THE REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF YORK

REPORT NO. 4
OF THE REGIONAL
PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
MEETING HELD ON APRIL 8, 2009

For Consideration by
The Council of The Regional Municipality of York
on April 23, 2009

Chair: Regional Councillor T. Wong

Members: Regional Councillor J. Taylor, Vice-Chair
Mayor M. Black
Regional Councillor M. Ferri
Regional Councillor B. Hogg
Regional Councillor D. Wheeler
Mayor J. Young
Regional Chair B. Fisch (ex officio)

Also Present: Regional Councillor V. Spatafora

Staff Present: L. Bigioni, P. Casey, P. Draper, H. Konefat, B. Macgregor, P. May,
R. Miller, K. Price, N. Prout, B. Tuckey, J. Waller

The Planning and Economic Development Committee began its meeting at 1:00 p.m. on April 8, 2009.

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The Planning and Economic Development Committee recommends the adoption of the recommendations contained in the following report dated February 3, 2009, from the Commissioner of Planning and Development Services and the Commissioner of Environmental Services.
1. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

   It is recommended that:
   1. York Region Council endorse, in principle, a new program (as outlined in Attachment 1) to promote more sustainable grade related (up to 3 storey) residential development through servicing allocation incentives of 10 or 20%.
   2. York Region Council amend the eligibility criteria of the “Sustainable Development Through LEED® Highrise Program” to include multi-unit residential developments with a minimum building height of four storeys replacing the existing five storey minimum.
   3. This report be circulated to the Building and Development Branch, Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing with a recommendation to incorporate the advanced construction requirements outlined in this report into the Ontario Building Code.
   4. Community Planning staff, in consultation with the local municipalities and representatives of the building industry, proceed with finalizing the program and implementation guide and report back to Council as necessary.
   5. Further incentive opportunities beyond 10 or 20% be explored, in partnership between Regional and local staff through municipally-initiated and comprehensive water conservation programs that could include such elements as innovative storm water management practices, inflow and infiltration reduction, peak water demand management, enhanced retrofitting programs and enhanced leak reduction programs. Regional staff to report back to Regional Council as necessary.
   6. This report be circulated by the Regional Clerk to all local municipal Planning Directors/Commissioners for consultation.

2. **PURPOSE**

   The purpose of this report is to establish a policy that advances sustainable development practices in relation to grade related residential developments through the provision of a servicing allocation incentive. The primary goals of this new policy are twofold:
   - To encourage the construction of more energy efficient and sustainable grade related residential developments throughout York Region.
   - To further reduce water consumption across the Region beyond what is achieved through existing programs.
3. BACKGROUND

Builds on the sustainability principles established through the Sustainable Development through LEED® policy

In June 2007, Regional Council endorsed the Sustainable Development through LEED® program. The program provides additional servicing allocation as incentive to encourage more sustainable high density development within Regional Centres and Corridors. As a next step, it was envisioned that a similar program (the Sustainable Home Incentive Program) would be implemented to encourage more sustainable ground related development.

Together, these two programs are meant to have the cumulative benefit of creating a full range of sustainable housing in all residential building categories within the Region. The Sustainable Home Incentive Program has been designed to address grade related development which, for the purposes of this program has been defined to include single detached residential, semi-detached residential development, townhomes and low-rise multi-unit residential development with a maximum height of three-storeys. To ensure a full range of sustainable housing, a modification to eligibility criteria of the “Sustainable Development Through LEED® Highrise Program” is required. The eligibility criteria needs to be amended to include multi-unit residential developments with a minimum building height of four storeys rather than the existing five storey minimum.

Sustainable Development

In 2007, Regional Council endorsed the York Region Sustainability Strategy, “Toward a Sustainable Region”. The purpose of this strategy is to provide a long-term framework informing municipal decisions based on the triple bottom line of a sustainable natural environment, economic vitality and social equity. Specifically, the Sustainable Home Incentive Program provides a number of benefits including:

- Using key resources like energy, water, materials and land much more efficiently.
- Improved indoor environments resulting in enhanced comfort and health.
- For the home owner, reduced operating costs over the life-cycle of the building and enhanced resale values and profits.
- For the builder, creating product differentiation and increased sales.

In order to realize these benefits, the Sustainable Home Incentive Program looks for improvements in the following areas of home performance, including:

- Water Conservation Measures
- Energy Conservation
- Resource Management
- Indoor Air Quality
- Renewable Energy
Homeowner Education

All of these benefits and improved home performance promote healthy communities and are keeping with the Regional policy framework for building sustainable communities. See Attachment 1, for additional information on the positive financial benefits, to the industry and eventual homeowner, and consumer trends related to sustainable development.

In developing the Sustainable Home Incentive Program (SHIP), Regional staff reviewed several green building programs that incorporated third party certification. It was determined that the GreenHouse™ Certified Construction Program offered by the EnerQuality Corporation and the LEED® for Homes Program to be offered by the Canada Green Building Council were the most appropriate to utilize in the development of a Regional incentive program. Both programs offer the benefit of third party certification on each residential unit constructed. Third party certification is an important tool to ensure the implementation and success of the Sustainable Home Incentive Program. Refer to Attachment 2 for a description of these green building programs.

Municipal and Industry Consultation on a Sustainable Home Incentive Program has occurred

A municipal consultation session was held by the Region on November 28, 2008 which included building and planning staff from the local municipalities. The participants were provided a draft program framework and approval process and asked to comment on the Sustainable Home Incentive Program. In general, municipal staff who attended the consultation session were very supportive of the proposed program framework. There was discussion around the mechanisms for implementing the program including the need for third party verification, the need for developers to demonstrate the ability to achieve water savings in the field and program flexibility. In recent follow-up with municipal staff, it has been confirmed that there is support at the local level for this new program.

There has also been ongoing consultation with representatives from the building industry. Regional staff have been engaged as participants in ongoing consultation with the East Gwillimbury Water Conservation Group. This working group includes representatives from the Town of East Gwillimbury, Regional staff, water efficiency experts and representatives of the building industry. The focus of the Water Conservation Group is to examine and determine the effectiveness of water efficiency measures that could be implemented into the planned new communities in East Gwillimbury. The East Gwillimbury Water Conservation Group has reviewed and provided comments on the proposed water efficiency measure of this program.

Most recently, Regional staff presented the proposed program to representatives from BILD. The representatives from the building industry were comfortable with the energy conservation measures proposed through this program. The majority of builders have
already incorporated Energy Star requirements into their building practices in recognition that these requirements will be incorporated into the Ontario Building Code in 2012.

Further consultation with local municipal partners and representatives of the building industry will be required to develop the program implementation guide.

4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

In order to make a “servicing allocation” incentive available, the Region needs to ensure that significant water conservation is achieved through the construction of new homes beyond what is achieved through the existing Ontario Building Code requirements. In grade-related housing, this requires cooperation between York Region, the local municipality, the developer/builder and the homeowner. The following discussion outlines the program framework including the mechanisms for ensuring significant water conservation measures are achieved.

4.1 ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR PARTICIPATION IN THE SUSTAINABLE HOME INCENTIVE PROGRAM

The Key to achieving significant levels of water conservation is partnership with our local municipalities

Water conservation is a critical component of sustainable development and a critical foundation to the success of this program. Incentives encouraging enhanced home performance in combination with a variety of municipal water conservation programs will provide significant water savings. It is important to continue and enhance partnerships with the local municipalities as a cornerstone of the Sustainable Home Incentive Program. To be eligible for participation in this program, all municipalities will be required to participate in the following programs:

- The local municipality continue participation in Regional water efficiency plans and policies that implement and support the Region’s Water for Tomorrow program.
- Local municipalities develop I-I reduction strategies as a basis for funding partnerships with York Region.
- Regional design and construction standards and best practices be developed and implemented for municipal and private water and wastewater connections.
- The local municipality agrees to partner with York Region to participate in water system leakage reduction programs, as they are developed and implemented.
- The Local Municipality amends their water-use by-law to support municipal and Regional summer water conservation plans to reflect best practices principles to be established by York Region (i.e. lawn watering permitted one day per week).
4.2 ELEMENTS FOR ACHIEVING MORE SUSTAINABLE HOUSING

Based on stakeholder engagement, the Region’s Sustainable Home Incentive Program should be designed to be as flexible as possible while being mindful of ensuring the integrity of the program. Flexibility was incorporated into this program by providing the development community options on the type of certified construction program they utilize to participate in the Sustainable Home Incentive Program. Participants can choose the certified construction program that is most readily incorporated with their existing business practices.

Third party certification required through the Greenhouse™ or LEED® for Homes Certification

In order to provide a servicing allocation incentive the Region must ensure that the proposed housing achieves a higher level of performance than required by the current Ontario Building Code. Developers of grade related residential developments will be required to confirm that all proposed dwellings are eligible for certification under the GreenHouse™ Certified Construction or LEED® for Homes programs.

Level One of the Sustainable Home Incentive Program: 10% Incentive

In order to receive the 10% servicing allocation incentive, water savings must be achieved by implementing the following water conservation measures into new home construction, including:

- Low Flow (4.8 LPF) single flush toilets installed through out the home;
- Low flow showerheads, faucets and aerators installed through out the home;
- Water efficient clothes washers;
- Water efficient dishwashers;
- Hot water re-circulating systems;
- Water efficient whole home furnace humidifiers;
- Home Owner education; and
- Installation of smart meters

Limiting or restricting outdoor water use can have a significant impact towards reducing the peak water demands that occur during the summer months. As such, applications under either third party certification program will be required to implement the following outdoor water conservation measures:

- A minimum requirement of 6 inches of topsoil provided throughout the development which provides better root growth and reduces the need for irrigation.
- The provision of water-efficient, drought resistant sod provided throughout the development.
- Irrigation systems connected to municipal water supply systems will not be permitted.
The Sustainable Home Incentive Program relies on the requirements of the third party rating systems to ensure that all aspects of sustainable construction are addressed. A complete program description provided in Attachment 3, provides more information on the additional performance criteria that will be addressed through the SHIP program.

**Level Two of the Sustainable Home Incentive Program: 20% Incentive**

There are many examples of homebuilders within York Region who are dedicated to building the next generation of environmentally responsible homes. All these projects have incorporated technologies, materials and/or practices that achieve a higher level of resource efficiency and sustainability and should be rewarded. Examples of this leadership have been described in Attachment 4.

**Leaders in building environmentally and responsible homes in York Region should have the option to be rewarded with a 20% allocation incentive**

Developments that reach a higher level of conservation through more progressive and innovative approaches to home building should be rewarded and an increased allocation incentive of 20% is proposed. In addition to the criteria outlined in Level 1, to qualify for the higher incentive, the proposed home must include additional water conservation measures including the following:

- rainwater harvesting and storage systems for indoor and outdoor water use; or
- greywater reuse; and
- install permeable driveway surfaces (other than sod).

A complete program description provided in Attachment 3 provides more information on the additional performance criteria that will be addressed through the SHIP program.

**4.3 HOW WERE THE PROGRAM INCENTIVE LEVELS DETERMINED?**

Regional staff from the Environmental Services and Planning Departments collaborated to determine the potential water savings that could be achieved through implementation of SHIP.

The first step in determining the incentive levels to be provided was to examine the current requirements of the Ontario Building Code and the manufacturer’s specification on commercially available appliances and products. This information was used to determine the technical elements of a “typical” new home constructed in York Region. The next step of the analysis including determining the amount of water a “typical” home would consume. Regional staff used water conservation and efficiency studies to determine the average water consumption of a ‘typical home’. This information was determined from a variety of sources including manufacturer specifications, York Region Water Efficiency Master Plan, the Regional Water and Wastewater Master Plan, and
research conducted by the American Water Works Association and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. This water consumption rate for a ‘typical’ home was then expressed in litres per capita per day based on the Regional-average person per unit (PPU) for grade related housing.

A similar analysis was conducted to determine the water consumption rates of a Level 1 and Level 2 SHIP home. The analysis included a calculation to determine the amount of water savings achieved through the enhanced technical requirements of the Level 1 or 2 home when compared to the ‘typical’ new home. Through this analysis, Regional staff have determined estimated water savings for each Level of the proposed program (see Table 1). These water savings translate into incentive levels to be used in support of this program, as follows and detailed in Table 1.

- Level 1 = 50 litres/capita/day water savings = 10% servicing allocation incentive
- Level 2 = 80 litres/capita/day water savings = 20% servicing allocation incentive

**Table 1**
Summary of Water Savings Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Certification</th>
<th>Mandatory Water Saving Features</th>
<th>Estimated Water Savings Litres/capita/day</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Incentive Level 1 – 10%**  
Energy Star GreenHouse or LEED Certified or Equivalent Certification Program | High Efficiency Toilet (HET)  
Bathroom taps max flow 5.6 lpm  
Shower head max flow 7.6 lpm  
Dishwasher - Energy Star  
Clothes Washer - Energy Star  
Hot water recirculation system  
Water efficient whole home humidifier  
6 inches of top soil  
drought tolerant sod | 50 lcd |
| **Incentive Level 2 – 20%**  
LEED Silver or Equivalent Certification Program | HET max flush 4.1 litres  
Bathroom taps max flow 5.6 lpm  
Showerhead max flow 6.6 lpm  
Dishwasher - Energy Star  
Clothes Washer – Energy Star with MEF>=2.0 and WF<5.5  
Hot water recirculation system  
Water efficient whole home humidifier  
6 inches of top soil | 80 lcd |
Certification | Mandatory Water Saving Features | Estimated Water Savings Litres/capita/day
---|---|---
90% drought tolerant species and 80+ sod | | 
Irrigation system using non potable water source | | 
Rainwater Harvesting 75 % Roof Area | | 
Grey water collection from 3 sources | | 

* Regional total water consumption per capita rate = 365 lcd.
** PPU used for this program in 3.38 (represents the weighted Regional average for grade-related housing)

Regional staff circulated the water savings analysis that was conducted to water efficiency experts to ensure validity. Other jurisdictions have also conducted similar water savings analysis. For instance, the Environmental Protection Agency in the United States through their WaterSense program is creating a third party certification program for the construction of water-efficient homes. Informational material supporting this program indicate that homes constructed through this program will be designed and built to be about 20% more efficient.

### 4.4 HOW DO WE ENSURE SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS PROGRAM?

Successful implementation of the Sustainable Home Incentive program includes ensuring the projected water savings are achieved on the ground. Regional staff have incorporated the following measures to ensure program success, as follows:

**Water Consumption and Savings used to calculate Incentive Levels**

York Region has a responsibility to ensure that the Regional water and wastewater systems operate in a safe and efficient manner. The servicing allocation incentives proposed are based on consumption rates for the proposed features and fixtures of this program. These rates were incorporated into the analysis to ensure that the water and wastewater system operations can be maintained and can be safe guarded from excessive demand, unexpected overflow and surcharging.

**Ensuring Incentive Levels Calculated in a manner consistent with Servicing Assignment to Local Municipalities**

The combined water consumption rate used in the water savings analysis incorporated both residential and employment land uses. In this way, Regional staff were able to
ensure that the proposed incentive levels were determined in a manner consistent with the methodology used in calculating Regional servicing capacity and assignment to the local municipalities. Regional staff also recognized the importance of not “double counting” water efficiencies achieved through existing conservation efforts like the Water for Tomorrow program.

**Potential for Greater Uptake in this Program due to Current High Demand for Grade-Related Housing**

There is the potential for a greater uptake in this program than what has been currently realized in the Sustainable Development Through LEED® Program due to the current higher demand for grade-related housing. Research on water efficiency indicates that water savings associated with grade related housing are typically lower than water savings achieved with higher density developments. In general, low density residential water use is more greatly influenced by outdoor water use and personal habits. As such, Regional staff incorporated program requirements that speak directly to reducing outdoor water demand, for the provision of water metres and home owner education. It is anticipated that these measures will have a positive impact on personal water-use habits.

**Mandatory Water Efficiency Measures are required to Ensure Program Success**

York Region has clearly indicated those water efficiency measures that are required to achieve the two incentive levels that are contemplated in this program. These mandatory water efficiency measures are necessary to ensure that sufficient water savings are achieved to mitigate any risk associated with the provision of allocation incentives.

**The Need for a Third Party Rating System**

The success of the Sustainable Home Incentive Program relies on ensuring that the water efficiency measures are effectively translated from design into construction. The use of a third party rating systems provides York Region and program participants with an existing process and trained professional raters to facilitate implementation of this program. Alternative third party rating systems may be considered provided they meet the same water conservation and sustainability principles outlined under the SHIP program.

**Field Proofing of Ability to Achieve Third Party Certification**

Developers who participate in the Sustainable Home Incentive Program will be required to demonstrate their ability to achieve third party certification on a first phase of development or through model home construction. Upon this successful field
demonstration of performance, servicing allocation incentive would be extended to the program participant.

**Ensure New Program Complements the existing Sustainable Development through LEED® program**

Energy and water efficiency is important across the Region. The achievement of higher density compact development served by transit in centres and corridors is a Regional priority. The Sustainable Home Incentive Program has been designed to complement the existing High Density Sustainable Development through LEED® program. These two incentive programs have been developed to address all residential housing forms in a comprehensive manner, as demonstrated in Tables 2 and 3.

### Table 2
Sustainable Development through LEED®
High Density Development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Incentive Level (%)</th>
<th>Sustainability Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>High Density Development Achieving LEED® Gold – higher water/sewer conservation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>High Density Development Achieving LEED® Silver – higher water/sewer conservation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>High Density Development Achieving LEED® Silver – moderate water/sewer conservation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 3
Sustainable Home Incentive Program
Grade Related Development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Incentive Level (%)</th>
<th>Sustainability Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Low Density Development Achieving LEED® for Homes – Silver or above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Low Density Development Achieving Greenhouse Certification/LEED for Homes Certified</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.5 NEXT STEPS

Further Consultation with local municipalities and development industry required

Regional staff will further consult with the local municipalities, development community and other stakeholders with the objective of detailing the program framework and developing implementation guidelines that are readily integrated into the plan of subdivision and site plan approval processes (refer to Attachment 5).

Develop Partnerships to Implement Monitoring of Consumption

Regional staff should explore opportunities to partner with local municipalities and program participants to implement water consumption monitoring programs. The resulting information could be used to assess the water consumption rates realized in a more water-efficient home. This would be extremely valuable in evaluating the effectiveness of the program.

