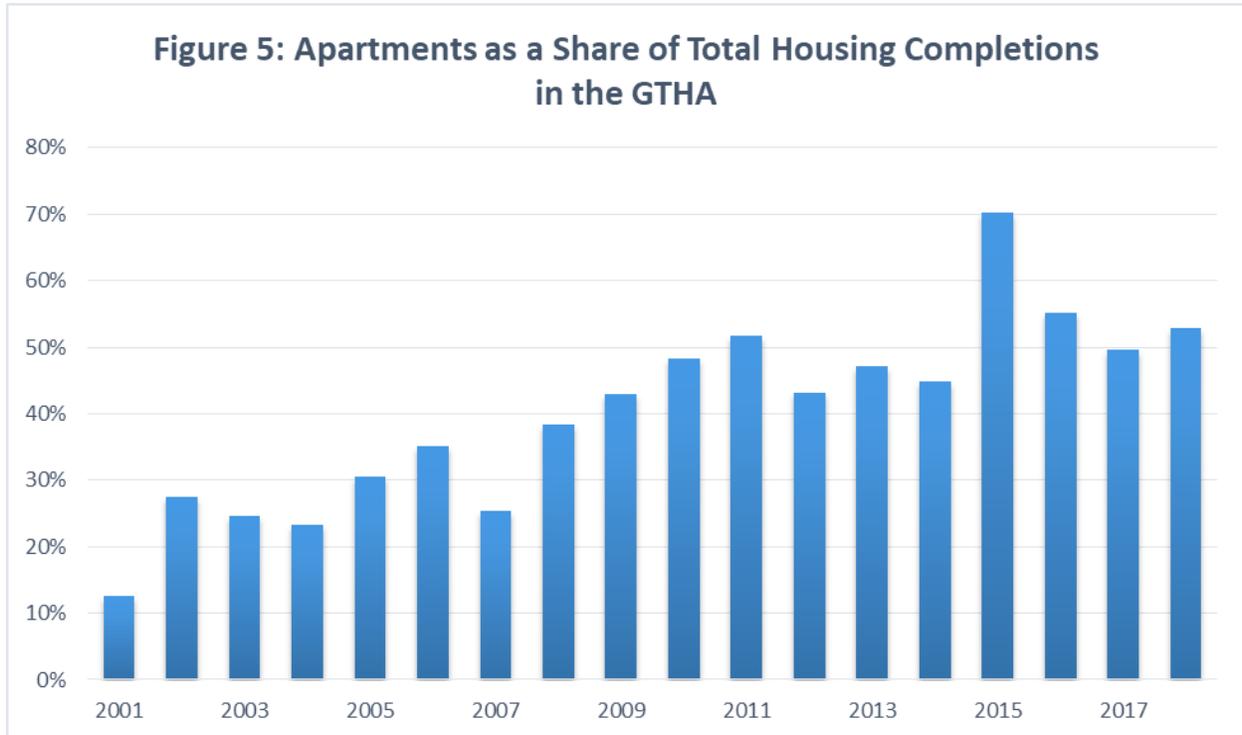


This pattern is expected to continue in the future with some local municipal intensification targets being higher than the Regional average and others being below, to reflect the relative intensification opportunities in centres and corridors and other locations, the extent of higher order transit service and the anticipated level of greenfield residential growth within each local municipality.



## 4. Housing Market Trends

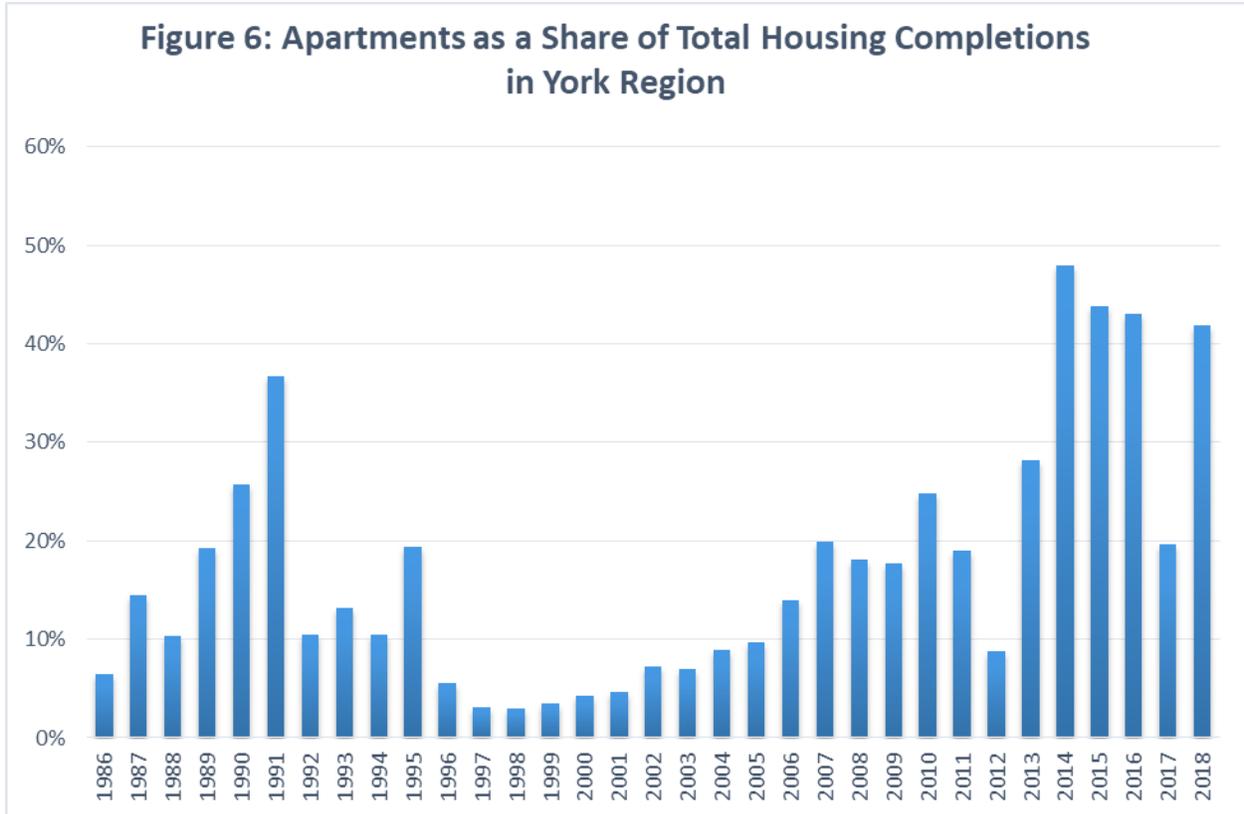
While intensification units can take the form of any housing type, a large share of these units will be in the form of apartment units. In recent years, there has been an increasing proportion of high density housing units being built due to a number of factors including affordability, demographics and the influence of land use planning policy. Figure 5 shows this increasing trend across the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area.



Source: CMHC Housing Completions

While the City of Toronto continues to attract the majority of the high density housing market in the GTHA, York Region's share has been increasing. In the last 10 years, York Region's share of GTHA apartment completions has averaged about 13 per cent compared to the previous 10 year period average of 9 per cent.

Within York Region, high density housing as a share of the total housing market has been increasing since the late 1990s as shown in Figure 6.



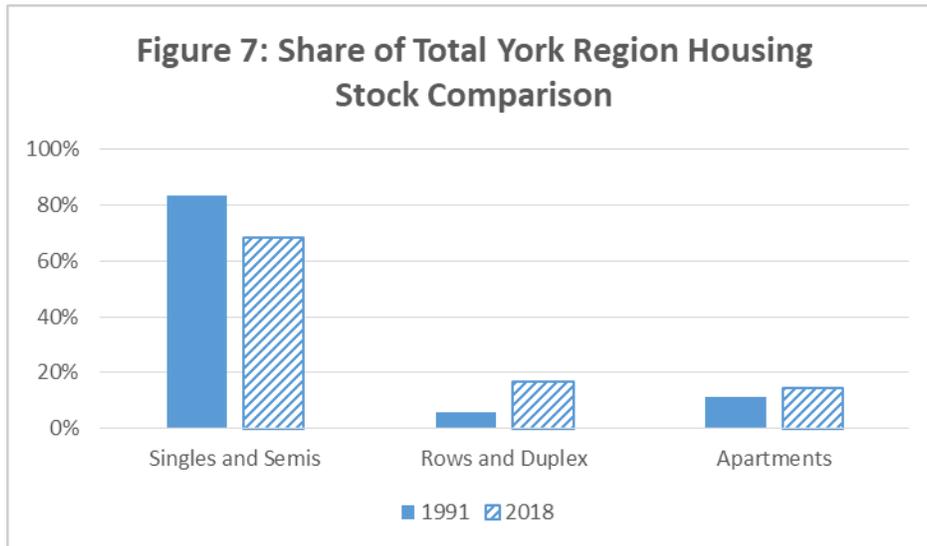
Source: CMHC Housing Completions

This trend is anticipated to continue due to the following factors:

- The aging of York Region's population will result in more non-family households (e.g. single person households) and a higher demand for apartment units. There will also need to be more family-sized apartment units to accommodate an increasing share of family households living in apartments.
- Housing affordability is an increasing issue in York Region. Medium and high density housing types are generally more affordable than low density housing forms.
- Continuing diversification of the Region's population and transition from a suburban to a more urban character will result in demand for a wider range of housing structure types, including more medium and high density housing.
- Continued development of transit infrastructure, community facilities and amenities will increase the attractiveness of the Region's Centres and Corridors and other intensification areas and contribute to the development of complete communities. Areas well-served by transit and that have good access to services are increasingly being favoured by businesses who are competing for work force talent from the younger working age cohort.