Explore Additional Incentive Opportunities

Through initial consultation, the need for additional incentive opportunities for municipalities who address water conservation in a holistic manner was raised. Municipally-initiated and comprehensive water conservation programs including such elements as innovative storm water management practices, inflow and infiltration reduction, peak water demand management, enhanced retrofitting programs and enhanced leak reduction programs may achieve significant water savings. Currently, Regional staff are engaged in discussions with some of our local municipal partners to establish principles for developing municipal based conservation programs and will report back to Council upon completion. Further incentive opportunities will be explored, in partnership between Regional and local staff, for municipal wide conservation and retrofitting efforts that achieve significant water savings over and above those achieved through existing programs.

Relationship to Vision 2026

The Sustainable Housing Incentive Program meets a variety of goal areas and objectives of Vision 2026. Specifically, this program directly addressed the objectives of promoting conservation, ensuring clean water and air, creating livable, sustainable and safe communities as well as taking a strategic approach to growth management and balancing growth with the environment.
5. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There is a general consensus among building professionals regarding the economic, environmental and social benefits of green construction methods. The proposed policy applies to private developments; York Region will realize cost savings associated with treating less water and wastewater per capita. While not quantified in this report, this proposed policy might also have a positive financial impact on the delivery of Regional services in the future.

6. **LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT**

The proposed policy supports the completion of planned communities by providing local municipalities the opportunity to advance additional residential development based on a more efficient use of resources and infrastructure. It will also result in positive financial impact on the delivery of local services through enhanced conservation and efficiencies. Regional staff have consulted on an incentive program and will continue consultation with our local municipal partners to develop an implementation guide for the Sustainable Home Incentive Program. At the same time, Regional staff will also consult with our local municipal partners to determine the feasibility on implementing municipal-wide water conservation programs.

7. **CONCLUSION**

This policy builds upon the success of the “Sustainable Building Through LEED® Program”. It provides the opportunity to promote sustainable construction practices in grade-related residential development. The success of this program will depend on partnership between the Region, local municipalities and the development industry. The benefits of this program will extend beyond water conservation resulting, for the residents of York Region, in homes that have reduced carbon footprints, emits less greenhouse gases, reduces energy and water consumption and provides a healthy indoor living environment more resilient to climate change.

For more information on this report, please contact Teresa Cline, Planner, Community Planning at (905) 830-4444, Ext. 1533, or Heather Konefat, Director of Community Planning at Ext. 1502.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.

*(The five attachments referred to in this clause are attached to this report.)*
2

ECONOMIC AND DEVELOPMENT REVIEW 2008

The Planning and Economic Development Committee recommends the following:

1. Receipt of the presentation by Paul Bottomley, Manager of Growth Management, Economy and Information Research; and

2. Adoption of the recommendation contained in the following report dated March 4, 2009, from the Commissioner of Planning and Development Services.

1. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that:
1. The Economic and Development Review 2008 (Attachment 1) be circulated by Planning & Development Services in print and electronic form to the public, local municipalities and agencies, and be made available on the corporate website.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of the Economic and Development Review 2008 is to examine key economic and demographic indicators in York Region. The report assesses the competitiveness of York Region’s economy, as compared to its regional and national counterparts. The report also aims to provide Regional Council with a broader perspective on economic indicators. This information is used to prepare key economic policy and aids in the development of public and private sector economic investment strategies.

3. BACKGROUND

The Economic and Development Review has been published on a semi-annual basis since 1995. This year’s report highlights a number of year-end economic indicators, which show that although York Region’s economy has continued to grow throughout 2008, there are signs of a slowing economy.
4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

HIGHLIGHTS

• Although many indicators show relatively strong performance in 2008, figures for the 4th quarter were down considerably, perhaps indicative of a considerably slower 2009.
• York Region’s total population was estimated to be 1,011,360 on December 31, 2008, an increase of approximately 28,300 people from December 2007.
• York Region has 16.7% (2008) of the GTA’s population and 15% (2006) of its employment.
• Building permits were issued for 8,305 new residential units in 2008. York Region issued the third largest number of new residential permits in the country.
• Housing completions reached 9,021 units in 2008, a decrease of 14.1% from 2007.
• Total construction for 2008 was valued at approximately $2.8 billion, a decrease of 20.1% or $705 million under 2007.
• Industrial, commercial, institutional (ICI) construction made up 27.5% of the total value of construction in York Region during 2008, a decrease from 2007, where ICI construction accounted for 32%.
• The total estimated value of industrial construction in 2008 came in at $231.5 million. This represents a decrease of 40.8% from 2007 values.
• Commercial construction values were estimated at $314.2 million, a 34.2% decrease from the total value of commercial construction in 2007.
• Institutional construction values were estimated at $224.7 million, a 8.6% decrease from the total value of institutional construction in 2007.
• The estimated number of jobs in York Region was approximately 490,000 (year end 2008).
• The unemployment rate as of December 2008 in York Region was estimated to be 5.7%.
• As of mid-year 2008, there were approximately 45 private sector companies in York Region with 500 or more employees, an increase of 5 from 2007. These companies come from a broad diversity of sectors including manufacturing, computer technology, transportation, communications and commerce.
• Over the last four years, the average resale price for single detached dwellings has continued to rise steadily from $435,707 in 2005, to $458,636 in 2006, to $480,637 in 2007 and $508,892 in 2008.
• The number of housing resales in York Region during the last quarter of 2008 dropped by 45.5% compared to the last quarter of 2007.
• The 2006 Census shows that relative to the GTA and Canada, York Region appears to have a “younger” population. The proportion of the Region’s population above the age of 60 is lower than that of both the GTA and Canada. Conversely, the proportion of baby boomers in York Region is greater relative to both the GTA and Canada.
• The Region’s economic performance is being monitored to detect the impacts that a dynamically changing national and global economies will have on the Regional economy.

**POPULATION AND EMPLOYMENT**

During 2008, York Region experienced strong population growth, increased its share of the GTA’s population, and ranked as one of the largest Regions in Canada.

By the end of 2008, the Region’s population had grown by approximately 28,300 people (2.9%) over the previous year, bringing the total estimated population to 1,011,360 people (see Figure 1). This pace of growth is slower than the average annual population increase that York Region has experienced in recent years, due to a slowdown in the number of housing completions. In the last 5 years, the Region has grown by an average of approximately 31,300 people annually.

In 1997, the Region accounted for 13.1% of the GTA’s total population. In 2008, 16.7% of the GTA now call the Region home. When compared to other cities, Regions and Regional Districts (as defined locally) across Canada, York Region retained its position as having the sixth largest total population – a ranking it has held since 2002 (see Table 1).
Table 1  
Canada’s Largest Municipalities 2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>City of Toronto</td>
<td>2,637,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Greater Vancouver Regional District</td>
<td>2,271,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>City of Montréal</td>
<td>1,871,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Peel Region</td>
<td>1,313,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>City of Calgary</td>
<td>1,042,900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>York Region</td>
<td>1,011,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>City of Ottawa</td>
<td>898,150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>City of Edmonton</td>
<td>752,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>City of Québec</td>
<td>728,900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>City of Winnipeg</td>
<td>653,400</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: List includes cities, Regions, and Regional Districts as defined locally.

York Region experienced both an increase in total jobs and an increase in unemployment rates in 2008

York Region is estimated to have had approximately 490,000 jobs (year end 2008). Over the last 10 years, approximately 185,000 new jobs have been created within the Region. Although total employment did grow within the Region, there were more people looking for work by year end as the Regional unemployment rate rose to approximately 5.7% in December 2008 from 5.1% in December 2007. Even with this increase, the Regional unemployment rate is lower than National, Provincial, and GTA averages, indicating that York Region is a resilient and diversified economy and should be in a better position to withstand an economic downturn.

PROPERTY MARKET AND BUILDING ACTIVITIES

York Region’s residential real estate market healthy but down from a peak year in 2007

8,046 single detached unit resales occurred during the year – a decrease of 24.5% from 2007. Each quarter of 2008 saw a decrease in total unit resales compared to 2007, but the 4th quarter experienced the largest drop at 45.5%. In addition, multiple dwelling unit resales decreased by 18% from 2007 numbers to total 5,019. The value of all resales in 2008 totalled $5.7 billion – a decrease of 18.6% from 2007. Although overall resale activity is down, the annual average sale price of all dwelling types increased during 2008. For example, the average resale value of a single detached unit increased by 4.9% from $484,741 in 2007 to $508,892 in 2008.
The supply of new residential units remained strong in 2008, while York Region’s housing supply continued to become more diversified

In 2008, a total of 9,184 housing starts and 9,021 housing completions occurred in the Region, representing decreases of 17.6% and 14.1%, respectively, from 2007. The total number of residential building permits issued in 2008 decreased to 8,305 from 10,421 in 2007. The downward trend in total building permits issued began during the second half of 2007 (see Figure 2).

However, when compared to other cities, Regions and Regional Districts across Canada, York Region still ranked third for the number of new residential permits issued in 2008 (see Table 2).

Table 2
Comparative Residential Building Permits Across Canada 2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Municipality</th>
<th># of Permits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Greater Vancouver Regional District</td>
<td>14,838</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>City of Toronto</td>
<td>13,873</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>York Region</td>
<td>8,305</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>City of Ottawa</td>
<td>6,744</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>City of Calgary</td>
<td>6,593</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>City of Montréal</td>
<td>6,054</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Peel Region</td>
<td>5,896</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>City of Québec</td>
<td>5,878</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Halton Region</td>
<td>5,660</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>City of Edmonton</td>
<td>4,541</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Statistics Canada Building Permit Reports and Table 32.2 (unpublished), 2008.
Note: List includes cities, Regions, and Regional Districts as defined locally.

Reviewing the mix of residential unit types completed in 2008, 59% were single detached units, 8% were semi-detached units, 15% were row houses, and 18% were apartments. Compared with 2007, the biggest change in the Region’s housing mix occurred for single and semi detached units, which respectively accounted for 52% and 11% of 2007’s housing completions.

The Region’s Housing Directions Report and Regional Official Plan call for a balance between single detached and multiple unit dwellings in new housing construction. A review of the historical residential unit completion mix shows the proportion of single detached homes gradually decreasing (see Figure 3). This trend of a more balanced mix of housing types represents a positive step towards providing an increased number of housing choices in the Region.

Total housing completions for York Region in 2008 were 9,021, representing a 14.1% decline from 2007. As depicted by the historical completion data chart above (Figure 3b) housing completions are still at a healthy level when compared to the past recessionary periods of the early eighties and early nineties.

In 2008, the Region reviewed 45 plans of subdivision and 8 plans of condominium representing, 9,874 residential units and 149.68 hectares of industrial/commercial lands. Comparatively, the Region reviewed 53 plans of subdivision and 36 plans of condominium in 2007, representing 12,362.5 residential units and 149.72 hectares of industrial/commercial lands.

**York Region’s total value of construction decreased across all sectors – residential, industrial, commercial, and institutional – in 2008, yet the Region still ranked among the top four across Canada**

Total construction in York Region during 2008 was valued at $2.8 billion – a decrease of $705 million from 2007. All sectors (residential, industrial, commercial, and institutional) experienced decreases in the total value of their construction for the 2008 calendar year. This is compared to the relatively high values in 2007. The residential, commercial, and institutional sectors experienced decreases of 15.1%, 34.2% and 8.6%, respectively. The largest decrease occurred in the industrial sector, finishing 2008 with a decrease of $159.7 million (40.8%) under its value of construction in 2007.

The value of ICI construction has increased in York Region from 1996-2008. Since 1996, the annual value of non-residential construction has more than doubled from $316 million to $770 million in 2008 (see Figure 4). The last six months of 2008 saw a significant
decline in total ICI construction as compared to 2007 levels. Total ICI values for the second half of 2008 were $331.9 million, down 45.3% compared to 2007.

Compared to earlier years, 2008 has not been a year of strong growth for the total value of construction in York Region. 2008 was the lowest since 2002, but still only $100 million less per year than the 2003-2006 period. The poor 2nd half of 2008 however may be a harbinger of what is to come in 2009. York Region still posted the fourth largest total construction value in the country (see Table 3).

### Table 3
Cross Canada Comparisons 2008: Values of Total Construction ($000’s)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Municipality</th>
<th>Total Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>City of Toronto</td>
<td>$5,720,398</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Greater Vancouver Regional District</td>
<td>$5,578,940</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>City of Calgary</td>
<td>$3,955,194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td><strong>York Region</strong></td>
<td><strong>$2,801,370</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>City of Edmonton</td>
<td>$2,159,666</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Peel Region</td>
<td>$2,071,465</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>City of Montréal</td>
<td>$1,769,189</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Halton Region</td>
<td>$1,700,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>City of Ottawa</td>
<td>$1,698,831</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>City of Québec</td>
<td>$1,559,504</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Area Municipal Building Permit Reports, 2008; Statistics Canada Building Permit Reports and Table 32.2 (unpublished), 2008.

Note: List includes cities, Regions, and Regional Districts as defined locally.
The total residential construction value of residential permits in York Region was approximately $2.03 billion. When compared to other cities, Regions and Regional Districts, this value is the third largest in the country for 2008 (see Table 4).

### Table 4

Cross Canada Comparisons 2008: Values of Residential Construction ($000’s)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Municipality</th>
<th>Residential Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Greater Vancouver Regional District</td>
<td>$3,385,938</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>City of Toronto</td>
<td>$2,941,922</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td><strong>York Region</strong></td>
<td><strong>$2,030,903</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>City of Calgary</td>
<td>$1,491,110</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Halton Region</td>
<td>$1,124,800</td>
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<td>City of Ottawa</td>
<td>$1,031,568</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Peel Region</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>City of Edmonton</td>
<td>$914,295</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>City of Québec</td>
<td>$902,035</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>City of Montréal</td>
<td>$888,006</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Area Municipal Building Permit Reports, 2008; Statistics Canada Building Permit Reports and Table 32.2 (unpublished), 2008.

Note: List includes cities, Regions, and Regional Districts as defined locally.

The total value of all ICI construction in 2008 placed the Region seventh in Canada (see Table 5). All ICI sectors decreased in the Region by 30.9% compared to the strong performance in 2007. ICI decreased by 15.2% compared to the more typical 2006 totals.

### Table 5

Cross Canada Comparisons 2008: Values of ICI Construction ($000’s)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Municipality</th>
<th>Industrial</th>
<th>Commercial</th>
<th>Institutional</th>
<th>Total</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>City of Toronto</td>
<td>$304,953</td>
<td>$1,843,098</td>
<td>$630,425</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>City of Calgary</td>
<td>$154,343</td>
<td>$1,591,325</td>
<td>$718,416</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Greater Vancouver Regional District</td>
<td>$123,727</td>
<td>$1,710,326</td>
<td>$358,949</td>
<td>$2,193,002</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>City of Edmonton</td>
<td>$139,524</td>
<td>$828,550</td>
<td>$277,297</td>
<td>$1,245,371</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Peel Region</td>
<td>$250,202</td>
<td>$536,855</td>
<td>$272,869</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>City of Montréal</td>
<td>$76,380</td>
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<td>$224,790</td>
<td>$881,183</td>
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<td><strong>York Region</strong></td>
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<td>City of Ottawa</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>City of Québec</td>
<td>$125,633</td>
<td>$391,058</td>
<td>$140,778</td>
<td>$657,469</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Waterloo Region</td>
<td>$85,089</td>
<td>$271,081</td>
<td>$230,825</td>
<td>$586,995</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Area Municipal Building Permit Reports, 2008; Statistics Canada Building Permit Reports and Table 32.2 (unpublished), 2008.

Note: List includes cities, Regions, and Regional Districts as defined locally.
Relationship to Vision 2026

The Economic and Development Review 2008 helps to promote Regional economic vitality as outlined in both the Regional Official Plan and Vision 2026. The monitoring of economic trends allows York Region to assess the competitiveness of its economy and evaluate and respond to changes in the economic climate. Furthermore, the Economic and Development Review 2008 is a vehicle for highlighting and showcasing the Region as a destination to live, work and play.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The economic indicators presented in this report will allow York Region Council to effectively monitor, evaluate and respond to variations in the Region’s economic landscape. Printing and distributing the Economic and Development Review 2008 is provided for in the 2009 approved budget.

6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

Regional economic indicators, as presented in this document, are important in evaluating economic trends across the Region. The adoption of this report’s recommendations provides all those using this document (including local municipal economic development and planning officials) with a summary of York Region’s economy. This will provide a primer for policy decision-making, devising strategies, and attracting new businesses to the Region.

7. CONCLUSION

Although many indicators show relatively strong performance in 2008, figures for the 4th quarter were down considerably, perhaps indicative of a considerably slower 2009. Regional economic indicators, as presented in this document, are vital in assessing and responding to economic trends across York Region. The acceptance of the recommendations of this report will provide all those using this document, including local municipal economic development and planning officials, with a summary of York Region’s economy. This publication will be useful for effective decision-making, devising strategies and attracting new businesses to the Region.

It is proposed that the attached Economic and Development Review 2008 be printed and distributed widely to local municipalities, Chambers of Commerce, Boards of Trade, involved business groups, libraries and other stakeholders. The Region’s Economic Development Department will also use this report to channel vital data on the Region to employers in York Region, and aid businesses in establishing or relocating within York Region.
For more information on this report, please contact Paul Bottomley, Manager of Growth Management, Economy & Information Research at (905) 830-4444 Ext. 1530, or John Waller, Director of Long Range and Strategic Planning at (905) 830-4444 Ext. 1525.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.

(The attachment referred to in this clause is attached to this report.)

3

REGIONAL OFFICIAL PLAN UPDATE
SPECIAL MEETING OF COUNCIL - INFORMATION REPORT

Pursuant to Section 26 of the Planning Act, as amended, the Regional Planning and Economic Development Committee held a Public Meeting to inform the Public and receive comments regarding the Regional Official Plan Five Year Review.

The Planning and Economic Development Committee recommends the following:

1. Receipt of the presentation by Barbara Jeffrey, Manager, Land Use Policy and Environment, Long Range and Strategic Planning;

2. Receipt of the following deputations:

   (a) Claudio Brutto, Brutto Land Management Consulting Limited, on behalf of Aurora Leslie Landowners Group, and communication dated March 2, 2009;

   (b) Michael Larkin, Larkin & Associates, on behalf of Memorial Gardens Canada Limited, and comments dated April 9, 2009;

3. Receipt of the following communications:

   (a) Paula Tenuta, Director, Building Industry and Land Development Association, dated April 7, 2009, regarding Regional Official Plan Update, Draft Criteria for Building New Communities;

   (b) Cam Milani, for Rizmi Holdings Limited and Lucia Milani, April 7, 2009;

   (c) John La Chapelle, Manager, Access Network Provisioning, Ontario, Bell Canada, April 7, 2009;
(d) Lucille King, Town Clerk, Town of Aurora, April 8, 2009, regarding Regional Population and Employment Forecasts; and

4. Adoption of the recommendations contained in the following report dated March 25, 2009, from the Commissioner of Planning and Development Services.

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

1. Regional Council receive this report and refer any written submissions as well as submissions made during the Special Meeting of Council held on April 8, 2009, to Regional staff for their consideration during the drafting of the Regional Official Plan Update.

2. Attachment 2, to this report be endorsed as the working version of the Table of Contents for the Regional Official Plan Update to be released in June 2009.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide context for the Special Meeting of Council required under Section 26 of the Planning Act, governing 5-year reviews of official plans. The Special Meeting of Council, the holding of which has been delegated to Planning Committee by By-law R-1290-2002-067, is to hear submissions in regard to revisions that may be required to the Regional Official Plan.

This report also introduces and recommends Council endorsement of Attachment 2 as the working version of the Draft Table of Contents for the Regional Official Plan Update to be released in June 2009.

3. BACKGROUND

Planning for Tomorrow has set the stage for the Regional Official Plan Update

Since 2005, under the Planning for Tomorrow initiative, Regional staff has brought forward a series of research reports and presentations on all aspects of growth management under the Planning for Tomorrow program. These reports include:

- Comparative Analysis of Growth Scenarios - April 30, 2008
• Planning for Tomorrow – Refined York Region 2031 Forecast and Land Budget – September 3, 2008
• York Region 2031 Land Budget – January 2009
• York Region 2031 Population and Employment Forecasts – January 2009

In addition to the background research papers, the three phases of public consultation with local Councils, stakeholders and special interest groups undertaken in 2006, 2007 and 2008 have focused on the issues requiring attention in an updated Plan.

Formulation of policies and the release of the updated Regional Official Plan in June of this year is part of the final phase of the Planning for Tomorrow exercise.

When the updated Official Plan is approved, the Region’s Official Plan will conform to Provincial Plans including Places to Grow – the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, the Greenbelt Plan, the previously approved Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan and the Provincial Policy Statement. Further the Regional Official Plan will conform with important elements of the Region’s Sustainability Strategy, Master Plans and other Corporate initiatives.

For a 5-year review of the Regional Official Plan, the Planning Act requires consultation and a Special Meeting of Council to hear submissions in regard to revisions to the Official Plan that may be required.

Section 26 of the Planning Act, requires that at least every five years, Council revise the Plan to:
• Ensure that it conforms with Provincial Plans;
• Has regard for matters of Provincial Interest and is consistent with Policy Statements;
• If it contains policies dealing with areas of employment, including the designation of areas of employment in the official plan and policies dealing with the removal of land from areas of employment, to ensure that those policies are confirmed or amended.

Before revising the official plan, the Planning Act requires that consultation take place with the approval authority (in this case the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing) and public bodies with respect to revisions that may be required. Subsection 26 (3)(b) of the Planning Act further requires that a special meeting of Council, open to the public, be held to hear submissions in regard to revisions that may be required. The duties of Council, pursuant to section 26 of the Planning Act, have been delegated to the Planning and Economic Development Committee by By-law R-1290-2002-067.

Regional Council at its meeting of February 19, 2009, endorsed Clause 8 of Report 2 of the Regional Planning and Economic Development Committee, which, among other things, set April 8, 2009 as the date of the Special Meeting for the 5-year review.
The 5-year review of the Regional Official Plan (ROP) and the ROP update are part of the Region’s Growth Plan and Greenbelt conformity work, leading to release of an updated Official Plan in June 2009.

**Planning Act requirements for Public Notice have been met**

Section 26 of the *Planning Act* requires Notice of the Special meeting of Council to be given for two consecutive weeks, not less than 30 days prior to the meeting.

Notice was given in all York Region News Group papers twice, exactly one week apart between February 15 and February 28, 2009, the Toronto Star February 18 and 25, 2009 and the King Sentinel and King Weekly, February 18 and 25, 2009. A copy of the Notice is appended as *Attachment 1* to this report.

### 4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

The Region is required to bring the Regional Official Plan into conformity with Places to Grow - the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe and the Greenbelt Plan. This involves undertaking the necessary steps for the ROP 5-year review as well as a wider Official Plan Update.

**Regional Official Plan Update to focus on Sustainability**

The main structure of the Regional Official Plan established in 1994 was focussed on the three themes of sustainable natural environment, healthy communities and economic vitality. This focus on sustainability remains valid and has been strengthened with the approval of the Regional Sustainability Strategy in 2007. The sustainability focus will be strengthened with a consistent approach throughout the updated Plan.

**Approval of Provincial Plans has required updates to many sections**

Since the Regional Official Plan was adopted and approved in the mid 1990’s there have been many new Provincial planning initiatives (Greenbelt, Source Water Protection, Places to Grow, Metrolinx and Draft Lake Simcoe Protection Plan) that have fundamentally changed the way planning occurs in south-central Ontario. In the opinion of staff, production of a comprehensive update of the Regional Official Plan will allow a comprehensive approach to inclusion of these initiatives in the Plan.

**Recent Regional Initiatives and new Policy Directions**

The Region has established a strong foundation for sustainability over the past 15 years with such initiatives as:

- Viva Rapid Transit, York Region Transit and planned subway extensions
• Water for Tomorrow Program and Water Efficiency Master Plan
• Greening Strategy and Land Securement Initiatives
• Energy Efficient Affordable Housing
• Human Services Strategy and Human Services Planning Coalition
• Minimum LEED™ Silver Standard for Regional Facilities
• Incentives for LEED™ for mid- to high-density development in the Regional Centres and Corridors and ground-related housing Region-wide
• Clean Air Strategy
• Climate Change Discussion Paper
• Updated Master Plans for Transportation and Transit, Water and Wastewater and Pedestrian and Cycling
• Economic Development Strategy

The Regional Official Plan Update will further enhance and strengthen Regional initiatives in creating the next generation of sustainable communities by using our definition of Sustainable Communities as:

*Sustainable communities promote active lifestyles and meet the needs of people of all ages, cultures and abilities. The communities include a diversity of jobs, housing types including affordable housing, schools, public spaces, recreation facilities and other amenities with the highest standard in urban design and green building. Safe, accessible and enhanced mobility systems are provided that prioritize public and rapid transit, and pedestrian and cycling connections.*

The key policy directions contained in the Regional Official Plan, once implemented, will achieve the Region’s pursuit of creating sustainable communities. These include:

• Enhanced and updated linked Regional Greenlands System to ensure a natural heritage legacy.
• Urban development and infrastructure projects that contribute to Greenlands System enhancements.
• Long-term protection of strategically located employment lands.
• Support for a green industry cluster in the Region.
• Urban design guidelines for new retail/commercial developments in the Region.
• Target a minimum 25% affordable new housing units across the Region, in each of the local municipalities including the Regional Centres and Corridors.
• Local Intensification Strategies for each Local Municipality to meet and/or exceed a minimum of 40% intensification within the Region’s built-up area.
• New Communities Criteria that includes requirements for green building, water management, mobility systems, public spaces, mixed-use and compact development and urban design.
• Progressively higher standards in energy and water efficiency, and renewable systems for new development region-wide.
• Archaeological Resources Master Plan in consultation with appropriate First Nations Communities. Implement a full-cost accounting approach to financial management that considers the economic, environmental and social costs of expenditure through its entire life cycle.

• Modified Agricultural and Rural Area policies and mapping to bring the Regional Official Plan into conformity with the Provincial Greenbelt Plan.

Some Regional Official Plan policies and designations cannot be changed through this process

While the main philosophical structure of the Plan has been retained and a number of policies amended to reflect the updated Provincial context, there are a number of policy directions and mapping that cannot be changed through this process. Most particularly, with the exception of the wellhead protection policies, the policy regime and land use mapping relating to the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan remains unchanged. The Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan and the Greenbelt Plan are not scheduled for review by the Province until 2015.

Should the Provincial review result in amendments to the Provincial Plans, changes to Regional and local planning documents could be made at that time.

Table of Contents prepared

The working version of the Table of Contents for the Updated Regional Official Plan is appended to this report as Attachment 2. The Table of Contents between the 1994 Official Plan and the Updated Official Plan are similar, however, in an effort to provide integration of the principles and actions of sustainability as well as integrate Master Planning and Growth Plan, Greenbelt Plan and Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan, and focus policies towards city-building and urbanization, there has been reorganization and merging of some sections.

While the working version of the Table of Contents may be modified slightly before the release of the Official Plan Update in June 2009, Regional staff is confident that it represents an appropriate organization for the next generation of the Regional Official Plan.

Relationship to Vision 2026

Vision 2026, York Region’s strategic plan for the future, establishes the overall vision and direction for Regional Council. Regional Council has adopted the Sustainability Strategy. Master Plans for Transportation and Transit and Water and Wastewater are in the last stages of review. New Communities Criteria and Wellhead Protection Area policies and mapping have been endorsed by Council for discussions and release as part of the Regional Official Plan update. The preparation of an updated Regional Official
Plan will permit the strengthening of these linkages in the Regional Official Plan document.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

As with the balance of Planning for Tomorrow, the Regional Official Plan update work is to be undertaken with the existing Regional staff complement from the Planning Department as well as other Regional departments.

The Region is currently undertaking a detailed 25 year fiscal and economic analysis to assess the transportation and water and sewer costs associated with the amount of growth anticipated to occur in the Region by 2031. The fiscal and economic analysis will include an evaluation of long range capital expenditures and revenues, operating costs, tax levy impacts, reserve fund and debt requirements.

6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

Local municipal official plans are required to conform to the Regional Official Plan and to Provincial Plans. A number of local municipalities are undertaking Official Plan updates and growth management exercises. Regional staff has been meeting regularly with local staff to coordinate Regional forecasting and land budget work as well as natural heritage systems planning and Greenbelt conformity work. Review of the proposed wellhead protection area policy and mapping commenced the second week in March with local municipalities, however staff meet on a regular basis with area municipal representatives to discuss Source Protection Planning. This dialogue will continue.

7. CONCLUSION

Changes in Provincial planning context, with the approval of the Greenbelt Plan and Places to Grow – the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, as well as approval of a number of Regional initiatives including the Sustainability Strategy, require that the Regional Official Plan be revisited.

Since 2005, under the Planning for Tomorrow initiative, Regional staff has brought forward a series of research reports and presentations on all aspects of growth management under the Planning for Tomorrow program. The 5-year review of the Regional Official Plan (ROP) and the ROP update are part of the Region’s Growth Plan and Greenbelt conformity work, leading to release of an updated Regional Official Plan in June 2009.
Besides background research papers, the three phases of public consultation with Local Councils, stakeholders and special interest groups undertaken in 2006, 2007 and 2008 have focused on the issues requiring attention in an updated Plan.

Section 26 of the Planning Act, requires that at least every five years, Council shall revise the Official Plan and hold a Special Meeting of Council, open to the public, to hear submissions in regard to revisions that may be required.

Regional staff considered the options of amending the Plan through a series of amendments and came to the conclusion that an overall Regional Official Plan Update was required. Regional Council at its meeting of February 19, 2009, endorsed Clause 8 of Report 2 of the Regional Planning and Economic Development Committee, which, among other things, set April 8, 2009 as the date of the Special Meeting to set the work plan for the Regional Official Plan Update.

This report provides context for the Special Meeting of Council to be held April 8, 2009 at 1:30 p.m. and provides a working version of the Table of Contents for the Regional Official Plan Update to be released in June 2009.

For more information on this report, please contact John B. Waller, MCIP, RPP, Director Long Range and Strategic Planning Branch at (905) 830-4444, Ext. 1525.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.

(The two attachments referred to in this clause are attached to this report.)

4

UPDATED GREENLANDS SYSTEM POLICY DIRECTIONS:
REGIONAL OFFICIAL PLAN UPDATE

The Planning and Economic Development Committee recommends the adoption of the recommendations contained in the following report dated March 3, 2009, from the Commissioner of Planning and Development Services.

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

1. Regional Council endorse the policy directions for an updated Greenslands System in York Region outlined in Section 4 of this report for discussion and inclusion in the Regional Official Plan update.
2. Planning Department staff circulate this report to all local municipalities, the development community, Regional partners and stakeholders, and the Ministries of Energy and Infrastructure and Municipal Affairs and Housing for comment and discussion.

2. PURPOSE

This report provides policy directions for the creation of an updated Greenlands System for York Region. The policy directions are based on the Natural Heritage Discussion Paper, 2007 and the Natural Heritage Strategic Directions Paper, 2008.

3. BACKGROUND

York Region takes a sustainable approach to growth

York Region has taken a sustainable approach to the growth challenges ahead. The Region’s Sustainability Strategy, which was approved in 2007, provides a long-term framework for making smarter decisions about growth management and undertaking municipal responsibilities that better integrate the economy, environment and community. The Sustainability Strategy has informed the update to the Regional Greenlands System.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sustainability Benefits of the Regional Greenlands System</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sustainable Natural Environment</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Habitat for plant and animal species</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintains biodiversity species richness &amp; ecosystem complexity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improves air quality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contributes to water management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mitigating the impacts of climate change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The forecasted growth for York Region has the potential to place considerable additional pressure on the Region’s natural systems. A healthy and strong Greenlands System is essential not only to ensure a sustainable region, but, as a key defining feature of York Region, and its continued long term health must be ensured.

York Region has a long history of Greenlands System planning. The original Greenlands System was created in 1993 and there have been considerable successes in protecting and securing elements of the System. The focus on the system in 1993 was to identify and protect the system. Since the original Greenlands System was identified, the Provincial Oak Ridges Moraine and Greenbelt Plans have expanded the system. In this phase of Greenlands System planning, the focus will be on connecting and strengthening the System.

**Natural Heritage Discussion Paper and Strategic Directions**

Natural Heritage Discussion Paper was endorsed by Regional Council in May 2007, and Natural Heritage Strategic Directions was endorsed by Regional Council in January 2008.

Both papers addressed the natural heritage considerations within the Region’s Growth Management strategy, in order to ensure a strong, linked natural heritage system through the Oak Ridges Moraine and Greenbelt, the existing urban areas and towns and villages, and the new whitebelt communities.

The discussion paper stimulated conversation with our stakeholders on updating our natural heritage system and strategy. The paper provided an examination of the emerging policy context surrounding natural heritage, the growth management context in York Region, and identified 8 Action Areas to ensure a comprehensive strategy for protecting and enhancing the Region’s natural heritage. The Strategic Directions paper incorporated the feedback received on the Discussion Paper, and provides strategic direction on how to proceed with the 8 Action Areas. The results included a comprehensive strategy for protecting and enhancing the Region’s natural heritage.

4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

**Provincial Policy supports York Region’s initiative to update the Greenlands System**

The Provincial Policy Statement was updated in 2005 to reflect the change in understanding of natural heritage as a system, and defines a Natural Heritage System as “a system made up of natural heritage features and areas, linked by natural corridors..."
which are necessary to maintain biological and geological diversity, natural functions, viable populations of indigenous species and ecosystems. These systems can include lands that have been restored and areas with the potential to be restored to a natural state.”

This change in Provincial Policy supports the update to the Region’s Greenslands System, particularly the desire to ensure a linked and enhanced system.

**Draft Greenslands System Policy Directions: Enhancing York Region’s Natural Legacy**

Section 2.1 of the Regional Official Plan establishes the basis and policies for the Regional Greenslands System. The purpose of this section is to identify an updated linked, Greenslands System for the Region. This section of the Regional Official Plan will be updated based on the policy directions below.

**Key Policy Objective:** Enhancement of an updated linked Greenslands System in order to ensure a healthy system for generations to come.

The updated Greenslands System will be comprised of cores, corridors, and linkages. Core areas are the most significant natural features on the landscape, and include significant woodlands and wetlands, Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSIs), and Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESAs). Corridors can include existing significant valleylands, and watercourses. The linkages are smaller features that connect core areas, and are either existing or to be established through restoration. In order to have a healthy, functioning system the core areas must be interconnected by natural or restored corridors and linkages in order to provide for a system that facilitates the movement of animals, plant dispersion, and provide opportunities for pathways for walking and cycling, and ultimately, the creation of a Regional Trail System.

Regional scale linkages will be identified to ensure that the system is linked north to south and east to west. *Attachment 1* identifies a schematic diagram of how these Regional linkages could be identified.

The Regional Greenslands System is connected through the 3 broad land use areas within York Region; the existing urban areas, the Oak Ridges Moraine and the Greenbelt and
the whitebelt areas. While there will be a coordinated overall approach to the Greenlands System, each of these three areas will have a different policy approach and focus recognizing local conditions. Table 1 outlines the general approach to the Greenlands System throughout the broad land areas of the Region.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1</th>
<th>Policy Approaches to Greenlands System</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Land Area</strong></td>
<td><strong>Policy Approach</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| All | • Identify System for protection  
• Ensure overall system health  
• Ensure System gains with each development or infrastructure project  
• Invest in Greenlands  
• Strategic enhancement & securement  
• Identify potential Regional trail corridor |
| Existing Urban Areas | • Protect & strengthen existing features  
• Increase urban natural cover  
• Mitigate urban heat island effects through urban greening; streetscaping, green roofs.  
• Restoration of degraded areas |
| ORM & Greenbelt | • Protect as per Provincial requirements  
• Enhance cores, corridors and linkages with greening initiatives  
• Identify Regional scale linkages (east west and north south) --- see Attachment #1  
• Target for securement initiatives  
• Stewardship initiatives with private landowners |
| Whitebelt | • Identify system for protection  
• Strategic enhancement to establish linkages and green Greenbelt corridors  
• Greenlands System Assessment to address interface impacts, strategic enhancement, system gain opportunities and passive recreation.  
• Target key elements for securement |

The new communities within the Whitebelt lands will be developed as pedestrian first, transit-oriented communities within interconnected mobility systems to ensure complete and walkable communities. This vision for the whitebelt must be achieved by balancing natural heritage and infrastructure objectives. The vision for the updated Greenlands System recognizes the need for infrastructure connectivity which may include crossing the System and ensures that where infrastructure is necessary to contribute to complete and interconnected communities that those infrastructure components also contribute to an enhanced Greenlands System.
To complement the system, policies encouraging strategic enhancement of the cores, corridor and linkages will be included. The gaps within the core areas can be enhanced to ensure terrestrial species diversity and core habitat function are maintained or created. Continued and improved investment in our Greenlands System is a necessary complement to the policies requiring the identification, protection, and enhancement of the Regional Greenlands System.