## 5. Changes in the Overall Housing Mix in the Region

While the Region’s overall existing housing stock remains concentrated in lower density housing forms, the shift in housing growth to higher density forms is slowly improving the overall mix of housing in the Region. In 1991, single and semi-detached units formed approximately 83 per cent of the Region’s total housing stock; rows, apartments and duplex units collectively accounted for a 17 per cent share. In 2018, the share of single and semi-detached units was about 69 per cent, with increases in the shares of medium and high density housing to approximately 31 per cent of the Region’s housing base (see Figure 7). Increased levels of medium and high density housing development contribute to development of a more balanced Regional housing stock with a greater variety of housing types.



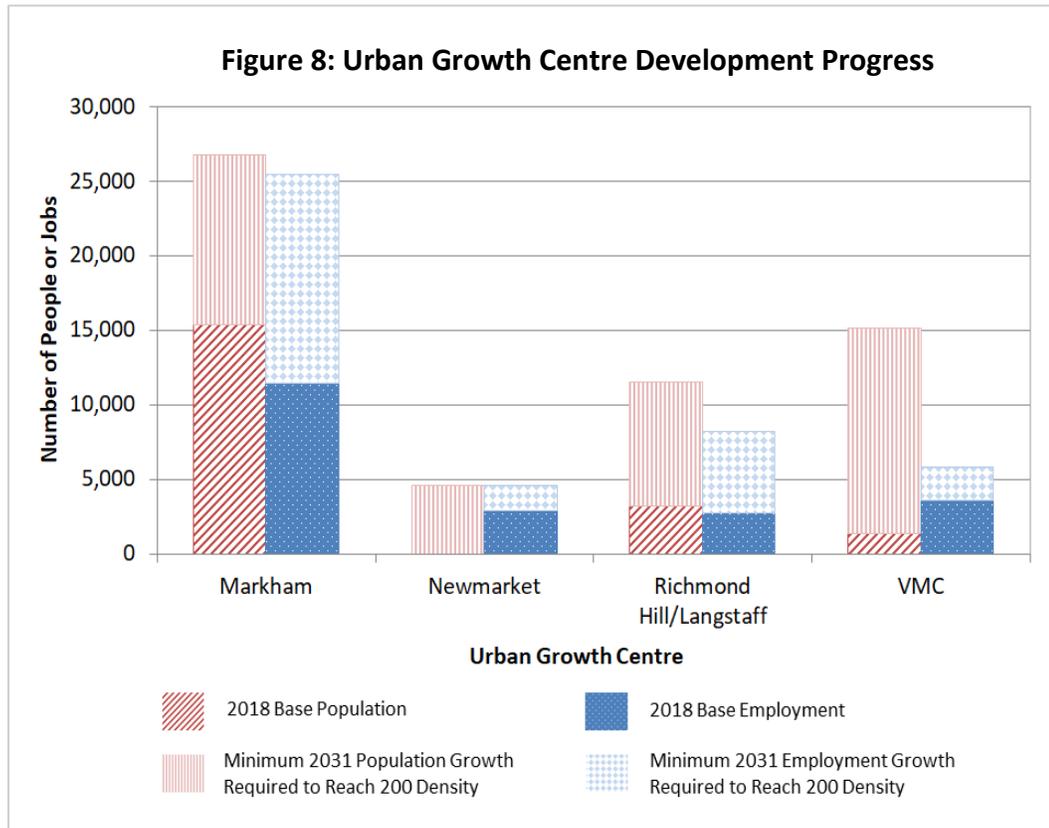
## 6. Development Progress in the Region's Urban Growth Centres

The Growth Plan requires the Region to plan for Urban Growth Centres to reach a density of 200 residents and jobs per hectare by 2031. York Region's four UGC's are seeing increasing levels of development activity, infrastructure investment and planning applications for significant development. Table 2 and Figure 8 show the population and employment growth required for each UGC to reach the 200 density target. The Urban Growth Centres are located within the boundaries of the Regional Centre secondary plans. The ratio of population and employment growth was assumed to be consistent with the secondary plan of the associated Regional Centre. The secondary plan build-out targets for the Regional Centres are higher than the population and employment required to meet the Growth Plan 200 residents and jobs per hectare density target.

Markham Centre is the most advanced of the Region's four UGCs having had the advantage of a planning framework in place since 1994 and formerly being largely a greenfield site with little redevelopment of existing uses required. VMC has seen significant increases in development activity and interest since the opening of the Spadina subway extension in late 2017. Richmond Hill Centre is continuing to experience growth with nine buildings totalling over 2,000 units that have been built, under construction or approved since 2010. In Langstaff Gateway, the first preliminary development concepts are coming forward. The opening of 17150 Yonge Street (the York Region Annex building) in 2020 will allow the Newmarket UGC to come close to meeting the employment component of the Growth Plan density target.

**Table 2: Urban Growth Centre Development Progress**

UGC	Area (ha)	2018 Estimated Base		Minimum Growth Required to 2031 to Get To 200 Density		Total Population & Employment
		Population	Employment	Population	Employment	
Markham	260.7	15,300	11,400	11,400	14,000	52,100
Newmarket	45.8	0	2,900	4,600	1,700	9,200
Richmond Hill / Langstaff	98.8	3,200	2,700	8,300	5,500	19,700
VMC	104.4	1,300	3,600	13,800	2,200	20,900
<b>Total</b>	<b>509.7</b>	<b>19,800</b>	<b>20,600</b>	<b>38,100</b>	<b>23,400</b>	<b>101,900</b>



There are significant numbers of residential units under construction and in development applications in the UGCs as well as under construction and planned non-residential buildings which will result in employment growth as shown in the following table.

**Table 3: Planning Applications in the Urban Growth Centres as of mid-2018**

UGC	Residential Units	Population	Employment	Total Population & Employment
Markham	10,200	20,900	3,300	24,200
Newmarket	1,300	2,200	1,600	3,800
Richmond Hill / Langstaff	2,900	5,700	300	6,000
VMC	8,800	16,200	1,800	18,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>23,200</b>	<b>44,900</b>	<b>7,000</b>	<b>52,000</b>

It will be challenging to reach 200 density in all of the UGCs by 2031. The Yonge subway extension is needed to unlock the full development potential of Richmond Hill Centre/Langstaff Urban Growth Centre. Ongoing delays of the Upper York Sewage Solutions infrastructure could affect the pace of residential development of Newmarket's Urban Growth Centre. The size of the Markham Centre UGC will require significant residential and non-residential development to reach 200 residents and jobs per hectare by 2031. While VMC currently has a significant number of residential units under application, just over 500 units per year need to be completed to 2031 as well as sufficient employment growth to attain the 200 density target.

The conceptual maps in Appendix 1 illustrate the location of planning and development activity within each Urban Growth Centre.

## 7. Draft MTSA delineations and density targets

### 7.1 Total of 70 MTSA are identified

The Growth Plan requires that major transit station area (MTSAs) located in priority transit corridors be delineated and have minimum density targets. The Growth Plan also encourages municipalities to identify, delineate, and set density targets for additional MTSA outside of priority transit corridors. Additional higher order transit stations and stops were identified as MTSA, in consultation with local municipalities, based on the following considerations:

- Their location within a Regional intensification corridor;
- The level of anticipated intensification or the potential for intensification; and
- The potential to become a required MTSA through a future extension of a priority transit corridor.

As a result, York Region has 57 required MTSA and 13 additional MTSA, for a total of 70 MTSA (Table 4) along nine transit corridors, consisting of:

- TTC Subway Line 1: From Pioneer Village Station to the Vaughan Metropolitan Centre Station
- TTC Subway Line 1 (Yonge Extension): From the future Steeles subway station to the future Richmond Hill Centre subway station
- VIVA Highway 7 BRT: From Helen Street / Wigwoss Drive to the Unionville GO station, with two additional MTSA to Cornell
- VIVA Yonge Street BRT South: From Highway 7 to Gamble Road / 19th Avenue
- VIVA Yonge Street BRT North: From Sawmill Valley Drive / Savage Road to Davis Drive, with two additional MTSA to Green Lane
- VIVA Davis Drive BRT: From Yonge Street to Highway 404
- Barrie GO Line: From Concord to Aurora, with two additional MTSA to the East Gwillimbury GO Station
- Richmond Hill GO Line: Langstaff station as an additional MTSA
- Stouffville GO line: From Milliken to Unionville, with four additional MTSA to Lincolnville



**Table 4: MTSAs by Local Municipality**

<b>Municipality</b>	<b>Required MTSAs</b>	<b>Additional MTSAs</b>	<b>Total MTSAs</b>
Aurora	1	0	1
East Gwillimbury	0	2	2
Georgina	0	0	0
King	1	0	1
Markham	11	4	15
Markham / Richmond Hill (shared)	5	0	5
Markham / Vaughan (shared)	0	3	3
Newmarket	10	2	12
Richmond Hill	10	0	10
Richmond Hill / Vaughan (shared)	1	0	1
Vaughan	18	0	18
Whitchurch-Stouffville	0	2	2
<b>York Region</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>70</b>

Consultation on MTSAs is on-going and additional MTSAs may be identified.