Urban uses and infrastructure projects should contribute to net gains in the system and ensure overall system health through innovative design and construction and contributions towards strategic system enhancements. Every opportunity will be made to enhance or invest in strengthening the Greenlands System.

The Regional Greening Strategy implements the strategic vision for the Greenlands System. The continued successful implementation of the Greenlands System objective lies in creating new and nurturing the existing successful partnerships. The Greening Strategy will be updated to complement the updated Regional Greenlands System and associated mapping.

There are also a series of technical updates that will be occurring in conjunction with the Greenlands System update. These include:

- Incorporation of the Greebelt Plan into the Regional Official Plan as per the Provincial conformity requirement.
- Key Natural Heritage Feature and Key Hydrologically Sensitive Feature technical data update.
- Incorporation of the Regional Significant Woodlands Study into the Regional Official Plan policy and mapping; and
- Incorporation of the Lake Simcoe Protection Plan into the Regional Official Plan.

**Relationship to Vision 2026**

The updated Greenlands System policy directions addresses several goal areas of Vision 2026, including “Enhanced Environment, Heritage and Culture”, “Responding to the Needs of Our Residents”, “Managed and Balanced Growth”, “Infrastructure for a Growing Region” and “Engaged Communities and a Responsive Region”.

5. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The updated Greenlands System policy directions and mapping have been undertaken within the existing staff complement and budget allocation for the Planning and Development Services Department.
6. **LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT**

Regional staff are currently, and will continue to work closely with the Local Municipal staff and conservation authority staff in the creation of an updated Greenlands System and associated policy for York Region.

A copy of this report will be circulated to all local municipalities. Following the release of this report, consultations will be held with the local municipalities on the policy approach and mapping.

7. **CONCLUSION**

York Region has a long history of award winning Greenlands System planning. The original system was identified in 1993. In the face of the growth forecasted for the Region, the time has come to update the system to create a linked permanent natural legacy. In this phase of Greenlands System planning, the focus will be on connecting and strengthening the System throughout the entire Region. The policies and mapping of the Regional Official Plan will also be updated to reflect a series of technical requirements including incorporation of the Greenbelt and Lake Simcoe Protection Plans, and updated technical information on key natural heritage features and hydrologically sensitive features.

For more information on this report, please contact John Waller, Director of Long Range and Strategic Planning at (905) 830-4444 Ext. 1525.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.

*The attachment referred to in this clause is attached to this report.*

5

**LAND BUDGET AND URBAN BOUNDARY EXPANSION:**

**REGIONAL OFFICIAL PLAN UPDATE**

The Planning and Economic Development Committee recommends the adoption of the recommendations contained in the following report dated March 16, 2009, from the Commissioner of Planning and Development Services.
1. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

   It is recommended that:
   1. Regional Council receive the York Region Land Budget and Urban Boundary Expansion Report and *Attachments 1-3* for information purposes.
   2. Staff consult further with the local municipalities regarding urban boundary expansions for the update of the Regional Official Plan.
   3. Planning Department staff circulate this report to all local municipalities, the development community, Regional partners and stakeholders, the Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure and Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing for comment and discussion.

2. **PURPOSE**

   This report provides an overview of the Region’s land budget and urban boundary expansion implications and provides a basis for further discussions with local municipal staff and key stakeholders. In order to conform to the provincial *Growth Plan*, the Region will require an urban boundary expansion into all three Whitebelt areas. These boundary expansions are required in order to meet the Region’s updated 2031 population and employment forecasts of 1.5 million people and 799,000 jobs.

3. **BACKGROUND**

   **York Region is in the process of bringing its Official Plan into conformity with the Growth Plan**

   The Province of Ontario released the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (GGH) – *Places to Grow* in 2006. Municipalities throughout the GGH are required to bring their respective official plans into conformity with the *Growth Plan* by June 2009.

   The Region is close to completing its ‘Planning for Tomorrow’ exercise that is an important component of York Region’s overall conformity work. To date, through the ‘Planning for Tomorrow’ initiative, regional staff have brought forward to Planning Committee reports dealing with:

   - Phases I to III of the public consultation exercise
   - 2031 population and employment forecasts (January – endorsed by Committee and Council)
   - 2031 land requirements (January – endorsed by Committee and Council)
   - Regional Intensification Strategy (February – endorsed by Committee and Council)
• Wellhead Protection Area Policies and Mapping (March - endorsed by Committee and Council)
• New criteria for building communities (March - endorsed by Committee and Council)
• Natural Heritage System – (April Committee)
• Centres and Corridors Policy Criteria - (April Committee)

Further reports outlining infrastructure master plan updates for transportation, sewer and water, natural heritage trails, agriculture review and a 25 year fiscal impact analysis will be forthcoming over the next few months leading to a draft of an updated Regional Official Plan that can be released by Council for public review in June 2009.

**Regional Council previously dealt with reports on the Region’s updated forecasts and land requirements to 2031**

The York Region 2031 Land Budget report presented to Planning Committee in January 2009 detailed the Region’s residential and employment land requirements to 2031 and provided an analysis of the Region’s ability to achieve the *Growth Plan’s* Designated Greenfield density target of 50 people and jobs per hectare. An urban boundary expansion is required to accommodate the forecasted growth in York Region.

This report provides a brief overview of the Region’s 2031 land budget and urban boundary expansion implications and provides a basis for further discussions with local municipal staff and key stakeholders. The Region will be proceeding with an urban boundary expansion into the Whitebelt in order to accommodate the forecast population and employment growth to 2031.

**4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS**

**Land Budget work completed as part of municipal comprehensive review and conformity exercise**

York Region’s forecast anticipates 1.5 million people, 510,000 households and 799,000 jobs by 2031. This represents growth of 577,000 people, 234,000 households and 336,000 jobs from 2006 to 2031. To accommodate this growth, the Region is advocating boundary expansions in the three Whitebelt areas of Markham, Vaughan and East Gwillimbury that are carefully phased and sequenced.

In considering the need for an urban boundary expansion, the Region undertook a detailed municipal comprehensive review that included:

• The completion of an intensification strategy that identified a minimum 40% residential intensification target between 2015 to 2031, and planned for a significant portion of future population and employment growth within the Built-up Areas.
Intensification varies from municipality to municipality with targets for some municipalities greater than 40% (i.e. Markham, Vaughan and Richmond Hill)

- An assessment of the available residential and employment land supplies and demonstration of the need for a proposed urban expansion, and

- A demonstration of how the Growth Plan’s minimum Designated Greenfield area density target of 50 people and jobs per hectare is to be achieved.

Table 1 below highlights the Region’s ground-related housing supply based on a forecast scenario demand, as well as a 10 year historical average completion rate from CMHC. There is significant variation of residential supply between the southern three municipalities of Markham, Richmond Hill and Vaughan and the municipalities north of the Oak Ridges Moraine. The current ground-related supply ranges from 5 to 11.5 years in southern York Region and from 19 to 26 years in northern York Region.

Table 1
York Region Residential Forecast Supply Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Supply Detail</th>
<th>Unit Supply 2008</th>
<th>Current Years Supply</th>
<th>Historical Demand</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Ground-Related Supply</td>
<td>87,900</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td>9.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern York Region</td>
<td>44,400</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>5.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern York Region</td>
<td>43,500</td>
<td>18.9</td>
<td>25.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: York Region Planning & Development Services Department, 2008.

1Based on 10-year average Canadian Mortgage and Housing Completion Rates
2Ground-related supply includes singles, semis and rows
3Southern municipalities include Markham, Richmond Hill, Vaughan
4Northern municipalities include Aurora, East Gwillimbury, Georgina, King, Newmarket, Whitchurch-Stouffville

York Region 2031 Land Budget Highlights

The following observations were identified as part of the Region’s land budget analysis and review:

- 90,700 households are required within the Built-up Area of the Region in order to achieve the minimum 40% residential intensification target.

- The Region’s four Regional Centres are planned to meet and exceed a target of 200 people and jobs per hectare

- Forty-two percent (42%) of the Region’s employment growth is planned to be accommodated within the Region’s Built-up Areas.
• A total of 2,837 developable hectares (ha) of land in the Whitebelt are required for residential and employment uses in order to achieve the 2031 forecast. This includes 1,771 ha for community land development (including 296 ha for major retail uses) and 1,066 ha for employment land development.

• Boundary expansions are required in all three Whitebelt areas in East Gwillimbury, Markham and Vaughan. Given that planning approvals for new communities can take up to 10 years or more, it is important to proceed with urban boundary expansions given the risk that the ground-related housing supply could run out in just over five years in southern York Region.

• Community lands (lands for the Region’s new communities) in the Whitebelt are planned based on achieving a density of 70 people and jobs per ha. The addition of employment lands (lands for industrial and business park uses) lowers the total to 59 people and jobs per ha. Communities at these densities represent a more compact built form than traditionally built in York Region.

• The overall Greenfield Area Density for York Region is 50 people/jobs per ha, which meets the Growth Plan target.

Table 2 below outlines the approximate amount of developable land in the Whitebelt required to accommodate the forecasted population and employment growth to 2031. The Whitebelt land requirements are distributed to the three Whitebelt Areas, based on local municipal forecasts.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2031 Total Land Requirements by Land Use and Local Municipality</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community Lands (ha)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Gwillimbury</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Markham</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vaughan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: York Region Planning and Development Services Department, 2009

Regional Official Plan Update to be based on the following key principles.

The updated Regional Official Plan will be based on a number of key principles, each of which will help inform the location, extent and density of growth:

1. The Region is required by Provincial Legislation to bring its Official Plan into Conformity with the Places to Grow (2005) Plan no later than June 2009. Included in that conformity exercise is a land budget which defines lands that are required to meet the Population and Employment Forecasts.
2. The Region is advocating boundary expansions in the three whitebelt areas (Markham, Vaughan and East Gwillimbury) that are carefully phased, sequenced to provide for orderly sustainable growth and conform to Provincial and Regional Population and Employment forecasts.

3. The approach to phasing must be flexible and recognize that the pace of ground related demand changes due to market conditions and the design aspect of new communities is evolving.

4. In keeping with the Region’s internationally recognized Sustainability Strategy, new communities will be developed using ‘triple bottom line’ principles incorporating considerations of: environment, economy and healthy communities.

5. Communities built in these areas will be compact, complete and of the highest physical quality. Detailed criteria for the development of these new communities will be incorporated into the Regional Official Plan.

6. The Region is very serious about intensification and City Building within its existing urban areas. Urban expansions will be completed in a careful, considered way to ensure Provincial and Regional intensification targets are met or exceeded. The Regional Intensification Strategy provides a framework of how the Region will meet the intensification targets found in the Growth Plan.

7. The creation of a strong linked Natural Heritage system in conformity with the Greenbelt Plan is a primary objective of the Regional Official Plan. The Natural Heritage Strategic Directions Report (PEDC Report No.1, 2008) has helped inform the land budget.

8. The Region has completed a comprehensive three part growth management consultation with the public over a two year period and has carefully listened to issues. It was clear from the public discussions, that boundary expansions must be completed carefully, be phased and integrated with planning for required infrastructure.

**New Communities are to be carefully phased and sequenced**

There are a number of essential services and programs that make up the fabric of communities ranging from roads and sewers to human service facilities such as schools and day care facilities.

The delivery and timing of all of these services requires the co-ordination of a broad spectrum of agencies and organizations including the Region, local municipalities, school boards, human service providers, environmental groups, emergency services, transit operators, and provincial and federal agencies.
The development of new communities within the Whitebelt needs a collective, co-ordinated, and phased approach to meet York Region’s objectives. New communities required by 2031 will be identified and phasing and sequencing policies will be incorporated into the Regional and Local Official Plans to provide for orderly, sustainable growth that responds to the delivery of services optimizing the opportunity for dynamic liveable communities.

As mentioned above, detailed criteria for the development of these new communities will be incorporated into the Regional Official Plan. Urban expansions and the phasing and sequencing of new communities will be completed in a careful, considered way to ensure that the Region’s intensification targets are met or exceeded.

For managing the development of new communities in the Region, local municipalities may undertake a conceptual land use plan to 2051, within the framework of the Growth Plan and Greenbelt Plan policies, which outlines a strategic, integrated framework for sustainable communities. Within this broader 2051 strategic framework, local municipalities would subsequently designate land up to 2031 based on the regional land requirements detailed above.

The development within the designated areas shall be based on a phased approach in order to:

- Allow for better co-ordination amongst relevant agencies and organizations in the planning of new communities.
- Allow for more efficient delivery of hard services and soft services (i.e. human services, schools).
- Allow for the latest design techniques to be implemented.
- Facilitate the timely completion of new communities.
- Allow for more timely expenditures in transit.

Regional staff will be working with local municipal staff and other interested stakeholders in formulating the phasing and sequencing policies to be incorporated into the Regional and Local Official Plans.

**An Urban Boundary Expansion will be incorporated into the Regional Official Plan**

As Table 3 below illustrates, approximately 40% of the developable area of the Whitebelt will be required to the year 2031. Attachment 1 illustrates the Whitebelt Areas for each of the three municipalities of East Gwillimbury, Markham and Vaughan and land requirements to 2031. The Region is required by provincial legislation to bring its Official Plan into conformity with the Places to Grow Plan no later than June 2009. The Region is advocating boundary expansions into all three whitebelt areas that are carefully phased and sequenced to provide for orderly sustainable growth and conform to Provincial and Regional Population and Employment forecasts. The Regional Official
Plan’s regional structure map will be updated by June 2009 to illustrate the urban expansion areas.

<p>| Table 3 |
|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| 2031 Percent of Total Whitebelt Required by Local Municipality |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total Developable Whitebelt (ha)</th>
<th>2031 Whitebelt Requirement (ha)</th>
<th>2031 Percent of Total¹</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>East Gwillimbury</td>
<td>1,802</td>
<td>515</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Markham/Whitchurch-Stouffville</td>
<td>2,693</td>
<td>1,165</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vaughan/King</td>
<td>2,576</td>
<td>1,157</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>7,072</td>
<td>2,837</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: York Region Planning and Development Services Department, 2008

¹. The 2031 percentage for Markham and Vaughan are based on total Whitebelt Area for both Markham and Whitchurch-Stouffville and Vaughan and King. The total developable whitebelt area for Markham is 2,354 ha of which 49% is required up to 2031. The total developable whitebelt area for Vaughan is 2,493 ha of which 46% is required up to 2031.

The exact location of the urban area expansions need to be discussed with the local municipalities. Discussions will continue over the coming months in order to finalize the locations for both the community lands and employment lands to 2031.

As illustrated in the attached mapping, the development of the Whitebelt lands presents a number of challenges. New communities will be required to be more compact, pedestrian oriented and transit supportive. The amount of land that contains natural features, approximately 44% of all the Whitebelt area, will impact the design of new communities and how major capital infrastructure (roads, water and sewer pipes) is provided.

A number of areas have constraints related to the timing of capital infrastructure. The need and justification and potential location of the GTA West corridor linking highways 400 and 427 in Vaughan has yet to be determined. Until the Province determines whether a GTA West corridor is justified lands within the study area are essentially encumbered and are not readily available for development. Areas in East Gwillimbury are also under short term development constraints awaiting sewer and water infrastructure.

**Relationship to Vision 2026**

The decisions made around the forecast and land budget and urban boundary expansions will impact every goal area in Vision 2026:

- Quality Communities for a Diverse Population
- Enhanced Environment, Heritage and Culture
- A Vibrant Economy
- Responding to the Needs of Our Residents
- Housing Choices for Our Residents
- Managed and Balanced Growth
• Infrastructure for a Growing Region  
• Engaged Communities and a Responsive Region.

Planning new communities in the Whitebelt Areas and development will provide the opportunity to implement each of the goal areas and to achieve our Vision.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Financial forecasts for the Region are based on the population and employment forecasts and land budget summarized in this report. The urban boundary expansion and forecasted growth for the Region will require investment in transportation, water and wastewater infrastructure and human services. The Region is currently undertaking a detailed fiscal impact assessment and economic implications analysis for the forecast/land budget.

The Region has constructed very significant amounts of water and wastewater infrastructure to service future growth and has debt financed those works that will be recovered from future development charges. It is essential that sufficient land supply be available for development in order to ensure that the Region is able to collect development charges on a timely basis.

6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

The forecasts and land budget exercise were prepared in consultation with local municipalities and agencies. Discussions on the specifics of the urban boundary expansion regarding the location of community lands and employment lands are continuing.

A number of local municipalities are undertaking their own growth management exercises in conjunction with the Region’s work. Urban expansions into the Whitebelt will be required in the municipalities of East Gwillimbury, Markham and Vaughan in order to accommodate the forecasted growth. The local municipalities will use the forecasts, intensification targets and land budget to guide their long term planning initiatives, including growth management studies, capital infrastructure projects and social and health service programs.

7. CONCLUSION

York Region’s land budget was prepared in the context of key policies in the Growth Plan regarding the protection of the natural environment, the development of more compact transit supportive communities, intensification targets and density targets in
urban growth centres and Designated Greenfield Areas. Municipalities are required to conform to the Growth Plan by June 2009.

This report provides an overview of the Region’s land budget and urban boundary expansion implications and provides a basis for further discussions with local municipal staff and key stakeholders. The Region will be proceeding with an urban boundary expansion into the Whitebelt in order to conform to the Growth Plan based on updated 2031 population and employment forecasts of 1.5 million people and 799,000 jobs.

Boundary expansions are required in all three Whitebelt areas in East Gwillimbury, Markham and Vaughan. Given that planning approvals for new communities can take up to 10 years or more, it is important to proceed now with urban boundary expansions given the risk that the ground-related housing supply could run out in just over five years in southern York Region.

A total of 2,837 developable hectares (ha) of land in the Whitebelt are required for residential and employment uses in order to achieve the 2031 forecast. This includes 1,771 ha for community land development (including 296 ha for major retail uses) and 1,066 ha for employment land development.

The exact location of the urban area expansions need to be discussed with the local municipalities. Discussions on the specifics of the urban boundary expansion regarding the location of community lands and employment lands are continuing.

The Region is very serious about intensification and City Building within its existing urban areas. Urban expansions will be completed in a careful, considered way to ensure Provincial and Regional intensification targets are met or exceeded.

The urban boundary expansions will be phased and sequenced to provide for orderly sustainable growth. New communities will be developed based on the Region’s Sustainability Strategy, using the ‘triple bottom line’ principles incorporating considerations of: environment, economy and healthy communities. Detailed criteria for the development of these new communities will be incorporated into the Regional Official Plan.

York Region’s forecasting and land budget work is an important component of the Region’s municipal comprehensive review being undertaken to conform to the Provincial Growth Plan. In addition to forecast and land budget work, the Region’s ‘Planning for Tomorrow’ exercise includes a Regional Intensification Strategy, a comprehensive public consultation exercise, infrastructure master plan updates for transportation, sewer and water, an updated Natural Heritage Strategy and a 25 year fiscal impact analysis.

The results of the Region’s municipal comprehensive review will be implemented through the Regional Official Plan process.
Regional staff intend to present a draft of an updated Regional Official Plan that can be released by Council for public review in June 2009.

For more information on this report, please contact Paul Bottomley, Manager of Growth Management, Economy & Information Research at (905)830-4444 Ext. 1530 or John Waller, Director of Long Range and Strategic Planning at Ext. 1525.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.

(The three attachments referred to in this clause are attached to this report.)

6

CRITERIA FOR ENHANCED CENTRES AND CORRIDORS POLICIES
– REGIONAL OFFICIAL PLAN UPDATE

The Planning and Economic Development Committee recommends the adoption of the recommendations contained in the following report dated March 2, 2009, from the Commissioner of Planning and Development Services.

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

1. Regional Council endorse the draft criteria for York Region Centres and Corridors outlined in this report, as the basis for drafting enhanced policies as part of the Regional Official Plan (ROP) update.

2. The Regional Clerk circulate this report for information and comment to the local municipal planning departments, the Building Industry and Land Development Association (BILD – York Chapter), and the Provincial Ministries of Municipal Affairs and Housing, and Energy and Infrastructure.

3. Staff report back to this Committee and Regional Council in June 2009 with draft policies, based on further discussions with and feedback from participants in the policy formulation process including Regional Departments, local municipal staff and the development industry.
2. PURPOSE

This report presents criteria for enhanced Regional Official Plan (ROP) policies for Centres and Corridors, based on the Guiding Principles and Action Plan adopted by Regional Council on December 18, 2008 under the report “Taking York Region Centres and Corridors Planning to the Next Level of Innovation and Implementation – A Framework” (Planning and Economic Development Committee Report No. 11, Clause 4).

This work is being undertaken as part of the larger, on-going Provincial Growth Plan conformity and Regional Official Plan review exercise, in consultation with Regional Departments, local municipal staff and other stakeholders.

3. BACKGROUND

York Region’s Centres and Corridors structure is solid foundation for city-building, and is evolving with further investment and implementation

Established by the Regional Official Plan in 1994, and updated through ROPA 43 in 2005, the existing system of Centres and Corridors in York Region lays a solid foundation for efficient and effective city-building. This structure and related policy framework – including density targets, and directing intensification to Regional Centres and to Key Development Areas (KDAs) in Regional Corridors – has supported local municipal planning goals, and has created a climate for efficient, innovative and well-designed development. The adoption of the York Region 2031 Intensification Strategy by Regional Council on February 19, 2009 (Planning and Economic Development Committee Report No. 2, Clause 9) builds on this structure, and helps to set the stage for further advances in achieving compact and sustainable growth.

Further, significant investments in rapid transit services and infrastructure including two planned subway extensions, in concert with significant strides in planning implementation by the local municipalities, have combined to create an opportunity to take the Region’s Centres and Corridors structure to the next level. Working towards a new benchmark of innovation and implementation, Regional Council in December 2008 adopted the following 10 Guiding Principles to direct the next generation of Centres and Corridors planning in York Region:
1. Conform to and build on the policy requirements of the Growth Plan and other new Provincial legislation; recognizing that the Region’s existing urban structure of Regional Centres linked by Regional Corridors, and served by rapid transit, delivers the basic Provincial requirements.

2. Create a climate for innovation and leadership in all areas of city-building; from infill and intensification, to alternative parking standards, to high quality public art and gathering places.

3. Deliver a responsive policy and program framework for transit-oriented development supporting the extensions of the Spadina and Yonge Street Subways into York Region, including station-area development criteria.

4. Acknowledge and expand on the role of Yonge Street as the historic, cultural and primary Regional Corridor.

5. Position the Region as a leader in urban design excellence through supporting and expanding on local municipal and industry best-practices.

6. Leverage opportunities and partnerships for public investment in Centres and Corridors, including new municipal buildings and hospitals.

7. Support and enhance local municipal planning to direct high-density developments to the appropriate locations (e.g. KDAs - Key Development Areas).

8. Contribute to the promotion of the Centres and Corridors as premier live-work locations for business headquarters, including clusters of “green” enterprises, and their employees.

9. Enhance existing communities by acknowledging and supporting local heritage, character and other unique attributes.

10. Explore opportunities to harmonize existing Regional and local operations within Regional Road rights-of-way, including streetscape improvements, beautification and sustainability.

Staff have begun formal consultations, and have received excellent ideas

Consistent with the direction adopted by Regional Council in December 2008, staff are working towards delivering enhanced Centres and Corridors policies for consideration in June 2009. Consultation is a key part of this exercise, and the excellent feedback received to-date is setting the key parameters for the updated and enhanced policies. So far, formal consultations have been held with staff from Regional Departments including York Region Transit and Rapidco, and the local municipal planning departments.
Based on the consultation to date, there is a consensus that, while the existing policies are effective, further enhancements should be made to:

- Evolve the 2.5 FSI (Floor Space Index) density target for Regional Centres to a minimum requirement, provided that it is recognized that Newmarket Centre is at a different stage in the development lifecycle, and that Markham Centre has large valleylands and open spaces that will not develop.
- Ensure that the highest densities and mix of uses are directed to the Regional Centres and Key Development Areas in the Regional Corridors, while encouraging infill in Local Centres and Local Corridors at a smaller scale.
- Maintain the existing Key Development Area criteria and policies, and encourage local municipalities to set their own minimum density targets for those areas.
- Add further detail to the implementation-related policies, including urban design and parking considerations.
- Address future Regional Corridors in a manner that allows for the evolution of these important corridors, while acknowledging any potential traffic capacity constraints and community character considerations.
- Ensure the protection of existing successful employment areas along and adjacent to the Regional Corridors (e.g. East Beaver Creek in Richmond Hill).
- Encourage a more coordinated and city-building type approach to Regional streetscaping character and requirements, especially along the Yonge Street Regional Corridor.
- Planned subway stations should be addressed through specific planning policies, including revised KDA criteria to direct transit-oriented development at and around stations.

4. **ANALYSIS**

**Consultation and research underway to take Centres and Corridors policies to the next level**

While the current Centres and Corridors policy framework is a solid foundation, we continue to move forward, building on what has been accomplished and learned through our shared city-building experiences. Working towards a renewed and improved approach, Planning staff have been conducting strategic research, and consulting with Regional Staff and local municipal planning departments to establish a consensus on opportunities and related actions. Further consultation, including a formal workshop with industry representatives, will be held in May 2009.

**Criteria for enhanced policies have emerged through consultations to-date, research of best-practices**

The opportunities and related policy enhancements discussed to-date with stakeholders has been based on the following four themes or categories: 1) Growth Plan Conformity;
2) Centres and Corridors Structure; 3) Density; and, 4) Implementation. Within these emerging themes, staff have developed criteria on which to base the enhanced Centres and Corridors policies of the ROP (see Attachment 1 for consolidated list of criteria).

While the criteria are fundamentally rooted in the existing framework for Centres and Corridors set out in Chapter 5 – Regional Structure and Growth Management of the current ROP, they are designed to update and improve the current policies in ways that advance innovation and implementation throughout the planning and development process. The development of these draft criteria is supported by detailed background research and analysis undertaken by staff. Covering a range of topics including innovative approaches to planning implementation, the research will be later released as part of a series of Discussion Papers on approaches to Centres and Corridors planning and development.

Combining feedback received with best-practice research across York Region, and other jurisdictions with extensive research in this area, the criteria will serve as a basis to refine the current Regional policies and approaches to implementation. These criteria and related research, by subject area, follow below.

4.1 GROWTH PLAN CONFORMITY

The current Centres and Corridors structure and related policies deliver the basic policy requirements of the Provincial Growth Plan, which directs compact, mixed-use and transit-oriented development to urban growth centres and intensification corridors. Therefore, Growth Plan conformity requires only minimal policy changes, including the following:

- Harmonize the four Regional Centres with the Provincial Urban Growth Centres (UGCs), recognizing that existing Regional Centre boundaries extend beyond the outer limits of the UGC. This will include policies that encourage and manage additional development on lands between and/or adjacent to the Regional Centre and UGC boundaries.
- Require that the Regional Centres/UGCs will be planned to achieve a minimum gross density target of 200 residents and employees per hectare by 2031.
- Confirm that the Regional Corridors are Intensification Corridors, and will contribute to the overall minimum intensification rate of 40 per cent within the Built Boundary.

4.2 CENTRES AND CORRIDORS STRUCTURE

There is an increasing primacy of Regional Centres and Corridors, given the policies of the Growth Plan, the introduction of rapid transit services to those areas, and increasing thresholds of compact mixed-use development. This evolving role creates a significant opportunity to further distinguish the Regional system from the local systems of Centres and Corridors across the Region. Each system, and its related structure, has a specific role within the Region’s larger urban structure. In recognition of this specialization within the
larger system, it is increasingly important to further support local municipal planning efforts to enhance the character and vitality of Local Centres (e.g. King City) and Local Corridors (e.g. Leslie Street) in a manner that best reflects local context. Although appropriate and context-sensitive infill is desirable across York Region, concentrating the highest densities and mix of uses in the Regional Centres and Regional Corridors is optimal, given their higher-order role.

Based on this and other feedback received, the following is the approach being recommended to refine the Centres and Corridors structure in York Region:

- Reinforce Regional Centres as having the highest densities and greatest mix of uses within York Region.
- Establish a renewed and comprehensive policy structure for the Regional Centres, and adjacent lands that may be included within the revised Regional Centre boundary, in the form of Secondary Plan requirements to ensure a densely organized, cohesive, and integrated community. This policy structure would require:
  - A diverse mix of uses within the Centre, and accompanying densities and built form, creating vibrant precincts with enhanced live-work-shop opportunities tied to “transit first” priorities.
  - An integrated mobility plan and implementation strategy that includes innovative and progressive Transportation Demand Management (TDM) programs.
  - A fine-grid road network with essential internal/external linkages to ensure the prosperity of the Centre, and that complements the “transit first” priority objective.
  - A community/human services plan that integrates essential services with development.
  - A detailed phasing/staging plan for development, which includes triggers based on infrastructure availability.

- Maintain that the highest densities within the Regional Corridors are directed to locally-designated Key Development Areas (KDAs), based on criteria in the Regional Official Plan.

- Designate future subway stations and Mobility Hubs (as designated in the Metrolinx Regional Transportation Plan) as KDAs, with specific enhanced density and transit-oriented development (TOD) requirements.

- Require the protection of key existing employment uses in the Regional Corridors, through the acknowledgement that planned employment uses within Centres and Corridors, including major office uses, are important components of the urban structure.
• Direct local municipalities to plan for development and redevelopment in designated Local Centres and Local Corridors, in a manner consistent with Regional and local intensification area policies, and the overall Regional Centres and Corridors framework.

• Designate new Regional Corridors, based on planned expansions to the Regional Rapid Transit Network (e.g. segment of Davis Drive in Newmarket).

• Establish a strategic framework for the designation in the future of additional Regional Corridors, in consultation with the local municipalities.

• Acknowledge the role and function a larger system including linkages with 400-Series Highways, rail lines, and other major transportation corridors and nodes, in supporting the Region’s Centres and Corridors structure.

4.3 DENSITY

The current density target of 2.5 FSI (Floor Space Index) for Regional Centres and Regional Corridors is appropriate as a broad policy objective, based on the consultations and research to-date. Based on the experiences of the local municipalities in the planning and development of the southern three Regional Centres, 2.5 FSI should be established in policy as a minimum density requirement. The research and analysis undertaken by Regional staff in this area has shown that 2.5 FSI will meet and exceed the Growth Plan target of 200 residents and employees per hectare. This approach to density supports local municipal planning to exceed the Provincial target over the long-term build-out of these emerging Centres, while it is recognized that the Centres are at different stages of development.

Based on the above, the following is recommended:

• Set a minimum density target of 2.5 FSI for each designated development site within the Regional Centres.

• Maintain 2.5 FSI as a long-term target for Regional Corridors, and require local municipalities to establish appropriate minimum density targets for Key Development Areas (KDAs) in the Regional Corridors in a manner in keeping with the Regional urban structure, and that reflects local conditions.

• Establish a framework, using a modified KDA approach, to introduce appropriate minimum densities (e.g. at or closer to 2.5 FSI) at future subway stations (graduated based on a 500 m/1 km setback) in the planned Spadina and Yonge Subway Extension corridors, in collaboration with the local municipalities and transit partners.
4.4 IMPLEMENTATION

There has been considerable discussion with local municipal planning staff on ways that the Regional Official Plan (ROP) could further support local planning implementation. The ROP currently outlines a suite of implementation tools that are “encouraged”, to assist in Centres and Corridors implementation. These include innovative financial tools, alternative parking standards and the use of Section 37 of the Planning Act to secure community benefits in exchange for additional height and density.

Adding further action and detail to the existing suite of implementation tools in the ROP would bolster the Centres and Corridors vision and related infrastructure, including the implementation of the Viva rapid transit network and subway extensions to Highway 7. Further discussions with the local municipalities, and a dialogue with the development industry, are required to finalize the Region’s policy framework for Centres and Corridors implementation. The following will form part of that discussion:

- Requiring local municipalities to apply Section 37 of the Planning Act to achieve community benefits – including those prescribed by the Region, as related to rapid transit infrastructure and affordable housing – in exchange for additional height and density in the Regional Centres and Regional Corridors.

- Requiring local municipal zoning by-laws to establish alternative parking standards that reflect and support increasing levels of transit service. This includes setting performance-based standards in the form of reduced minimum and also maximum standards. This approach recognizes the impact that parking supply and design has on the form and function of development.

- Establishing a framework to work towards a renewed Regional streetscaping strategy, with an emphasis on the southern “subway segment” of Yonge Street, to support the achievement of a transit-oriented and pedestrian-friendly public realm in the Regional Centres and Regional Corridors.

- Reinforcing the need to provide a range of affordable housing choices for residents in close proximity to community facilities and transit, including a suite of tools to promote affordability through the development process.

- Exploring partnership opportunities with the local municipalities and other agencies, to provide affordable housing and other Regional infrastructure in strategic areas. This includes, but is not limited to, the designation of Community Improvement Plan (CIP) Areas and related instruments (e.g. public financing, grants, etc.) under Section 28 of the Planning Act.

- Optimizing coordination in the planning and delivery of essential infrastructure, including transit improvements and road network connections, among the Region,
local municipalities, senior governments and related agencies.

- Creating comprehensive implementation guidelines for Regional Centres and Regional Corridors – including subway station areas – undertaken in collaboration with the local municipalities and the development industry. The guidelines will have a focus on parking management and design, transit-oriented development (TOD), urban design, and also include standards for:
  - Accessibility for pedestrian/cycling mobility.
  - Energy and water conservation (e.g. LEED® or equivalent), including district energy, waste heat utilization, and solar orientation/solar access protection.
  - Management of wind tunnel effects.

**Next Steps**

Regional staff will continue to consult on the criteria outlined in this report, which will form the basis of draft policies to renew the planning framework for Centres and Corridors in York Region. Contributing to this dialogue will be the circulation of this report, and background Discussion Papers (Density, Height and Density Incentives, Parking, Community Improvement) under a separate cover, to the local municipalities and development industry representatives for further discussion.

The next step in the process will be a workshop with participants, including the development industry, which will be hosted by the Regional Planning Department in May 2009. Ideas arising from the workshop will be incorporated into the draft policies, which will be tabled for public review and comment in June 2009.

**Relationship to Vision 2026**

Advancing Centres and Corridors implementation through the enhancement of Regional Official Plan policies and related programs, contributes to the achievement of all Vision 2026 goals. In particular, city-building implementation through Regional leadership on transit-oriented development will serve to advance “Managed and Balanced Growth” and “Engaged Communities and a Responsive Region”.

**5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no direct financial implications associated with this report. It should be noted that achieving compact and transit-supportive development in Centres and Corridors supports significant infrastructure investments by the Region and senior government levels in these strategic areas. During the last review of the Region’s Development Charge by-law update in 2007 the Region also indicated that the impact of growth costs and development charges within Centres and Corridors would be reviewed in the next
full development charge update. Refining the planning and implementation framework for Centres and Corridors will serve to optimize these investments, and create a higher level of certainty and clarity for private sector investors and businesses, as well.

6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

Local municipalities are primarily responsible for planning implementation through such instruments as secondary plans, zoning by-laws and site plan control. In recognition of this important function, the local municipalities have been and will continue to be consulted through the policy enhancement process currently underway by Regional staff. The criteria that will form the basis for renewed policies for Centres and Corridors have been based, in large part, on the comments received from the local municipalities to-date.

7. CONCLUSION

The Region’s Centres and Corridors structure is sound, and has been an effective growth management tool since first established in the Regional Official Plan in 1994. The Centres and Corridors are the foundation for, and focus of, the Regional urban structure, based on a city-building model. This approach directs growth away from natural and agricultural lands, creates complete and sustainable communities, and supports strategic infrastructure investments for the future, including rapid transit and renewable energy.

Refinements to the Region’s urban structure and approach to city-building, as proposed in this report, will ensure that Regional policies for Centres and Corridors remain current, effective and innovative. This is especially important, to support the extensions of two subway lines into York Region and the strides in city-building made by the local municipalities.

This report sets out and recommends the endorsement of criteria on which to base renewed Regional Official Plan policies for Centres and Corridors in York Region. These criteria are consistent with the Guiding Principles adopted by Regional Council in December 2008, and incorporate feedback received to-date from Regional Departments and local municipal planning staff.

Draft policies will be tabled for public review and comment in June 2009, following further consultation with participants including the development industry, which will include a workshop to be hosted by the Regional Planning Department in May 2009.