For MTSAs that are shared between local municipalities, the Region established minimum density targets specific for each municipality to achieve for their portion of the MTSA. Combined, the weighted average of the two local municipal-specific minimum density targets achieve the Growth Plan's minimum density target.

Seven of the Region's MTSAs are located either entirely or partially within the Designated Greenfield Area. While growth in residential units in these MTSAs will not contribute to the Region's intensification units, they will still be part of developing more compact, complete communities in the Designated Greenfield Area.

For the two MTSAs shared with the City of Toronto (Milliken GO Station and Pioneer Village subway station) both York Region and the City of Toronto will independently delineate and set minimum density targets for these shared MTSAs. The minimum density target in the York Region portion of the shared MTSAs will not be dependent on the density being achieved in the City of Toronto portion to meet the overall MTSA density target. Density from the MTSA within York Region will not be used to off-set a lower density in City of Toronto MTSA.

Once delineations and minimum density targets are finalized, it is intended that MTSAs in the Region including both those on priority transit corridors and additional MTSAs be designated as protected MTSAs under Section 16 of the Planning Act and therefore be protected from land use planning appeals related to height and density.

## 7.2 Principles for delineating MTSAs and setting minimum density targets were developed

The Growth Plan states that MTSAs should generally be a 500m radius around the higher order transit station or stop. York Region staff developed the document: Draft Guidelines to Delineate and Set Density Targets for Major Transit Station Areas to guide the establishment of MTSAs. The document establishes Region's principles that MTSAs should:

1. Reinforce the planned regional and local municipal urban structure
2. Provide a diverse range and mix of land uses, if the MTSA is not located in an employment area (e.g. residential, employment, community services)
3. Include existing higher density land uses
4. Include areas that are anticipated or ideally situated to develop or redevelop to higher densities
5. Connect with adjacent MTSA's so that as much of the priority transit corridors are included, as possible
6. Be walkable
7. Collectively support the creation of complete communities for the broader community beyond the MTSA boundaries
8. Collectively provide a range of amenities (e.g. parks, schools, cultural facilities, retail, etc.)
9. Collectively provide opportunities to live and work along the priority transit corridors.

The Guideline to Delineate and Set Density Targets for MTSA's also provides specific direction on how to delineate MTSA's and set minimum density targets for MTSA's. Figure 9 illustrates key considerations to refining the general 500m radius to a specific delineated boundary and setting minimum density target for MTSA's.

**Figure 9: Considerations for delineating boundaries and setting minimum density targets**



### 7.3 Draft MTSA delineations and minimum density targets were developed

Draft MTSA delineations and density targets were developed by Regional staff with input from local municipal staff (see Appendix 2 for a list of meetings with local municipalities).

While not required by the Growth Plan, minimum density targets for additional MTSA's were assumed to be same as for the applicable Growth Plan density target for priority transit corridor

MTSAs, where possible. This is because in the future, it can be expected that additional MTSAs would become required MTSAs, at which point the Growth Plan minimum targets would be applicable.

The principles for establishing a minimum density target create three potential scenarios. Table 5 describes these scenarios and the approach to establishing the minimum density target.

**Table 5: Scenarios and Approaches to Establishing Minimum Density Targets for MTSAs**

Scenario	Approach to Establishing the Target
A. There is intensification potential above the applicable Growth Plan minimum density target	Set the target at or above the applicable Growth Plan minimum density target. This was done with regard to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The mid-point of the existing and potential build-out densities</li> <li>2. Regional and local Official Plan policies</li> <li>3. Potential density targets for adjacent MTSAs</li> <li>4. Grouping MTSA targets to reduce the overall number of discrete targets</li> </ol>
B. A fully, or mostly, built-out MTSA that currently exceeds the applicable Growth Plan minimum density target	Set the target at approximately 10% above the existing density, with regard to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Potential density targets for adjacent MTSAs</li> <li>2. Regional and local Official Plan policies</li> <li>3. Grouping MTSA targets to reduce the overall number of discrete targets</li> </ol>
C. Existing density and the potential build-out density is below the Growth Plan minimum density target	Re-evaluate the MTSA delineation for additional higher density or intensification potential. If potential build-out density is still below the Growth Plan minimum density target, then set an alternative density target with regard to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The range between the existing and potential build-out densities</li> <li>2. Regional and local Official Plan policies</li> <li>3. Potential density targets for adjacent MTSAs</li> <li>4. Grouping MTSA targets to reduce the overall number of density target categories</li> </ol>

After analysis of existing and potential build out densities, an initial minimum density target was established. Minimum density targets were adjusted as appropriate to be grouped into density target categories. Accompanying this document is a MTSA mapping package (Attachment 2), which includes:

- A map of the Region’s MTSA network
- A map of each local municipality with draft MTSA delineations, where applicable
- A MTSA index, which provides the proposed minimum density target for each MTSA and serves as a table of contents for individual MTSA maps.
- A map for each individual MTSA delineation and proposed minimum density target. Each map provides the area, existing density, minimum density target and the existing and anticipated proportion of population and employment, and the average corridor density
- Transit corridor infographic, which provides the existing density, minimum density target and the existing and anticipated proportion of population and employment for each transit corridor

- Additional strategic growth areas
- York Region building density examples

In some cases, MTSA's have a smaller area than the full 500 metre radius. There are also MTSA densities that are set above the Growth Plan minimum density targets. Table 6 provides a comparison of the Region's approach to delineating MTSA boundaries and setting minimum density targets compared with assuming a standard 500 metre radius around each station (excluding overlap areas) and Growth Plan minimum density targets. The result of York Region's approach accommodates approximately equal to the general Growth Plan approach. There are only two MTSA's where York Region's approach accommodates fewer people and jobs than the Growth Plan's minimum density targets.

**Table 6: Total People and Jobs Accommodated by MTSA's**

MTSA Type	Total Area	Density Target	Total People and Jobs Potentially Accommodated by MTSA Type*
<b>Based on 500m and Growth Plan Minimum Density Target</b>			
Subway Stations	428 ha	200	86,000 people and jobs
BRT Stations	3,260 ha	160	522,000 people and jobs
GO Stations	986 ha	150	148,000 people and jobs
<b>Total People and Jobs Accommodated</b>			<b>755,000 people and jobs</b>
<b>Based on York Region MTSA Boundaries and Minimum Density Target</b>			
Subway Stations	341 ha	383	130,000 people & jobs
BRT Stations	2,317 ha	215	497,000 people & jobs
GO Stations	596 ha	207	123,000 people & jobs
<b>Total People and Jobs Accommodated</b>			<b>752,000 people &amp; jobs</b>

\*values are rounded to the nearest thousand

In order to achieve the density target for each MTSA, it is expected that over time vacant parcels will be developed and existing lower density land uses will be redeveloped or intensified. The minimum density targets are long-term and do not have to be achieved by 2041.

#### 7.4 Minimum density requirements are met across all transit corridors in York Region

For the purposes of assessing average corridor densities, York Region was divided into nine major transit corridors. The average corridor densities are based on a weighted average of the minimum density targets for each MTSA within the corridor, including both those in Priority Transit Corridors and additional MTSA's. Consistent with the Growth Plan requirement, corridors with less than four stations are not included (e.g. the Spadina subway line). The following table summarizes the results. All corridors meet the required minimum densities.