For more information on this report, please contact Heather Konefat, Director of Community Planning at (905) 830-4444, Ext. 1502, or Sean Hertel, Senior Planner, at Ext. 1556.
The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.

(The attachment referred to in this clause is attached to this report.)

7

UPDATED TELECOMMUNICATION TOWER PROTOCOL

The Planning and Economic Development Committee recommends the adoption of the recommendations contained in the following report dated February 10, 2008, from the Commissioner of Planning and Development Services.

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

1. Regional Council replace the Region’s 2002 Telecommunication Tower Protocol by adopting Industry Canada’s protocol for telecommunication towers (CPC-2-0-03, as amended from time to time), as set out in Attachment 1.

2. The Regional Clerk circulate this report to the local municipalities, Industry Canada, and representatives of the cellular service providers.

2. PURPOSE

This report describes:

- The process to update the Region’s existing protocol.
- The issues raised during the update process and consultation with stakeholders.
- Why staff are recommending adopting Industry Canada’s protocol for the Region.

3. BACKGROUND

Radiocommunication and broadcasting services are important to all Canadians and are used daily by the general public, safety and security organizations, government, wireless service providers, broadcasters, utilities and businesses. In order for radiocommunication and broadcasting services to work, antenna systems including masts, towers, and other supporting structures are required. In exercising its mandate, Industry Canada has determined that it is important that antenna systems are deployed in a manner that considers the local surroundings.

York Region has a protocol for dealing with proposed antenna tower locates, which was adopted by Regional Council on April 18, 2002. Since then, Industry Canada has revised
their procedures twice. A revised version took effect on January 1, 2008 and is set out in Attachment 1 to this report. A recent amendment to the attached protocol exempts tower sharing by emergency services, including York Region Police towers.

A previous staff report was presented to Committee and Council in January 2008 (Clause 2 of Report No. 1 of the Planning and Economic Development Committee). The report outlined the main differences between the Region’s existing 2002 protocol and Industry Canada’s revised protocol. The report also identified the need to consult with the Region’s local municipalities and with the cellular service providers to develop an updated York Region protocol.

4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

During 2008, Regional staff organized a number of meetings to review Industry Canada’s new protocol. In an effort to develop an updated Regional telecommunication tower protocol these meetings focused on the “approval” powers, the appropriate consultation parameters, and identification of issues from a municipal perspective, especially the issue of potential health effects from telecommunication towers.

Industry Canada approves the location of antennas but requires public consultation and written confirmation that this consultation has been undertaken from the land use authority

The installation and operation of each antenna is controlled, in part, by Industry Canada through the issuance of licences. Before these licences are granted, proponents must receive written concurrence from the appropriate land use authority, that the consultation process has been reasonably adhered to. Planning Act tools and the municipal planning process may have limited effect because the final approval of the location of an antenna system rests with the Minister of Industry Canada. Section 5(1)f of the Radiocommunications Act states: [the Minister has the power to] “approve each site on which radio apparatus, including antenna systems, may be located, and approve the erection of all masts, towers and other antenna-supporting structures.”

Industry Canada requires proponents to follow the municipal land use consultation process. In the event the municipal process has no public consultation requirement, proponents must then utilize Industry Canada’s Default Public Consultation Process, as set out in Attachment 1.

The draft Regional Protocol benefited from several working meetings with key stakeholders

As directed by Regional Council, through the adoption of the January 2008 staff report, there have been multiple meetings with the Region’s local municipal partners in the development of an updated protocol. The process has been iterative and involved
detailed discussions of specific elements of the protocol. The municipal working group also met with the industry service providers in December 2008. Representatives from Ontario’s three main service providers were present: Bell, Rogers and Telus. Also in attendance, were the service providers’ legal counsel (Thomson Rogers) and their planning consultant (Slobodsky Associates), as well as representatives from Industry Canada.

The municipal working group was informed about Industry Canada’s current protocol and provided comments on the Region’s proposed updated protocol.

The Regional Medical Officer of Health has indicated that Health Canada’s safety standards are appropriate

In addressing a specific inquiry posed by Richmond Hill Council, the Town’s Planning Commissioner, the Region’s Planning Commissioner and the Region’s Medical Officer of Health, and respective staff, had a teleconference meeting with Health Canada. The purpose of the meeting was to better understand and explore the issue of potential health effects from telecommunication antennas. According to Health Canada’s Safety Code 6, radiofrequency fields from telecommunication antennas must be 50 times lower than the exposure that could cause harm to residents.

The Region’s Medical Officer of Health, in reply to Richmond Hill’s inquiry, attached herewith as Attachment 2, indicates that as part of the Region’s due-diligence, the Public Health Branch has reviewed Health Canada’s Safety Code 6 and research from agencies such as the World Health Organization, Health Canada, Industry Canada. This review also included research from a number of recent peer-reviewed scientific journal articles. The Region’s Medical Officer of Health concludes that “the weight of evidence has not identified that Safety Code 6 is inappropriate, in protecting the public from exposure to RF [radiofrequency] fields.”

Adopting Industry Canada’s protocol will reduce redundancies

After the series of meetings a draft of the Region’s updated protocol was developed. The resulting Regional protocol is very similar to Industry Canada’s protocol and because of the similarity, staff concluded that simply adopting Industry Canada’s protocol would reduce redundancies and permit a more efficient and consistent approach for the Region and the nine local municipalities.

The Region’s 2002 protocol served its purpose well over the years. It provided an opportunity for local municipalities to establish individual protocols/approaches. Industry Canada’s new protocol has also matured to become a far more comprehensive tool in the management of telecommunication tower approvals, which occurs at the Federal level.
Industry Canada’s protocol requires the proponent to consult with landowners and adjacent municipalities within a distance of three times the tower height. The draft updated Regional protocol identified the distance to consult with landowners as: 120 metres or three times the tower height, whichever is greater. Staff have determined to use Industry Canada’s protocol and have the local protocols determine more directive requirements, if necessary. Since Industry Canada’s revised protocol has been greatly improved, there is no longer a reason for the Region to have its own protocol.

Local Councils can still customize their respective protocols

Local municipal Councils have in the past, and will still be able to customize their own protocols. For instance, local Councils can, within reason and with Industry Canada’s agreement:
- Define more definitive public consultation requirements.
- Require proponents to install public meeting notice signs on the subject property.
- Require more landscaping around the base equipment.

The Region, however, will not likely be required to apply the protocol, as the land use authority, as identified by Industry Canada, refers to the local municipality. Even with antennas located within Regional right-of-ways, the proponent is still obligated to consult with the land use authority, i.e. the local municipality. The Region, in such specific instances, is like any other landowner or lessor.

5. FINANCIAL IMPlications

Updating the Region’s protocol has no direct financial implications affecting Regional budgets or the tax levy.

Regional Council, on January 22, 2009, adopted Clause No. 7 of Report No. 1, from the Finance and Administration Committee. The staff report provided an update on the Regional Policy entitled “Communications Installations on Regional Property. The staff report also introduced a new fee structure for telecommunication licenses granted by the Region. Regional Environmental Services and Legal staff will be reporting back to Finance and Administration Committee and Council on the implications of requiring proponents to examine the possibility of locating their equipment on Regional property, or possibly other publicly-owned property, prior to applying for approval to install their equipment on private property.

6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

The updated Regional telecommunication tower protocol benefited from two working meetings with participating local municipal planning staff. Also, there was an all parties
meeting between municipal staff, Industry Canada, the service providers, and their legal
counsel and planning consultant. There was also a teleconference with Health Canada.
This process has been comprehensive and has provided an effective forum for discussion
and municipal contribution.

Local Councils have the option of tailoring the Industry Canada/Regional protocol to suit
local circumstances.

7. CONCLUSION

Industry Canada’s revised public consultation protocol came into effect on January 1,
2008. The Region, local municipalities, the cellular service providers, Industry Canada
and Health Canada have worked towards a customized protocol that could be applied
across York Region.

After careful deliberations, Regional Planning staff are recommending replacing the
existing 2002 Regional protocol with Industry Canada’s 2008 protocol. The reasons
behind adopting Industry Canada’s protocol are that the local municipalities are the land
use authority required to provide written confirmation they consent to the proposed
antenna system. Furthermore, Industry Canada’s protocol has evolved into a more
detailed and thoroughly defined public consultation process. Finally, local Councils, as
with the old 2002 Regional Protocol, can still modify the protocol to suit their specific
local needs and circumstances.

For more information on this report, please contact Augustine Ko, Senior Planner, at
(905) 830-4444, Ext.1524 or Heather Konefat, Director, Community Planning Branch, at
Ext. 1502.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.

(The attachment referred to in this clause is attached to this report.)

8. PLANNING ACTIVITIES AND COMMISSIONER DELEGATED APPROVALS
2008 YEAR END SUMMARY

The Planning and Economic Development Committee recommends the adoption
of the recommendation contained in the following report dated February 3, 2009,
from the Commissioner of Planning and Development Services.
1. **RECOMMENDATION**

   It is recommended that:
   1. Council receive this report for information.

2. **PURPOSE**

   This report provides a summary and update of major development applications and planning initiatives that have been reviewed by staff and approved by Regional Council for 2008, including Regional Official Plan Amendments (ROPA’s), local official plan amendments (LOPA’s), plans of subdivision and condominium.

   This report is also submitted to advise Council of planning activities under the Commissioner’s delegated authority from October 1, 2008 to December 31, 2008.

3. **BACKGROUND**

   **Summary of significant development applications and planning matters**

   This report provides an overview of staff involvement on major planning activities such as official plan reviews, statutory public meetings, Ontario Municipal Board hearings and Provincial planning matters.

   Regional Council has delegated authority to the Commissioner of Planning and Development Services to issue recommendations or approvals related to development applications that are routine in nature, subject to a requirement that such approvals be reported to Council through the Planning and Economic Development Committee on a quarterly basis. This report provides a list of the following delegated approvals including:

   1. Local “routine” official plan amendments.
      These are minor applications with no outstanding Regional or local issues that the Regional Planning Commissioner has been authorized by Council to approve.

   2. Local “exempt” official plan amendments.
      These are minor applications with no Regional issues, which the Regional Planning Commissioner exempts from the Regional approval process, thereby allowing the local municipality to make a decision on the application.
3. Conditions of approval for plans of subdivision and condominium.
   As a commenting agency, the Region provides a letter to the local municipality outlining Regional Requirements of draft plan approval including transit, water and wastewater, road, financial and planning conditions.

4. Final approval of plans of subdivision and condominium.
   As a commenting agency, the Region provides a letter to the local municipality outlining how each Regional condition of draft plan approval has been satisfied.

4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

In 2008, Regional staff commented on a total of 45 Official Plan Amendment applications

4.1 OFFICIAL PLAN AMENDMENTS

In 2008, Regional staff reported on 4 Regional Official Plan Amendments and 6 Regionally significant local Official Plan Amendments. In addition, Regional staff approved 16 local Official Plan Amendments by way of the “Routine” process and exempted 19 local Official Plan Amendments from the Regional approval process, as indicated in Table 1 (see Attachment 1). In 2008, Regional staff issued decisions/reported on a total of 45 Official Plan Amendment applications compared to 30 in 2007 (50% increase).

4.2 STATUTORY PUBLIC MEETINGS

In 2008, Regional staff held 2 statutory public meetings

In 2008, Regional staff held the following statutory public meetings:
   1. On April 30, 2008, a Public Meeting was held on ROPA 61, outlining the necessary information and studies required to deem a Regional Official Plan Amendment application complete.
   2. On November 5, 2008, a Public Meeting was held on ROPA 63, a technical amendment to make minor modifications to policy and mapping in the Regional Official Plan.

4.3 PLANS OF SUBDIVISION AND CONDOMINIUM

In 2008, the Region forwarded conditions of approval on 45 plans of subdivision and 8 plans of condominium representing 9,873.5 residential units and 149.68 hectares of industrial/commercial lands, as indicated in Table 3 (see Attachment 1). Comparatively, the Region provided comments/conditions of approval on 53 plans of subdivision and 36 plans of condominium in 2007 representing 12,362.5 residential units and 149.72
hectares of industrial/commercial lands. These approvals in 2008 provided for a unit mix
of non-detached residential units representing greater than 50%.

Increase in the number of residential units which staff provided
clearance/final plan approval; slight decrease in the amount of
industrial/commercial lands

From January to December 2008, staff provided clearance of Regional conditions of
approval on final plans to the local municipalities and issued final approval on 83 plans
of subdivision and condominium involving a total of 9,539.5 units and 105.69 hectares of
commercial/industrial lands, as indicated in Table 4 (see Attachment 1). In comparison,
in 2007, staff provided clearance/final approval on 75 plans of subdivision and
condominium involving a total of 6,731.5 residential units and 155.02 hectares of
commercial/industrial lands.

4.4 CURRENT RESIDENTIAL LAND SUPPLY

Region wide there are currently 33,986 units awaiting registration, of which 28,411 is
ground related supply. This represents approximately a 3 year supply of draft approved
units.

The Provincial Policy Statement, 2005 (PPS) requires municipalities to maintain a 3 year
supply of serviced residential lands which are appropriately zoned, draft approved or
registered. Currently the Region has approximately a 3 year supply of draft approved
units. The Region can service a 4 year supply based on the implementation of the Duffin
Creek Water Pollution Control Plant (WPCP) and the flow control measures in the York-
Durham Sanitary Sewer (YDSS). However, to ensure an ongoing 3 year supply of draft
approved units, it is important that key infrastructure completion targets for both the
WPCP expansion plan and the Southeast Collector are achieved, as this will ensure that
the Region continues to meet the PPS requirement.

The PPS also requires municipalities to maintain a 10 year supply of residentially
designated lands. It has been estimated using the Region’s forecast that Region-wide
there remains approximately a 10 year supply of ground related residentially designated
lands within the existing urban boundary. However, there are differences with respect to
the amount of supply north and south of the moraine. North of the moraine, the supply is
approximately 18 to 25 years, while south of the moraine, the supply is approximately 5
to 11 years. The lower number and higher number in years of supply are based on
average historical growth rates and forecasted growth rates respectively.

In order to maintain the prescribed minimum land supply, both urban boundary
expansions and designation of new intensification areas within the existing urban
boundary need to be planned for. There are also different servicing infrastructure and
triggers north and south of the moraine, which impact the timing of development for
these designated lands. York Region, in partnership with the local municipalities, will be
addressing these issues through comprehensive planning reviews and intensification strategies.

4.5 TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS

A large portion of the work being done by staff in the Community Planning Branch includes participation on Technical Advisory Committees and Working Groups. Participation in these committees is extremely valuable. Regional and local issues are identified and resolved early in the planning process ensuring that future development applications can be dealt with in an effective and timely manner.

Community Planning staff have/and continue to participate on the following working groups and committees including:

1. East Gwillimbury Official Plan Review Team,
2. Sutton Secondary Plan Technical Advisory Committee,
3. Richmond Hill Downtown Yonge Street Study,
4. Markham Yonge/Steeles Corridor Study,
5. Markham Centre Advisory Group,
6. Markham Cornell Advisory Group,
7. Langstaff Area Secondary Plan Study,
8. Vaughan Official Plan Technical Advisory Committee,
9. Vaughan Yonge Street Study,
10. Yonge Subway Extension Working Group,
11. York Region Agricultural Liaison Group, and
12. GTA Agricultural Working Group.

4.6 UPDATE ON VARIOUS PLANNING MATTERS

In 2008, the Community Planning Branch was involved in 18 OMB hearings

During 2008, the Community Planning Branch was involved in 18 Ontario Municipal Board (OMB) hearings, 6 of which are ongoing hearings that staff will continue to be involved with in 2009. The remaining 12 hearings were settled or had no further involvement by staff. The following 2 OMB hearings are of special note:

OMB refuses approval of Official Plan Amendment and Draft Plan of Subdivision Applications submitted by Mademont Investments - Newmarket

In November 2006, Mademont Investments submitted an Official Plan Amendment application and supporting draft plan of subdivision. The applications proposed a total of 448 residential units and a 20.5 hectare commercial block. The subject lands are currently designated “Environmental Protection Area-Oak Ridges Moraine” which does not permit residential or commercial uses. The applications were appealed to the OMB and on
December 23, 2008, the OMB refused the approval of the applications. Regional staff with the assistance of outside economic/planning consultants defended the Regional position. The “Board’s” decision was supportive of the position taken by both the Region and the Town.

Rehearing for North Leslie Planning Area to take place in March 2009

Four parties of the Bayview East Landowners' Group (BELG) were granted a re-hearing before the OMB with respect to the land use designations for their lands within the North Leslie Planning Area. The landowners are requesting their lands be re-designated for residential purposes, while the position of the Region and the Town is that the lands should be designated for employment uses. The re-hearing is scheduled to begin on March 30, 2009 and the OMB has reserved eight (8) weeks to hear the matter.

4.7 SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES/REPORTS

Newmarket Official Plan approved save and except one minor site specific appeal

On April 24, 2008, Regional Council adopted the recommendation to approve the Town of Newmarket’s “new” Official Plan (OP). The Newmarket OP establishes a policy framework for managing growth recognizing the Town’s evolution towards a mature urban structure. On May 29, 2008, the entire Newmarket OP came into full force and effect save and except for a minor site specific appeal by a landowner.

Regional Official Plan Amendment No. 53/Aurora 2C Lands approved in February 2008

The purpose of ROPA 53 was to expand the Town of Aurora’s urban boundary through re-designation of approximately 445 hectares of land from “Rural Policy Area” to “Urban Area” creating approximately 94 net hectares of strategically located employment land and 114 net hectares of land for residential and related land uses. Development of the 2C lands will likely generate approximately 4,000 jobs and accommodate a population of approximately 8,000 persons. ROPA 53 was adopted on January 24, 2008 and came into force and effect on February 20, 2008.

Regional Official Plan Amendment No. 61/Complete Applications adopted in December 2008

Regional Official Plan Amendment No. 61 was adopted by Regional Council on December 18, 2008. The Amendment lists a number of studies that may be required to support an application to amend the Regional Official Plan and all the necessary information required to deem an application as being “complete” under the Planning Act.
York Region Launched the Sustainable Development through LEED Program

In March 2008, Regional Council adopted the Sustainable Development through LEED program. The purpose of the program is to provide an allocation incentive to developers of “green” high density residential developments. Since the launch of this program in March 2008, York Region has received two development applications (one in Markham and one in Georgina) requesting allocation incentives for building to LEED standards. Other municipalities, including the City of Vaughan have brought forward reports to local Council recommending participation in the program.

Regional Allocation Reserve to Encourage Assisted Housing Projects

In September 2008, Regional Council endorsed the use of the Regional Reserve of Servicing Allocation for multi-unit non-profit housing projects within York Region. The purpose of this program was to remove lack of servicing allocation as a barrier to the development of non-profit housing development opportunities. Since September 2008, the Community Planning Branch has received one application for allocation from the Regional reserve to facilitate an Assisted Housing development within the Township of King.

Peaker Plant Location identified by the Ontario Power Authority

During the 3rd quarter of 2008, Regional staff received 3 Regional applications to amend the Regional Official Plan to facilitate the approval of a proposed 350 MW peaker plant. Subsequent to these submissions, Regional staff received 5 Environmental Review Reports, submitted in association with the Environmental Assessment Act, for the proposed peaker plant. Regional staff reviewed these documents during the months of November and December and provided comments to the Ministry of Environment and Ontario Power Authority. A preferred location in the Township of King has been identified by the Ontario Power Authority and the contract to construct and operate the facility has been awarded to Pristine Power.

5. PLANNING ACTIVITIES AND COMMISSIONER DELEGATED APPROVALS, OCTOBER 1, 2008 TO DECEMBER 31, 2008

This section deals specifically with development activities from October 1, 2008 to December 31, 2008, and is being provided in accordance with Council’s requirements to provide details on planning activities on a quarterly basis.

Staff reported on 2 Regional Official Plan Amendments and issued a decision to approve 1 Regionally Significant local Official Plan Amendment from October 1, 2008 to December 31, 2008, as indicated in Table 5 (see Attachment 2).
Staff commented on 4 local Official Plan Amendments by way of the “Routine” process from October 1, 2008 to December 31, 2008, as indicated in Table 6 (see Attachment 3).

Staff exempted 6 local Official Plan Amendments from the Regional approval process, from October 1, 2008 to December 31, 2008, as described in Table 7 (see Attachment 4).

From October 1, 2008 to December 31, 2008, staff provided Regional comments and recommended conditions of approval to the local municipalities or Ontario Municipal Board on 18 proposed plans of subdivision, the details of which are provided in Table 8 (see Attachment 5). The 18 plans of subdivision comprise a total of 2,904 residential units and 105.8 ha of industrial/commercial lands.

From October 1, 2008 to December 31, 2008, staff provided Regional comments and recommended conditions of approval to the local municipalities or Ontario Municipal Board on 2 proposed plans of condominium, the details of which are provided in Table 9 (see Attachment 6). The 2 plans of condominium comprise a total of 277 residential units and 4.7 ha of industrial/commercial lands.

In the same time period, staff provided clearance of Regional conditions of approval on final plans to the local municipalities and issued final approval on a total of 18 plans of subdivision, as indicated in Table 10 (see Attachment 7). The 18 plans comprise a total of 1,572 residential units and 25.7 ha of industrial/commercial land.

No clearances for final plan of condominium were issued from October 1, 2008 to December 31, 2008.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

2008 Revenue for plan review in keeping with 2007 revenue

There are no direct financial implications associated with this report. Development from the applications listed in Section 5 of this report will provide tax assessment to both the Region and local municipalities.

For 2008, fee revenue for approvals and plan review totalled $232,001 (which represents a 3.4% increase from 2007 when fees totalled $224,353) as seen in Table 12.
For 2009, staff anticipate a decrease in fee revenue for approvals and plan review. This decrease may be attributed to a reduction in development applications due to the ongoing Official Plan reviews occurring related to the Places to Grow legislation, which requires applications to be part of this process, and to the economic downturn that prevailed in late 2008 and which is expected to continue through 2009.

7. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

Official Plan Amendments approved, or exempted, by the Region establish the principle of development that leads to further development approvals at the local level. Conditions of approval provided by the Region on plans of subdivision and condominium facilitate approvals issued by the local municipalities.

8. CONCLUSION

In the year 2008, the Commissioner of Planning and Development Services:
- Reported on/approved or exempted 45 Official Plan amendment applications.
- Provided comments/conditions of draft approval to the local municipalities or Ontario Municipal Board on 53 plans of subdivision and condominium representing 9,873.5 residential units and 149.63 hectares of industrial/commercial lands.
- Provided clearance of Regional conditions to local municipalities and issued final plan approval on a total of 83 plans of subdivision and condominium, comprising 9,539.5 residential units and 105.69 hectares of industrial/commercial lands.

During 2008, York Region’s population grew by approximately 28,300 people in 9,021 newly completed homes, reaching a total estimated population of 1,011,360.

In York Region, total housing completion for 2008 was 9,021 units, down from last year’s total figure of 10,502.
The Planning and Economic Development Committee recommends the adoption of the recommendation contained in the following report dated January 30, 2009, from the Commissioner of Planning and Development Services.

1. **RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that:
1. This report be circulated by the Tourism Branch to local municipalities, chambers of commerce, the board of trade and the York Region Tourism Advisory Group.

2. **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this report is to provide Regional Council with an overview of the activities implemented in the 2008 York Region Tourism Marketing Program.
3. BACKGROUND

Regional Council approved the 2008 York Region Tourism Marketing Program in October 2007 and the York Region Tourism Marketing Mid-Year Review report in June 2008. This report provides a comprehensive overview of the marketing, industry relations and destination development initiatives implemented in 2008.

4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

The marketing initiatives implemented in 2008 were developed based on the Premier Ranked Tourism destination research, guidance from the York Region Tourism Advisory Group and through consultations with the tourism industry.

Industry Development initiatives and programs enhanced the marketing efforts and provided additional partnership and development opportunities for York Region tourism businesses.

Goals and Objectives

The activities support the goals of the tourism marketing program to:
• attract tourists and encourage repeat visitation
• generate overnight stays
• increase revenues and tourist spend
• strengthen urban and rural communities by supporting the development, growth and sustainability of the local tourism industry
• promote York Region as a viable four season destination.

Audience and Positioning Message

The tourism marketing program was focused on promoting York Region by experience and by season and was targeted to a domestic high yield demographic in two key market segments:
• Leisure Consumer: Overnight visitors, visiting friends and relatives and same day travellers based the geographic locations of York Region, GTA and rest of Ontario
• Meetings and Group: Business meetings, conferences, sport and recreation, travel trade and tour operators focusing on meeting planners based in York Region and the Greater Toronto Area, the York Region business community, Tour Operators based in Ontario and Quebec and sport tourism operators based in Ontario.
The positioning message in advertising campaigns and promotions speaks to York Region’s key tourism experiences, Family Fun, Festival and Events, Arts and Culture, Distinctive Getaways, Agri-tourism Recreation and Golf.

**Seasonal landing pages and contesting incorporated into the new *In Your Backyard* marketing and promotional campaigns provided valuable consumer data and performance metrics**

For 2008, new creative with the theme, “In Your Backyard”, was developed and utilized throughout the seasonal marketing and promotional campaigns. The 2008 program leveraged the success of previous campaigns and incorporated multi media tactics including print, television, radio and online.

All marketing and advertising activities directed consumers to seasonal landing pages on the tourism website (www.yorktourism.com), increasing the site’s popularity and driving traffic to online tourism partners. All consumer inquiries and online click through rates, referrals, unique visitors and page views were tracked and measured to determine program success.

Seasonal consumer contests complemented the consumer leisure marketing programs and helped drive traffic to the website and capture consumer data and approval to allow for future communication from York Region.

The performance results of the 2008 marketing program include:

- 3,007 consumer contest entries
- 6,880 online and telephone inquiries responded to
- 102,000 unique visitors to the tourism website of which 46% of requested pages were directly to the business listings, getaway packages and the calendar of events
- $116,483 from partners purchasing advertising and participating in tourism activities
- $300,000 from the funding partnership agreement with Tourism Toronto through the hotel destination marketing fee contributions
- $25,000 incremental funding from Tourism Toronto to support the enhanced summer promotions

**Seasonal campaigns targeting consumers in Ontario, USA, Quebec and York Region implemented to increase visitation**

The Spring/summer advertising campaign targeted the Ontario market, upstate New York and Quebec through various tactics including print advertising in CAA, AAA, Wine Council of Ontario, Festival and Events Ontario, Great Toronto and Great Ontario Getaway magazines; on air and online radio campaigns with tourism partners on the Jewel and CHFI promotions in the Ontario Travel Information Centres; various online campaigns and e-blasts with Ontario Tourism and the Globe and Mail and commercials on all broadcasts of Rogers Television, “First Local”. 
With concerns regarding a drop in visitation and hotel overnight stays, a $75,000 enhanced summer getaway campaign targeting consumers in the Golden Horseshoe area was implemented and supported by $25,000 in incremental funding from Tourism Toronto. Hotel packages under the theme of Girlfriend Getaways and Golf Getaways was promoted through double page advertorial and advertising for five consecutive weeks in the Toronto Star. Sympatico and MSN banner ads, text links and e-newsletters provided opportunities to target online consumers and direct consumers to the hotel packages that were created to support the campaign.

The Fall campaign targeted residents from the GTA, York Region, Quebec and New York State promoting the *In Your Backyard, FestiFALL magazine*. The campaign tactics included a resident unaddressed ad mail drop to 300,000 homes in York Region, online promotions with CHFI Loyalty Club and Ontario Tourism, radio promotions with the Jewel Radio; Globe & Mail e-flyers and various print media including City Magazines distributed throughout York Region and Ontario and the Ontario Tourism Great Drives program.

The Winter campaign targeted residents of York Region and the Greater Toronto Area through Jewel Radio, Rogers Television and web based campaigns with Ontario Tourism. In addition, 3500 York Region bookmarks highlighting winter festivals and activities were distributed at 10 community events through partnership programs with local municipalities and 25,000 bookmarks were distributed at various events throughout Ontario through a *Snow Globe* promotion with Ontario Tourism.

**Various on line, print and direct mail campaigns implemented to build awareness and increase market share from the meeting and group markets**

Initiatives intended that continued to build awareness in the Corporate Meeting and Conference market included renewing our partnership with the Canadian Society of Association Executives, Meeting Planners International and the Canadian Society of Professional Event Planners. In partnership with Tourism Toronto, York Region attended the Meeting & Incentive Travel and the Incentive Works tradeshows. To build awareness of York Region as a meeting destination, a new publication was developed and distributed at the tradeshows and was distributed to 10,000 corporations through a partnership with Ignite Magazine.

Assistance is regularly provided to meeting planners and association planners to facilitate site selection and connecting planners to local tourism business. These activities resulted in six meeting and conference leads being generated and circulated to the tourism partners to secure the business.

To encourage Leisure Group Business, York Region implemented online, print and direct mail campaigns targeting the U.S. and Ontario based tour operators with a focus on the student and youth markets. York Region had 36 appointments with tour operators at the
Ontario Motor Coach Association conference and enhanced awareness of York Region’s tourism products through exposure as one of the sponsors at the conference opening reception.

Activities intended to build awareness to York Region’s sporting venues included two presentations to the coaches and teams of the Markham Sports Council, an eight page feature in the Dudley Hewitt Hockey Tournament Program and a partnership with the International Silver Sticks Hockey Tournament. Results to date included a booth and distribution of the 2008 York Region Discovery Guide at the Milliken Mill Unionville Soccer tournament and planning assistance to secure the Markham Fencing Club as host of the 2008 provincial championships.

Enhancements to the tourism website and five promotional publications were distributed to build top of mind awareness for York Region’s tourism experiences

York Region Tourism Website – yorktourism.com
New features to the tourism website include the Tourism Industry News blog which enhances communication to tourism industry partners and the addition of new survey software enables contesting options and the collection and tracking of consumer data.

York Region Discovery Guide
A total of 156 tourism businesses advertised in the Guide generating $87,325 in advertising revenue. The guide increased to 84 pages and included a new pull out York Region map and 10 attraction discount coupons.

In Your Backyard, FestFALL Magazine
A total of 15 York Region tourism businesses advertised in the magazine, up 50% from the previous year, generating $7000 in advertising revenue. An unaddressed postcard drop to residents of York Region resulted in over 5,000 inquiries for the magazine.

York Region Driving Successful Meeting In Your Backyard Brochure
This new brochure was developed featuring innovation meeting and accommodation options to build top of mind awareness for York Region as a meeting destination.

Touring York Region and Student Experiences Profile
Two profiles featuring tourism experiences targeting the adult and the student group markets were distributed at conferences and through direct mail campaigns to 2,500 tour operators.

York Region Golf Feature
In partnership with seven Golf partners, a 10 page York Region Golf feature was included in the GTA Golfers Guide and distributed to 50,000 golf related locations throughout Ontario.
Several educational and networking opportunities provided to the tourism industry to further develop York Region as a tourism destination

The development of new opportunities to benefit the tourism industry is key to growing York Region as a tourism destination. The following were provided to tourism partners:

• Celebrate Ontario grant application assistance was provided to regional based festival and events including, Windfall Ecology Festival, Whitchurch-Stouffville Strawberry Festival, Kingfest, Kleinburg BIA – Bindertwine, Aurora Street Festival, Resurgance Theatre, Markham Jazz Festival, Unionville Street Festival. Markham Jazz Festival was successful in securing $37,000 in funding.

• A Hotel Partner Marketing meeting was conducted with 20 hotel General Managers and Director of Sales.

• An education seminar on website marketing tactics was provided to 22 York Region industry partners.

• A familiarization tour of key attractions in Markham, Stouffville and Richmond Hill was provided to 12 front line hotel staff with the goal of increasing knowledge of the Region and improve customer service to hotel guests.

• The Tourism Industry News Blog was established to communicate and update York Region tourism industry on marketing activities, promotional opportunities, industry news and partner profiles.

• York Region Day at Union Station – in June and September, 12 industry partners distributed a total of 20,000 promotional bags to commuters travelling through Union Station. A contest available only on yorktourism.com collected valuable contact data from commuters who picked up the promotional bag.

• The Annual Tourism Conference was held in November with 80 industry partners in attendance and keynote presentations were delivered from the Ontario Tourism Marketing Partnership Corporation and the Ministry of Tourism.

Building partnerships and maintaining a strong marketing presence with a renewed focus on priorities designed to optimize return on investment is required in today’s economic conditions

Continuing to build collaboration and partnerships to instill a regional approach to destination marketing is key to York Region’s ability to deliver a successful tourism program in 2009. With the internet playing an increasing significant role in consumer travel planning, it is important to continue to enhance the current on-line activities to maximize York Region’s presence. Integrated web media tactics, video streaming and additional web features will be incorporated into the tourism website to engage the on-line consumer. Taking into account these key learnings combined with the concerning economic conditions, supports maintaining a strong marketing presence in 2009 with a renewed focus on priorities designed to optimize return-on-investment.
Relationship to Vision 2026

The activities outlined in this report support the Vibrant Economy and Enhanced Environment, Heritage and Culture Goals of Vision 2026 and are a core component of the York Region Economic Development Strategy.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The tourism program initiatives were funded in the 2008 Operation Budget allocation and were augmented by $300,000 from Tourism Toronto destination marketing fee and advertising support from the tourism industry partners.

6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

The Region’s tourism program is based on developing and promoting a range of tourism experiences that will impact all municipalities throughout York Region. The tourism program provided opportunities for local municipalities and tourism businesses to maximize their tourism potential enhance job and wealth creation while contributing to the quality of life for residents.

7. CONCLUSION

The 2008 tourism program activities continued to raise the level of interaction with the tourism industry and partner businesses while collaborative opportunities avoided duplication of efforts, focused resources and expanded market reach. The marketing priorities build upon York Region’s key experiences and strongest audience markets to maximize visitation and economic impact.

For more information on this report, please contact Brenda McGowan, Manager, Tourism Development at (905) 830 4444, Ext. 1553 or Patrick Draper, Director Economic Strategy and Tourism at Ext 1503.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.
The Planning and Economic Development Committee recommends the adoption of the recommendation contained in the following report dated February 3, 2009, from the Commissioner of Planning and Development Services.

1. **RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that:

1. This report be circulated by the Regional Clerk to the local municipal economic development offices.

2. **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this report is to present to Council the Export Development Program 2008 Annual Report and 2009 Marketing Plan.

3. **BACKGROUND**

**Export Development Program Launched In 2000**

The York Region Export Development Program was launched in 2000 with funding assistance from Human Resources and Skills Development Canada. The Region has funded the Export Development Program since 2003.

The program provides access to education and information, assessment of export readiness, research and market intelligence, contacts and networks, and advice of export business growth in global markets.

**Program resources consist of 2 Export Advisors in 2008 & 2009**

The Export Development Program is directed and marketed by the Economic Strategy Branch complimented by two contracted export advisors. In 2008, one export advisor was contracted for four months, the other for 12 months. In 2009, the Program will have two contracted export advisors for the full year.
4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

Export Development Program 2008 Annual Report

York Region is a dynamic exporter

York Region businesses exported more that $6.7 billion worth of products in 2006 to the United States, $1.2 billion to other countries, and $2.0 billion to confidential locations from 6,859 exporters. Exports from York Region exceeded the exports of two provinces, including PEI and Nova Scotia. The Region’s exports represent 4.9% of Ontario’s total product exports and 2.2% of Canada’s total exports.

166 on-site business development consultations resulted from the 2,624 contacts made

The export program consultants meet with individual companies to assess the foreign market potential of the products/services and to provide advice/referrals to assist the clients in expanding their export sales.

On site business consultations are targeted at 25 per quarter for each consultant with total client consultations in 2008 targeted at 200. In 2008, 2,624 contacts were made and 163 export businesses visited. This is consistent with our projected consultations of 200 as the program had one Export Advisor for only 4 months.

In 2008 there were 2,620 York Region exporters contacted. Eighty-four percent, or 139 of the 166 client site consultations were in the manufacturing sector.

602 client referrals were made to 23 partner export trade organizations

In 2008 there were 602 client referrals to 23 partner organizations as shown in Table 1.

Table 1
Partner Referrals from the Export Development Initiative in 2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Export Development Partner</th>
<th># of Referrals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trade Commissioners and Virtual Trade Commissioner Service</td>
<td>191</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Export Development Corporation</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Research Council Canada</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Innovation Synergy Centre Markham</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ontario Ministry of International Trade and Investment</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canadian Commercial Corporation</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All other organizations</td>
<td>206</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Referrals</td>
<td>602</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
An export business contact database with consultation results, referrals, and follow up actions for the business development consultants is available in the Planning and Development Services Department.