**Table 7: Average MTSA Corridor Densities**

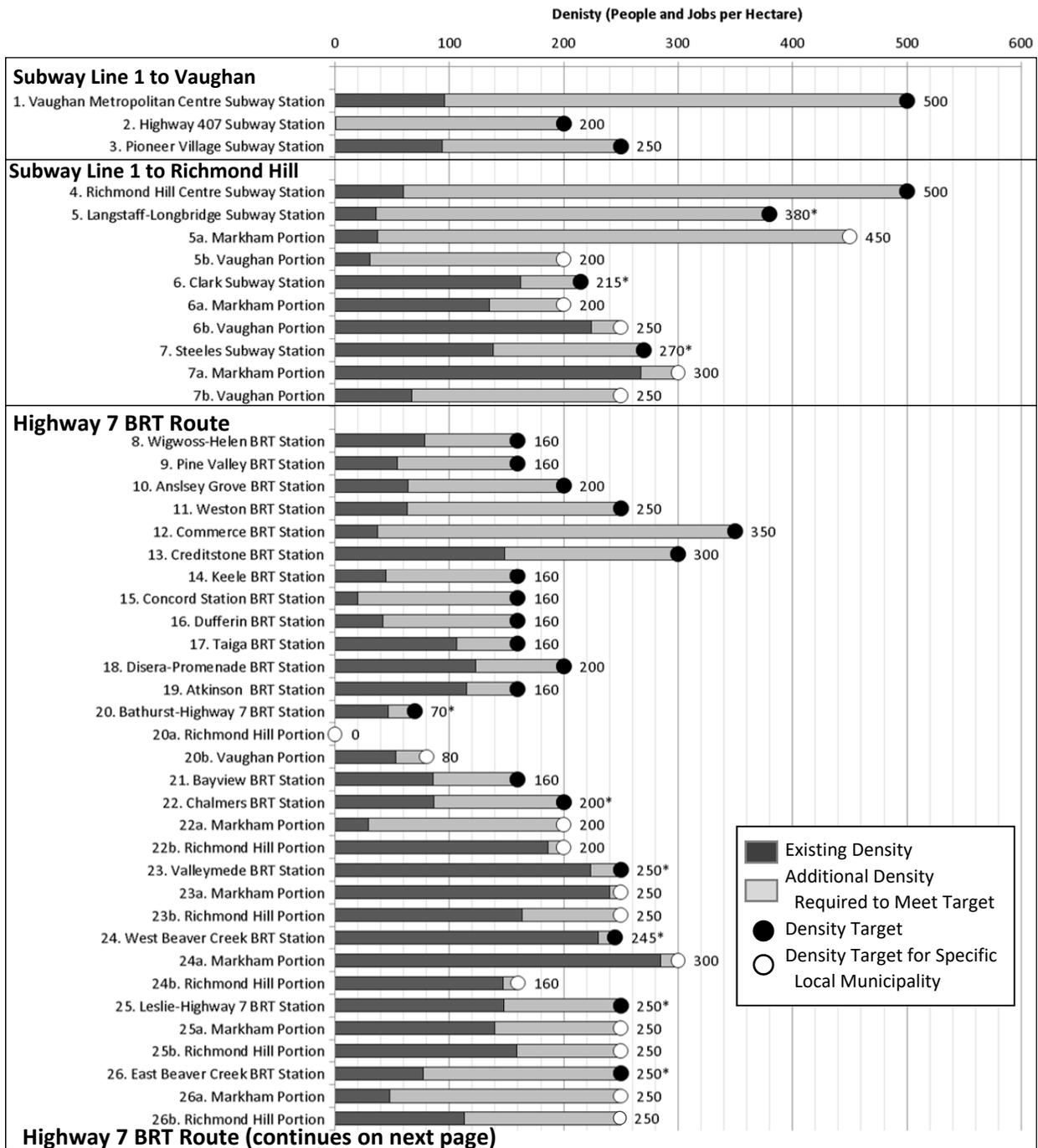
Corridor	Number of MTSA*	Required Average Density (people & jobs / ha)	Average Density (people & jobs / ha)
Subway Line 1 (to VMC)	3	N/A	410
Subway Line 1 (to Richmond Hill Centre)	4	200	330
Highway 7 BRT	32	160	245
Yonge South	9	160	175
Yonge North	6	160	185
Davis Drive	7	160	195
Barrie GO Line	9	150	160
Richmond Hill GO Line	1	N/A	500
Stouffville GO Line	6	150	210
All MTSA in York Region	70	N/A	230

\*Some MTSA are connected to more than one corridor

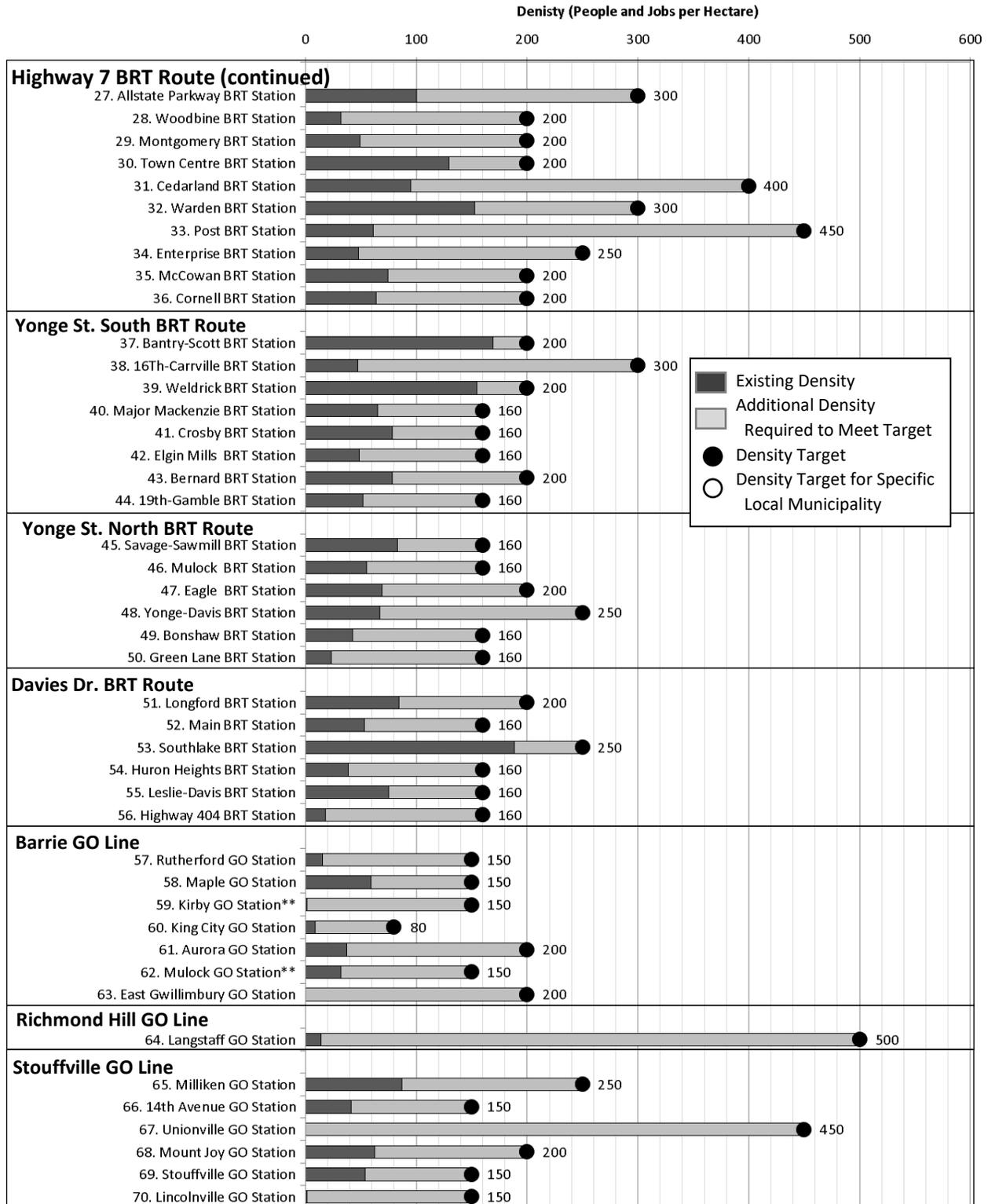
Figure 10 on the next page summarizes the existing density and proposed minimum density targets for all identified MTSA in the Region.



Figure 10: Existing and Proposed Density Targets



\*Density target is based on a weighted average of the density targets for two municipalities that share the MTSA, and rounded to the nearest 5



\*\*Identification of this location as a MTSA is pending final approval from the Province of a GO train station at this location; it is included in the MCR at this time for further discussion

## 7.5 Two MTSAs require alternative minimum density targets

For MTSAs along priority transit corridors, minimum density targets below the Growth Plan targets can be established if:

- a. The Growth Plan target cannot be achieved because:
  - Development is prohibited, or severely, restricted by Provincial policies
  - Planning for the minimum density target is premature given the potential for redevelopment
- b. The alternative target would:
  - Support a more compact built form
  - Maximize the number of potential transit users within walking distance of the station
  - Increase the existing density of the area
  - Be appropriate giving the existing urban form
  - Not preclude planning for the minimum density target in the future
- c. The average of the transit corridor achieves the minimum density target

Alternative minimum density targets apply only to MTSAs along priority transit corridors.

The Growth Plan requires Regional Council to make a formal request to the Minister of Municipal Affairs to permit alternative target MTSAs. Table 8 identifies the MTSAs where alternative targets will be necessary due to development constraints.

**Table 8: MTSA Alternative Targets**

Major Transit Station Area	Growth Plan Density Target (p+j/ha)*	Proposed Alternative Density Target (p+j/ha)*	Reasons for Alternative Density Target
Bathurst and Highway 7 BRT, Richmond Hill and Vaughan	160	70	Small existing population and jobs, very limited development potential on surrounding lands due to Highway 407 infrastructure, a floodplain hazard, significant woodlands, and lands restricted by Parkway Belt West.
King City GO Station, King	150	80	Surrounded by mainly existing low density residential uses which offer limited opportunity to consolidate larger parcels for high density intensification. There are also numerous buildings with heritage designations or potential designations that limit intensification potential.

\*People and jobs per hectare

## 7.6 Local Municipal land use designations continue to apply within MTSA

The minimum density targets being developed for the Region's MTSA are an overall density target to be treated as an average across the entire MTSA. The density targets are not meant to be applied to each individual property within the MTSA. Local municipal official plan and secondary plan designations along with the applicable zoning will determine the appropriate land uses, building heights and densities within the MTSA to reach the overall Regional target for that MTSA. In addition, local municipalities can set maximum density targets for MTSA. Section 5.2.5.8 of the Growth Plan states that the identification of strategic growth areas (which include MTSA), are not land use designations and their delineation does not confer any new land use designations, nor alter existing land use designations. Furthermore, any development within MTSA would still be subject to the relevant provincial and municipal land use planning policies and approval processes.



## 8. Additional Strategic Growth Area Delineations and Density Targets

Under the Growth Plan, Urban Growth Centres and Major Transit Station Areas are classified as strategic growth areas (SGAs). Upper and single tier municipalities have the option of identifying SGAs beyond UGCs and MTSA. Identified SGAs are required to be delineated in the ROP and have a minimum density target. The following considerations were used to determine potential additional SGAs in the Region.

- 1) Located in the one of the following areas in the Region's intensification hierarchy:
  - Regional Corridor
  - Go Transit Rail stations
  - Local Centres and Corridors
- 2) Highest level of intensification area in the local municipal official plan (e.g. Key Development Area, Primary Centre, etc.)
- 3) Area must be delineated in the local municipal official plan or secondary plan (i.e. areas along corridors without specific boundaries are not considered). It may or may not currently have population and/or employment targets.
- 4) Higher order transit service exists or is planned for by 2041 to service the SGA (minimum service standard is Regional Priority Transit Corridor network).
- 5) Have no major infrastructure constraints (e.g. water and wastewater capacity issues) to 2041.
- 6) Planned scale of development is of Regional significance – growth of at least 10,000 population and/or jobs
- 7) Build-out density is at least 150 residents and jobs per hectare. This is the lowest MTSA minimum density requirement.
- 8) Local municipal staff input to include as an SGA.

Based on these considerations, Vaughan Mills, Carrville Centre in Vaughan and the Yonge Street portion of Aurora Promenade (does not include the Aurora GO Station MTSA) were identified as potential additional SGAs. Attachment 2 provides a map showing the delineation of these SGAs. The following table provides the projected population and employment at build-out based on existing secondary plans. The proposed minimum density target was developed taking into consideration the planned secondary plan build-outs and potential MTSA density targets, should the areas become a MTSA in the future. The proposed minimum density targets in Table 9 are intended for potential inclusion in the ROP. For any individual property within the SGA, the applicable local municipal official plan designations and zoning apply.

**Table 9: Potential Additional Strategic Growth Areas**

SGA	Area (ha)	Estimated Population and Employment at Build-Out	Potential Density at Build-Out (p+j/ha*)	Proposed Minimum Density Target (p+j/ha*)
Vaughan Mills Primary Centre	91	16,400	180	160
Carrville Centre (Vaughan)	57	15,000	263	200
Yonge Street portion of Aurora Promenade	80	14,100	176	160

\*People and jobs per hectare

It should be noted that there are numerous intensification areas throughout the Region, including local centres and corridors and infill areas, among others, that are not included as identified SGAs. This does not, however, diminish their importance in accommodating intensification units. These intensification areas will continue to be identified in local municipal official plans and still play key roles in achieving local municipal intensification targets.



## 9. Employment Intensification

Although the Growth Plan does not include specific employment intensification targets, employment uses play important roles in the development of complete communities in Urban Growth Centres, Major Transit Station Areas, Regional Corridors and other intensification areas. The Growth Plan density targets for UGCs and MTSAs are expressed in terms of residents and jobs per hectare. Employment in these locations support transit usage and provide opportunities for improved live/work relationships within intensification areas. Employment uses such as office, retail/commercial, service, institutional as well as cultural and entertainment uses further enhance the liveability of intensification areas and play a role in attracting additional residential intensification to these areas. Mixed-use development and improving live/work relationships are key components of the Region's 2031 Intensification Strategy.

As of mid-2018, there were approximately 128,500 jobs in the Region's Centres and Corridors. Employment grew by approximately 5,300 between 2017 and 2018.

The Growth Plan requires that major office uses and appropriate major institutional development be directed to UGCs, MTSAs or other SGAs served by frequent transit service. Similarly, retail and office uses are to be directed to locations that are supportive of transit and active transportation.

Attracting employment uses is of particular importance in Urban Growth Centres where the goal is to have a balanced mixed use community, with both employment and living opportunities, taking full advantage of higher order transit infrastructure. The Growth Plan states that Urban Growth Centres are to serve as high-density major employment centres. Retail and office uses are to be directed to locations that support active transportation and have existing or planned transit.

The Growth Plan encourages the intensification of employment areas that support active transportation and are served by existing or planned transit. In York Region, some MTSAs include employment areas which could be potential candidate areas for development of higher density employment uses.

As part of the Employment Strategy, municipalities are required to identify opportunities for intensification of employment areas. A forthcoming staff report to Council on employment trends in York Region includes an analysis of the intensification potential in the Region's employment lands. In addition, the Growth Plan requires the Region to establish density targets for employment areas which will be addressed in the upcoming forecast work as part of the Regional Municipal Comprehensive Review.

## 10. The Regional Intensification Policy Framework

### 10.1 Approach for allocating intensification units to local municipalities

The Region's growth in total intensification units to 2041 will be determined through the growth forecast and land needs assessment process which is currently scheduled to be reported on in late 2019. The Region has a significantly more than adequate capacity to accommodate intensification units to 2041 and beyond. Based on work undertaken by Meridian Planning Consultants in 2014/2015, the planned potential of the Region's intensification areas was estimated to be approximately 178,000 units. This estimate does not include potential intensification sites not currently subject to an application and not within an identified intensification area. As a point of comparison, the York Region draft November 2015 45 per cent intensification forecast had 98,600 intensification units from 2016 to 2041.

The total intensification units will be allocated by local municipality using the following considerations:

- Approved development applications in the delineated built-up area
- Extent and timing of growth potential of intensification areas including: Urban Growth Centres/Regional Centres, Regional Corridors, MTSAs, SGAs, local centres and corridors and other intensification area potential
- Historic levels of intensification
- Past ROP local municipal intensification targets
- Role in the Regional urban structure
- Overall forecast housing units by local municipality
- Infill and secondary suite potential
- Infrastructure timing and capacity (transit, water and wastewater)

Notwithstanding that there is more than sufficient total capacity across the Region for the required intensification units to 2041, some intensification areas may be limited in terms of short and medium term development potential due to servicing and/or transportation constraints. These factors will be taken into consideration when assessing the timing of intensification units as part of the local municipal growth forecasts. The local municipal intensification targets will be reported on in the Intensification Strategy report to be produced in the first quarter of 2020.

### 10.2 Updated Regional intensification matrix is proposed

The Region's urban structure for intensification is already in place with the Centres and Corridors framework in the ROP and the local municipal intensification strategies and policies within each of the nine local municipalities. Intensification is to occur in strategic locations in the built-up area to maximize efficiencies in infrastructure delivery, human services provision and transit ridership. Under the ROP, the strategic locations are based on an intensification framework that recognizes the primacy of the Regional Centres in accommodating the highest density and scale of development.

The following matrix is an update of the 2009 York Region Intensification Strategy framework. It indicates in order of priority where intensification can best be accommodated taking into account capacity, infrastructure and services availability. The highest densities are anticipated towards the top of the matrix and generally decrease moving downwards in the hierarchy. While the intensification elements near the top of matrix will accommodate the highest density uses, more modest forms of intensification such as small infill projects and second suites also play important roles in the Region's intensification framework. MTSAs can form part of an intensification area such as a UGC which is why they are separated from the other elements of the matrix.

**Figure 11: York Region Intensification Matrix**



With 4 Urban Growth Centres, 70 MTSAs, 3 additional strategic growth areas along with other designated intensification areas in local municipal official plans, there is more than sufficient capacity to accommodate the Region's intensification units to 2041 and beyond.

### 10.3 Intensification principles and key attributes help achieve complete communities

Intensification areas in the Region are to be planned to become complete communities providing an appropriate mix of employment, retail and services, a range of housing and transportation options and public service facilities. The principles of intensification contained in the 2009 York Region Intensification Strategy discussed earlier in this report remain applicable.

The 2009 Strategy also identified a set of key attributes intended to result in high quality and sustainable, compact communities in intensification areas. These key attributes are implemented through ROP policies, local municipal official plan designations and policies, secondary plans, infrastructure investment and through other land use planning decisions.

Similar to the Principles, the Key Attributes of Intensification Areas from the 2009 York Region Intensification Strategy are still relevant today. A slightly revised version is shown in Table 10 below. Not all of these attributes will be applicable for every type of intensification area.

**Table 10: York Region Key Attributes of Intensification Areas - 2019**

Attribute	Description
Mixed Use Development	Support a broad range of land uses, where appropriate, including employment uses such as retail, entertainment, arts and culture, parks, schools and other community services; residential use subject to local municipal official plan designations
Live/Work Balance	Support live/work opportunities through arrangement of residential and non-residential land uses such as office uses, and accessibility to transit and transportation
Physical Activity	Promote active living with connected pedestrian walkways, bicycle lanes and facilities, parklands and a well-designed street network. Support active modes of transportation within intensification areas.
Built Form	Buildings and streets that are well-proportioned to one another. Establish urban design and architectural standards to foster a sense of place. Ensure appropriate transition of built form to adjacent areas.
Natural Heritage/Open Space	Protected natural heritage features. Public spaces that are varied, interconnected and accessible to all neighbourhoods. Public spaces that are interesting, carefully spaced and proportioned.
Housing Options	Broad mix and range of units size, housing forms, types and tenures that satisfy the needs of the Region's residents and workers, including affordable housing for low and moderate income households.
Human Services	Provide a wide range of human services to allow for people of all ages and abilities to meet their needs including opportunities for employment, learning, culture, recreation and other human service needs.
Culture	The Region's cultural heritage resources and values are recognized, conserved and promoted as a benefit to the community.
Transit and Connections	Provide for efficient and effective higher order transit. Buildings and spaces between transit stations are connected by sidewalks and other walkways.
Traffic / Parking	Innovations in parking provisions such as structured and underground parking and municipal lots to maintain a pedestrian-friendly environment.
Sustainable Design and Energy Planning	Encourage sustainable building design and construction which could include use of renewable energy, green roofs, stormwater retention and reuse and others. Accommodate any land requirements for community energy systems, alternative energy and energy efficient technologies.

## 10.4 ROP Intensification policies require updating to be in conformity with the Growth Plan

The following policy areas related to intensification will need to be addressed in updating the ROP to be consistent with the Growth Plan. The ROP currently contains sections on intensification that set out the local municipal intensification targets, policies specific to Regional Centres and Corridors, Local Centres and Corridors related to land use, density, design, parking and key attributes for intensification areas.

**Table 11: Intensification Policy Direction**

Growth Plan Intensification Policy Area	Current ROP	Policy Direction
Local municipal intensification targets to 2041	Targets to 2031	Develop local municipal intensification targets to 2041
Delineated built-up area	Not in ROP	Map delineated built-up area
MTSA delineations and minimum density targets	Not in ROP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Map MTSA delineations, identify minimum density targets, including alternative minimum density targets</li> <li>- Map Priority Transit Corridors</li> <li>- Add definitions of MTSA's, Priority Transit Corridors</li> <li>- Identify Protected MTSA's</li> <li>- Clarify that local municipal land use designations prevail within MTSA's</li> </ul>
Additional SGA delineations and minimum density targets	Not in ROP	Mapping of additional SGA delineations and minimum density targets <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Add definition of strategic growth areas</li> </ul>
Intensification target 50% from completion of the MCR to 2031, 60% from 2031 to 2041	40% Intensification	Update to 2017 Growth Plan Intensification Targets
Develop an Intensification Strategy to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Encourage intensification to achieve the desired urban structure</li> <li>- Identify appropriate type and scale of development and transition of built form to adjacent areas</li> <li>- Identify SGAs and recognize them as a key focus for development</li> <li>- Ensure lands are zoned and development is designed to support achieving complete communities</li> <li>- Prioritize planning and investment in infrastructure and public service facilities that will support intensification</li> <li>- Implemented through official plan policies and designations, updating zoning and other supporting documents</li> </ul>	York Region 2031 Intensification Strategy  ROP Sections 5.3 to 5.5 which address intensification	Update Regional Intensification Strategy  Update of ROP policies to reflect the importance of SGAs (UGCs, MTSA's, other SGAs) as a focus for intensification  Additional policy direction to support the prioritization of infrastructure investment to support intensification  Direction to local municipalities to reflect Growth Plan policies in their planning for intensification areas with respect to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Transition of built form to adjacent areas</li> <li>- Appropriately zoning to support intensification areas</li> <li>- Quality development design to support complete communities</li> </ul>

Urban Growth Centres	Regional Centres identified	Map of Urban Growth Centres
Prioritizing strategic growth areas and other intensification areas for transit and other infrastructure investment	ROP policies to be updated	Enhance ROP infrastructure and intensification policies to incorporate the prioritization of strategic growth areas

## 11. Conclusion and Next Steps

The *Planning for Intensification Background Report* has provided the background and framework for developing the Region's Intensification Strategy to meet the requirements of the Growth Plan. This work builds upon the significant work undertaken as part of the 2009 Intensification Strategy, the policies in the ROP and the intensification strategies completed by the Region's local municipalities.

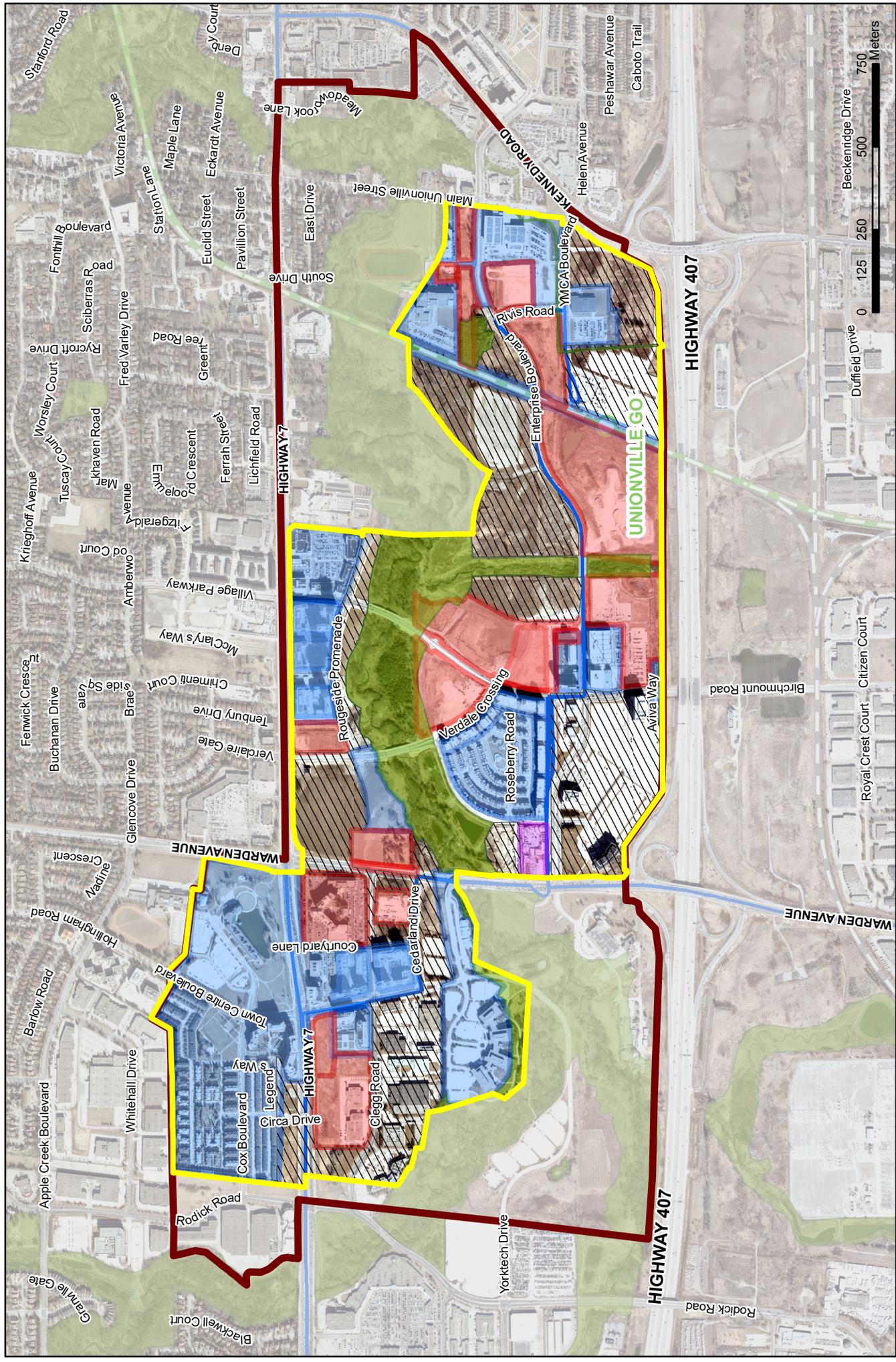
Growth through intensification results in more efficient use of land and infrastructure and supports the Region's significant investment in transit. Growth in strategic intensification areas contributes to City building in the Region and supports the development of complete communities.

York Region is well-positioned to accommodate the Growth Plan intensification targets. The level of transit investment in the Region's Centres and Corridors with the Spadina subway, Bus Rapid Transit, GO service improvements and future extension of the Yonge subway will support higher levels of intensification in York Region. The planning framework already in place for the Regional Centres and Corridors, local centres and corridors and other intensification areas including MTSA's provide the foundation for accommodating intensification growth. Historical intensification levels indicate that York Region achieved an average of 49 percent intensification since 2006.

The Intensification Strategy report, scheduled for the first quarter of 2020 will include the following components:

- Local municipal intensification unit targets to 2041
- Final MTSA and SGA delineations and minimum density targets
- Finalization of the intensification framework including the matrix, principles and key attributes for intensification areas
- Role of local municipalities in implementing the York Region Intensification Strategy and recommended tools for implementation
- Visualizations of sample MTSA's as part of the Visualizing Density project
- Framework for monitoring progress in achieving the Intensification Strategy
- How the York Region Intensification Strategy conforms to the Growth Plan and Provincial Policy Statement

## **APPENDIX 1 – URBAN GROWTH CENTRE MAPS**



# MARKHAM CENTRE URBAN GROWTH CENTRE DEVELOPMENT PROGRESS

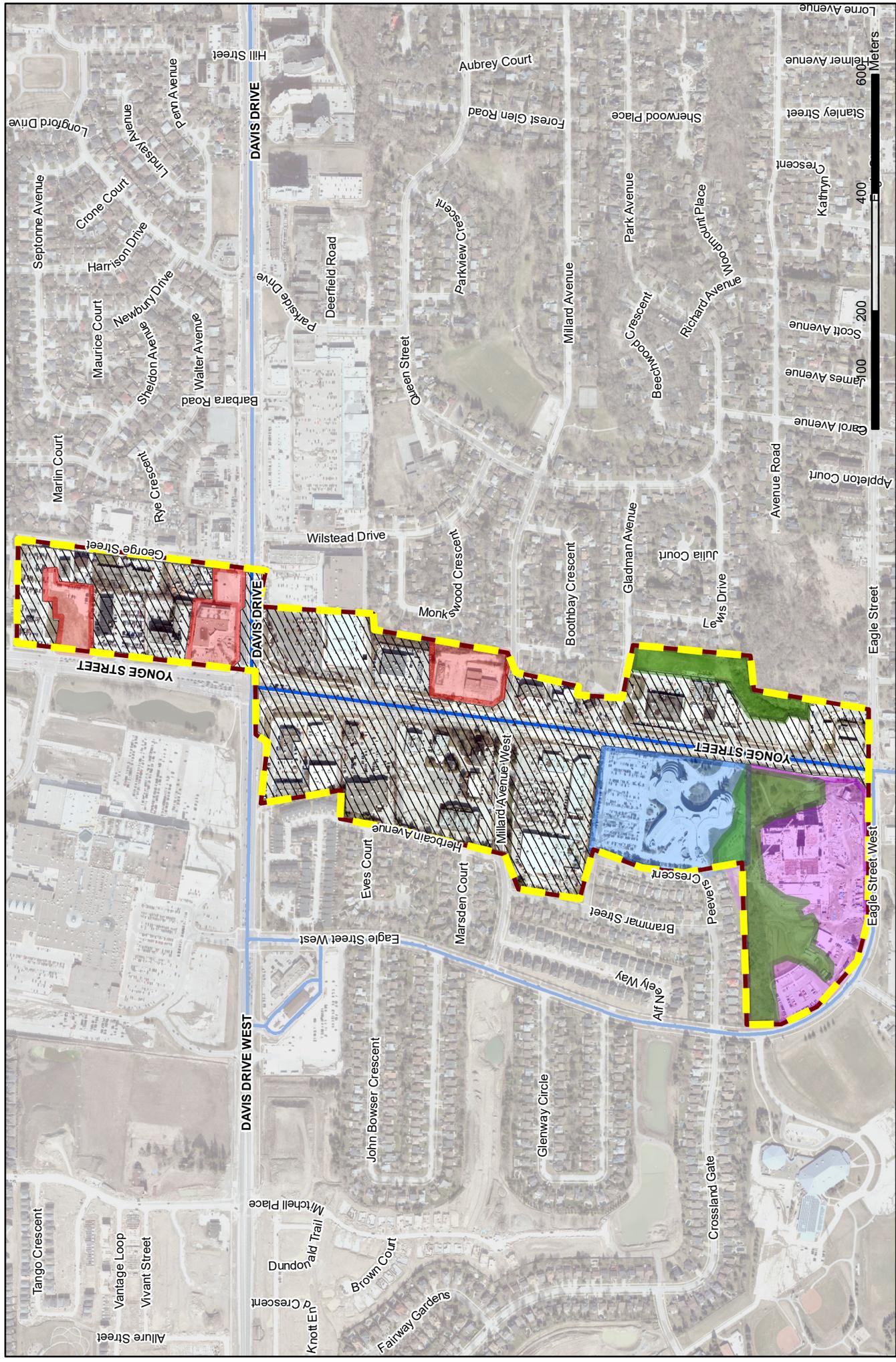
NOTE: This map is conceptual and is not intended to be a land use designation map.

- Under Application
- Under Construction
- Established Areas
- Intensification Potential
- Urban Growth Centre
- Regional Centre
- Greenway
- GO Rail
- Bus Route



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Planning and Economic Development Branch,  
Corporate Services Department March 2019  
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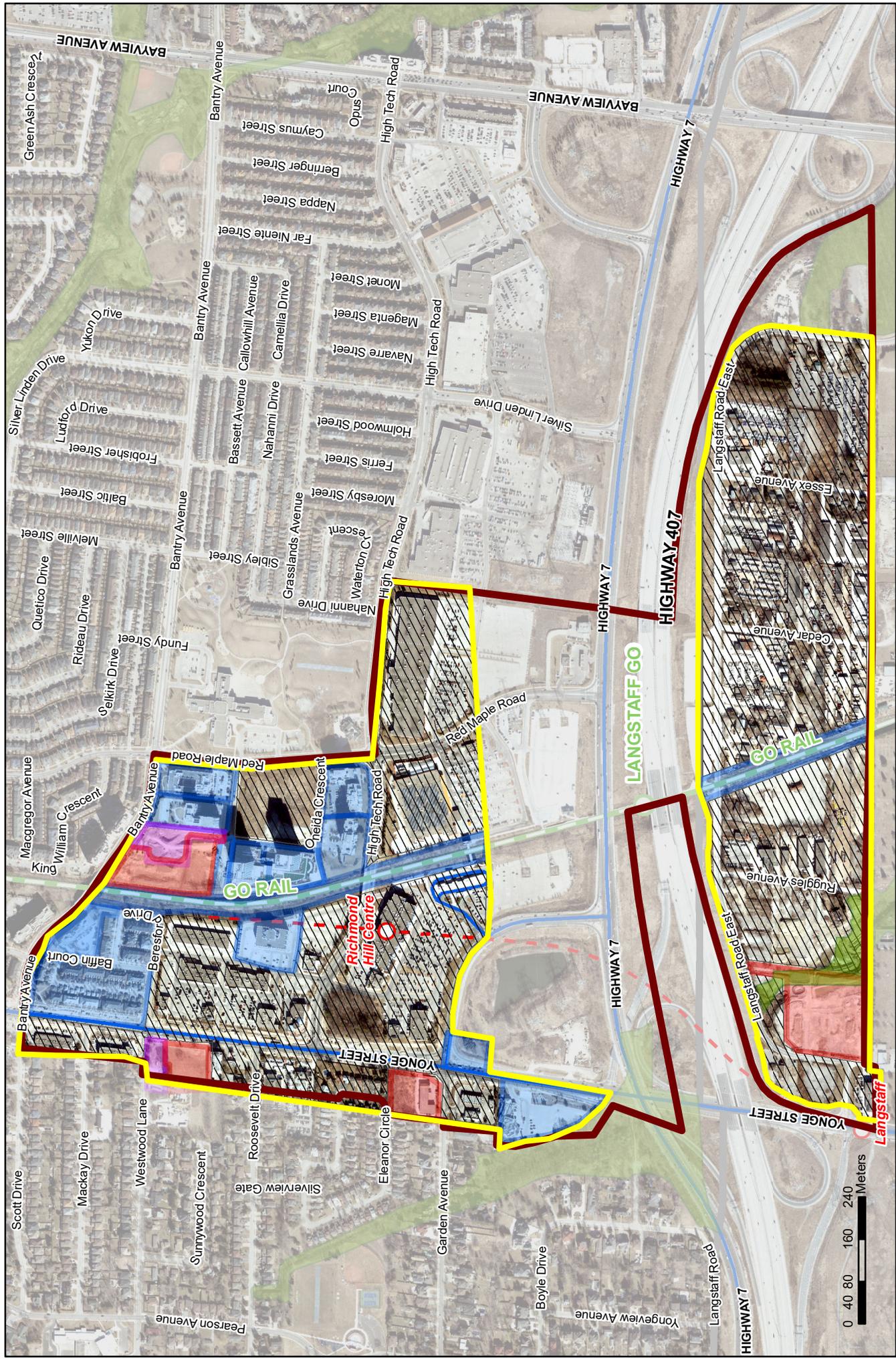
# NEWMARKET URBAN GROWTH CENTRE DEVELOPMENT PROGRESS

- Under Application
- Under Construction
- Established Areas
- Intensification Potential
- Urban Construction
- Established Areas
- Parks and Open Space
- Intensification Potential
- Urban Growth Centre
- Regional Centre
- Bus Route



Produced by: The Regional Municipality of York  
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NOTE: This map is conceptual and is not intended to be a land use designation map.



# RICHMOND HILL / LANGSTAFF URBAN GROWTH CENTRE DEVELOPMENT PROGRESS

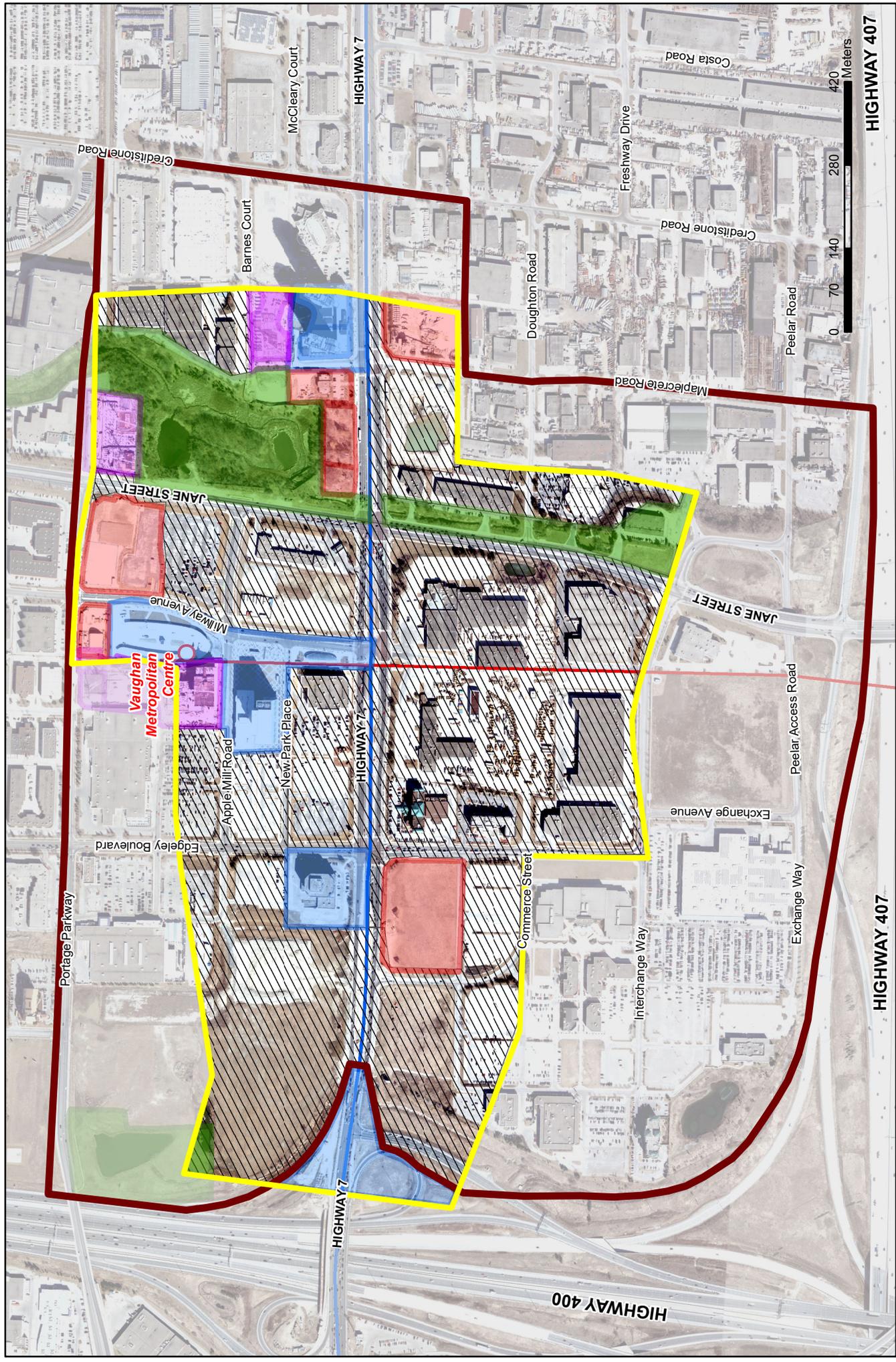
**Legend:**

- Planned Subway Extension
- Intensification Potential
- Urban Growth Centre
- Regional Centre
- Greenway
- Under Application
- Under Construction
- Established Areas
- GO Rail
- Bus Route

**York Region**

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NOTE: This map is conceptual and is not intended to be a land use designation map.



# VAUGHAN METROPOLITAN CENTRE URBAN GROWTH CENTRE DEVELOPMENT PROGRESS

NOTE: This map is conceptual and is not intended to be a land use designation map.

- Under Application
- Under Construction
- Established Areas
- Intensification Potential
- Urban Growth Centre
- Regional Centre
- Parks and Open Space
- Subway Route
- Bus Route



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## **APPENDIX 2 – LOCAL MUNICIPAL CONSULTATION ON INTENSIFICATION AND MAJOR TRANSIT STATION AREAS**

<b>Region-Wide Meetings with Local Municipal Staff</b>	
<b>Date</b>	<b>Meeting</b>
June 23, 2017	Local Municipal Working Group Meeting (Growth Plan policy discussion on intensification)
September 8, 2017	Local Municipal Working Group Meeting (Initial discussion on implementing the Growth Plan policies on intensification and MTSAs)
March 23, 2018	Local Municipal Working Group Meeting (Draft approach to MTSA delineation and density targets and approach to intensification framework)
September 28, 2018	Local Municipal Working Group Meeting (Planning for intensification project update)
February 15, 2019	Local Municipal Working Group Meeting (Refinements to MTSA delineation approach)

<b>One-on-One Meetings and Conference Calls with Local Municipal Staff</b>		
<b>Date</b>	<b>Meeting</b>	<b>Local Municipal Attendees</b>
Apr. 4, 2018	1-on-1 Meeting with Vaughan (MTSAs kick-off)	3
Apr. 13, 2018	1-on-1 Meeting with Richmond Hill (MTSAs kick-off)	4
Apr. 17, 2018	1-on-1 Meeting with Markham (MTSAs kick-off)	3
May 4, 2018	1-on-1 Meeting with Aurora (MTSAs kick-off)	4
May 7, 2018	1-on-1 Meeting with East Gwillimbury (MTSAs kick-off)	2
May 14, 2018	1-on-1 Meeting with Whitchurch-Stouffville (MTSAs kick-off)	2
May 15, 2018	1-on-1 Meeting with King (MTSAs kick-off)	2
July 6, 2018	1-on-1 Meeting with Richmond Hill (MTSAs Guidance document response to comments)	4
July 16, 2018	1-on-1 Meeting with Newmarket (MTSAs Guidance document response to comments)	2
Aug. 3, 2018	1-on-1 with Markham (MTSAs Guidance document response to comments & draft delineations)	2
Aug. 10, 2018	1-on-1 with East Gwillimbury (MTSAs Guidance document response to comments)	3
Aug. 10, 2018	1-on-1 with Aurora (Phone call check-in)	2
Sept. 5, 2018	1-on-1 with Vaughan (Draft delineations)	5
Sept. 17, 2018	1-on-1 with Markham (Draft delineations)	3
Oct. 17, 2018	1-on-1 with Markham (Density targets)	2
Oct. 31, 2018	1-on-1 Meeting with Newmarket (Draft delineations)	3
Nov. 22, 2018	1-on-1 Meeting with Vaughan (Draft delineations & density targets)	3
Nov. 26, 2018	1-on-1 Meeting with Markham (Draft delineations & density targets)	3
Nov. 28, 2019	1-on-1 Meeting with King - Teleconference (Draft delineations & density targets)	2
Dec. 5, 2018	1-on-1 Meeting with Richmond Hill (Draft delineations & density targets)	1
Dec. 13, 2018	1-on-1 Meeting with Whitchurch-Stouffville (Draft delineations & density targets)	3
Jan. 3, 2019	1-on-1 Meeting with Markham (Draft delineations & density targets)	3
Jan. 4, 2019	1-on-1 Meeting with Newmarket (Draft delineations & density targets)	1
Jan. 22, 2019	1-on-1 Meeting with East Gwillimbury - Teleconference (Draft delineations & density targets)	1
Jan 29, 2019	1-on-1 Meeting with Vaughan (Draft delineations & density targets)	4
Jan 29, 2019	1-on-1 Meeting with Richmond Hill (Draft delineations & density targets)	3
Jan 31, 2019	1-on-1 Meeting with Markham (Draft delineations & density targets)	4
Feb 1, 2019	1-on-1 Meeting with Markham (Draft delineations & density targets)	2
Feb 5, 2019	1-on-1 Meeting with King - Teleconference (Draft delineations & density targets)	4

There were no one-on-one meetings with the Town of Georgina since they have no MTSAs.