Partners receiving the company contact lists are following up for further consultation and assistance with the businesses.

**Export opportunity assessments are a key new component of the export development program that support economic growth in the Region**

An export opportunity assessment framework plan was finalized in 2008 and has been implemented. The goal is to provide in depth planning and research assistance to high potential exporters. The plan identifies the critical steps required to enter new markets.

Two companies received an opportunity assessment in 2008:
- Alutron Modules Inc. of Aurora is an ISO 9001 certified manufacturer of electrical/electronic control assemblies. Their target markets are North America, Europe and several countries in Asia. An opportunity assessment to broaden their export capacity was conducted for the United States, Mexico, and the Caribbean.

- Salbro Bottle Inc. of Woodbridge, is a leading manufacturer and distributor of packaging solutions with more than 100 year heritage. Salbro Bottle is a major player in the packaging industry. The opportunity assessment focused on entering Latin America: Argentina, Brazil, and Mexico.

**Export business success case examples in 2008**

- A pharmaceutical supplier to the biotechnology industry is excited about exploring the opportunities provided by the export advisor and would appreciate continued support in the future as their export business progresses.

- A biomedical instrument manufacturing company appreciates the advice and documentation and has hired an attorney to start distribution channel negotiations.

- An environmental waste paper exporter was exploring business expansion in new areas and was appreciative of receiving information on new international distribution channels.

- A company from the 2008 Markham China Mission is searching out new technologies for water purification in China and has received a list of prospective York Region companies and introductions to prospective partners.
The Export Development Program partners with the Greater Toronto Region Export Alliance

The Greater Toronto Region Export Alliance is a partnership of government service providers that deliver seminars and workshops. The goals of the York Export Alliance are to:

- Increase the international market penetration of existing exporters
- Expand the number of new exporters in the region
- Provide opportunities for export firms to network.
- Facilitate referrals to appropriate Export Alliance partners for customized export assistance.

Key partners in the Export Alliance include:

- Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT)
- Export Development Canada (EDC)
- Industry Canada
- Innovation Synergy Centre in Markham (ISCM)
- National Research Council Canada (NRC)
- Ontario Ministry of International Trade and Investment (MITI)
- Ontario Ministry of Small Business and Consumer Services (MSBC)
- Regional Municipality of York, Economic Strategy Branch on behalf of the 9 local municipal economic development offices.

The Greater Toronto Region Export Alliance hosted these events in 2008:

- Four partner strategy meetings
- US Customs Documentation Seminar
- New Exporters to US Border States mission to Buffalo with the Ministry of International Trade and Investment
- Doing Business in Mexico, a workshop provided by invitation only for export ready businesses hosted by Industry Canada and York Region.

Export Development Program 2009 Marketing Plan

The Export Development Program is a critical business development measure to advise and direct businesses reach global markets. York Region manufacturers are a mainstay of the Regional economy and are adversely affected by the current global economic crisis. The Program aims to encourage York Region exporters by providing the solutions needed to secure their long-term growth and prosperity. The program provides guidance on globalization and improves access to financing for export ready businesses and those considering export opportunities.
Marketing material to build awareness and lead pre-qualification in the manufacturing sector

- The redesigned Export Development Program brochure will be mailed out to 600 manufacturing exporters in 2009 to create awareness of the program, generate leads for the export advisors, and pre-qualify the manufacturing companies for interviews for the Invest Canada-Community Initiatives Program.

- An application for $31,500 for manufacturing interviews was submitted to the Invest Canada-Community Initiatives Program. The award will be announced in April.

Business development consultations, export opportunity assessments, and export marketing plan targets for 2009 include 200 on-site consultations, export opportunity assessments, and targeted workshops

- On site business consultations are targeted at 25 per quarter for each consultant with total client consultations in 2009 targeted at 200.

- Export opportunity assessments will continue in 2009. A business development plan was finalized in 2008 and has been implemented. The goal is to provide in depth planning and research assistance to high potential exporters. The plan identifies the critical steps required to enter new markets. Two companies have been targeted for the Export Opportunity Assessment in 2009, Delco Wire and Cable Ltd. and CLO Glass Ltd., both located in Vaughan.

- Based on the success of the “Doing Business in Mexico” workshop, two other client-focused export workshops will be hosted in 2009.

- In partnership with the Greater Toronto Region Export Alliance the Export Development Program will continue to support work in organizing relevant seminars and encourage York Region firms to participate.

Lessons Learned

In 2008 the opportunity assessments proved to be a value added service to companies that are ready to seek out new global markets. With the current economic downturn, the Export Development Program is expected to gain momentum in 2009 with exporters indicating an interest in seeking alternatives to the US market. The focused “Doing Business in Mexico” workshop will be repeated for two select countries according to client needs based on an online survey to determine the client’s interest in global markets.
5. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The cost for the Export Development Program is funded in the proposed 2009 Planning and Development Services budget.

6. **LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT**

The York Region Export Development Program directly supports the Vibrant Economy Goal of Vision 2026 by serving local companies to increase their export potential which contributes to the Region’s economic growth.

7. **CONCLUSION**

Encouraging York Region businesses to increase exports results in the additional creation of high quality jobs and enhances the economic prosperity of the Region. The Economic Development Program with its international partnerships increases the outreach to businesses in all 9 local municipalities.

For more information on this report, please contact Sharon Végh, Program Manager, Economic Strategy at (905) 830-4444, Ext. 1509 or Patrick Draper, Director of Economic Strategy & Tourism at Ext. 1503.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.

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**11 YORK SMALL BUSINESS ENTERPRISE CENTRE**

**2008 ANNUAL REPORT AND 2009 MARKETING PLAN**

The Planning and Economic Development Committee recommends the adoption of the recommendations contained in the following report dated February 3, 2009, from the Commissioner of Planning and Development Services.

1. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that:

1. The York Small Business Enterprise Centre program for 2009 be approved, subject to confirmation of provincial funding and Regional budget approval.
2. The Regional Chair and Regional Clerk be authorized to sign the necessary funding agreements with the Provincial Government and other sponsors, subject to review by Legal Services.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is:
- To provide Regional Council with the 2008 Annual Report of the York Small Business Enterprise Centre.
- To present the Marketing Plan for 2009.

3. BACKGROUND

The York Small Business Enterprise Centre provides assistance in the creation of new enterprises and the development of early growth stage businesses

The York Small Business Enterprise Centre in Newmarket serves entrepreneurs and small businesses in the Northern Six Municipalities and complements the services provided by the other three Small Business Enterprise Centres in Markham, Richmond Hill and Vaughan which are operated independently by the respective municipalities.

More than 2,000 new small businesses are started each year

York Region’s Small Businesses account for approximately 85% of businesses in York Region and are significant contributors to the Region’s economy with a major impact on jobs, investment, trade, innovation and prosperity. More than 2,000 new Small Businesses are started each year, as Regional entrepreneurs respond to market opportunities. The challenging economic climate has created an increase in resident’s interest in self employment opportunities.

In March 2002, Regional Council approved the establishment of the Centre at the Regional Administration Centre

Regional staff were authorized to submit an application to the Ontario Ministry of Small Business and Consumer Services for funding support to operate the Centre. A Letter of Agreement was signed between the Province and the Region in February 2003, and a Small Business Consultant was retained on contract in June 2003 to start up and manage the operation of the Centre.

Staff for 2009 consists of a Small Business Consultant and a Permanent Part Time Administrative Clerk.
4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

2008 Annual Report

Economic Impact

The goal of the York Small Business Enterprise Centre is to advance business creation, innovation, and growth to support the economy.

The economic impact of the three goals is monitored at Small Business Enterprise Centres in Ontario by using four numerical criteria of businesses registered, new business start-ups, business expansions, and jobs created.

Table 1 provides the economic impact obtained by the York Small Business Centre from 2007 and 2008 and the growth variance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Actual 2007</th>
<th>Actual 2008</th>
<th>% Variance 2007 vs 2008</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Businesses registered</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>+8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New business start-ups</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>197</td>
<td>+49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business expansions</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>+29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jobs created</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>+11%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Collaboration with the Northern Six Municipalities has intensified

The Northern Six Municipalities that the York Small Business Enterprise Centre serves (Aurora, East Gwillimbury, Georgina, King, Newmarket, and Whitchuch-Stouffville) actively market and collaborate with the Centre.

- All six municipalities hosted and marketed the Centre’s workshops at their municipal offices or local chamber of commerce.
- The small business information displays were fully integrated at the six municipalities and are restocked regularly with York Small Business Enterprise Centre announcements.
- On-call small business consulting was held in Georgina in 2008 to more effectively serve remote business start-ups.
The volunteer Advisory Group supports and promotes the York Small Business Enterprise Centre

The York Small Business Centre Advisory Group remains an integral part of the program, with members from business and government participating actively in quarterly meetings, seminars, workshops, and youth programs. The 11 members volunteer their time as mentors to the two provincial Youth Programs: Summer Company and Business Plan Challenge.

Advice for entrepreneurs in the early stages of business start-up and growth increased by 39% and total client contact increased by 46% as more individuals seek self employment

Service level output is measured by outreach to entrepreneurs and youth in all the Northern Six municipalities. Business start-ups participate in general information enquiries, client consultations, and youth programs. Business growth through networking and learning opportunities is provided through the seminars, workshops, webinars, and conferences. The actual 2007 and 2008 participation levels are provided in Table 2.

Reflecting the challenging economic conditions and the outreach initiatives, total client contact increased by +46% in 2008 versus 2007 as more individuals seek self employment. Part of this growth is attributable to the move of the Centre in May 2008 to a more accessible location on the 1st Floor of the Administration building.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Actual 2007</th>
<th>Actual 2008</th>
<th>% Variance 2007 vs 2008</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Information Enquiries</td>
<td>8,385</td>
<td>12,150</td>
<td>+45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Client Start-up Consultations</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>333</td>
<td>+39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workshop Participation</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>+50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seminar Participation</td>
<td>170</td>
<td>258</td>
<td>+52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online Webinar Registration</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bridges to Better Business Conference Registration</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>+95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enterprising Women’s Conference Participants</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer Company Applications</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>+72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approved Summer Company Participants</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>+43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Plan Challenge Participants</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>+50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total outreach</strong></td>
<td><strong>9,077</strong></td>
<td><strong>13,208</strong></td>
<td><strong>+46%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
New businesses start-up advice is provided to all Northern Six municipalities, an example from each municipality is provided

New and existing businesses are appreciative of the advice provided by the Centre, some examples of the services provided to new businesses that have started their operations in the Region are:

- **Aurora**: a retail furniture store received four consultations in the fall to secure finance, insurance information, and develop a business plan resulting in a grand opening in November.
- **East Gwillimbury**: attributed to guidance with business and marketing plans, a fine dining restaurant was opened in Mount Albert in January 2009.
- **Georgina**: requiring advice to purchase a dental placement agency, multiple consultations resulted in the business being purchased and expanded into a teaching facility for dental hygienists.
- **Newmarket**: a pizza franchise is scheduled to open in 2009 based on research advice for licensing, accounting referral and partnership agreement discussion.
- **King**: an art gallery owner has obtained a clearer focus on her business which has impacted her visibility in the community.
- **Whitchurch-Stouffville**: an indoor hockey training facility opened in January 2009 from discussions in October about developing the business and renting industrial space.

Seminar, Workshop and Conference participation increased by 61% in 2008

In 2008 there were six seminars, nine workshops, two webinars, and one conference. These events attracted 543 participants. Participation in the workshops, seminars, and conferences organized in 2008 compared to 2007 increased by 61%.

The seminars run for one and a half hours and the workshops for three hours. The workshops are restricted to a maximum of 22 participants to ensure interaction of the businesses.

Seminar topics are developed based on small business needs and surveys

Seminar topics included cold calling, instant power communications, selling on the internet, mastering time management, and strategic planning for 2009. Workshops required participant involvement for practical stages of business development including starting a small business, bookkeeping and taxes, marketing and sales, and building a business plan.
The province provided an additional $16,000 in 2008 for rural outreach resulting in two initiatives being developed: a five-part webinar series and a direct mail campaign

Two webinars have been completed in 2008 and have attracted 210 participants. The pilot is scheduled for completion with the fifth webinar in March 2009. Topics include:

- Super Strategies for Super Growth
- The Best Buyer Concept
- The 7 Musts of Marketing
- Detailing and Perfecting your Sales Process
- How to Keep Clients Forever and Dramatically Increase your Profits.

The webinar series was the first presented by an Ontario small business centre. The province presented the series as a successful case study at their regional conference in December 2008.

For the direct mail campaign, the re-designed York Small Business Enterprise Centre brochure was mailed to 2,000 rural businesses and households.

**Enterprising Women’s Conference in March 2008 partnered with the York Small Business Enterprise Centre**

For the fifth consecutive year, the Centre was a sponsor and co-organizer with the Women’s Centre of York Region’s Enterprising Women’s Conference. The conference was held in March 2008 to coincide with International Women’s Day to celebrate and recognize how much women have achieved. Other sponsors were Meridian Credit Union and the York Region Media Group. The focus of the Enterprising Women Conference is to help women entrepreneurs learn more practical skills around business development and connect with other women in business.

**Bridges to Better Business Conference held annually, had an increased participation of 50% in 2008**

Entrepreneurs, Innovation & the Green Economy was the theme of the 2008 Bridges to Better Business Conference held on January 21, 2009 at the Cardinal Golf Club. Over 150 participants registered for the event, a 50% increase over 2007. York Region’s first issue of the “Guide to Greening Your Business” was launched at the conference. The morning speaker sessions were complimented by five afternoon breakout sessions on topics of interest to entrepreneurs.
York Small Business Television Show (YSBTV), Series Two was aired

The second-13 episode series of 30 minute duration of York Small Business Television (YSBTV) was aired in 2008. All operating costs for YSBTV were fully covered through sponsorships.

Youth Program: Summer Company

Summer Company Program is a youth initiatives launched by the Government of Ontario, and is delivered through the Small Business Enterprise Centres across the province. The program offers students up to $3,000 upon successful completion of their Summer Company business. The successful applicants receive two months of hands-on business training and mentoring to help with the start-up and running of their businesses.

Ten businesses were developed over the summer from the 31 applications received for the Summer Company Program

From the 31 applications received, the following ten summer businesses were approved to participate in the Summer Company program:
- Aurora (3): a women’s magazine publication, a lawn care company, and a sporting goods manufacturer
- King: a lawn care company
- Newmarket (5): a personal trainer, a handy man contractor, an artist, a graphic artist, and a summer piano instructor
- Bradford West Gwillimbury: a structural stone and landscaping company with a strong client base in East Gwillimbury and Newmarket.

Youth Program: Business Plan Challenge

Business Plan Challenge was launched by MSBE in 2002 to celebrate the creativity and entrepreneurial spirit of Ontario’s high school students. Students from across the province submit business plans and compete for up to $5,000 in cash awards. The program attracted 60 submissions with three business plans achieving submission to the Provincial finals.

A Pickering College Student won first place in the Region from the York Small Business Enterprise Centre

The Provincial Awards Banquet was held in Markham in November 2008. Barry Mason, a resident of Newmarket and, in 2008, a Grade 12 student at Pickering College, Newmarket, was the first place winner of the regional business plan challenge and the first runner up for the Province. His business, BED Property Services, outlined a plan to provide cottage owner exterior cleaning and maintenance services.
Funding for the Centre in 2008 was $22,773 higher than budgeted

In addition to the budgeted base funding of $67,000 from the Ministry of Small Business and Consumer Services, the Centre secured additional operating capital (subsidies and client fees and charges) of $57,727 bringing the net levy to the Region down from $38,000 to $15,227.

2009 Marketing Plan

Economic Impact

The service targets for 2008 were surpassed by the York Small Business Enterprise Centre and the projected 2009 target increase is 10%.

Economic impact at Small Business Enterprise Centres in Ontario utilizes four numerical criteria of businesses registered, new business start-ups, business expansions, and jobs created. Table 3 indicates the counts obtained by the York Small Business Centre from 2008, the projected 2009 increase, and the percentage variance.

Table 3
York Small Business Enterprise Centre Performance Indicators: Projected 2009

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Actual 2008</th>
<th>Projected 2009</th>
<th>Projected Service Level Increase %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Businesses registered</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>+7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New business start-ups</td>
<td>197</td>
<td>262</td>
<td>+33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business expansions</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>+22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jobs created</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>+10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Collaboration with the Northern Six Municipalities will continue in 2009

To enhance participation in the communities the Centre serves, the Northern Six Municipalities and/or their Chambers of Commerce will continue to collaborate to promote and host the eight 2009 Workshops as in 2008.

The Advisory Group will remain at 11 volunteer members in 2009

Terms of reference for the York Small Business Enterprise Centre advisory group were developed in 2008 for 2009. We expect to retain the current advisory group members for 2009.
Client consultations are expected to grow in 2009 due in part to the economy, a pre-screening consultation plan has been implemented

A consultation procedure plan was developed for implementation in 2009 to address the increasing requirement for small business start-up consultations. The process is:

- Pre-start-ups or early stage idea clients must attend a free three-hour session, scheduled weekly. This will reduce informational client requirements significantly.
- Start-up businesses must prepare for the consultation by providing a mini-plan “Developing your Business Concept”.
- Existing businesses must provide a list of questions prior to the consultation.

The Small Business Assistant will become more involved in pre-screening the clients by providing an information form to complete with the prospective entrepreneur’s concept, target market, revenue model, and value proposition.

These measures will pre-qualify the clients and save time for the Small Business Consultant.

2009 Seminar, Workshop, and Webinar Schedule

The 2009 schedule includes 7 seminars, 8 workshops, and 3 webinars with the topics based on the needs of entrepreneurs

In 2009, the Centre will host a series of seven small business seminars and eight workshops. The eight workshops will continue to be offered in partnership with the Northern Six Municipalities. The three-hour workshops will offer hands-on training to small groups of 15 to 25 attendees on topics that are critical to the success of small business ventures. The one and half hour seminars attract 60 to 75 attendees and focus on general business topics and provide networking opportunities.

The selection of topics was developed based on input received from a survey of the Small Business Enterprise Centre’s 2,200 clients and focus on the Small Business Centre’s goal to advance business creation, innovation and growth. The topics include starting a small business, expanding your business, mastering time management, building and developing a marketing and business plan, financial management, sales and marketing including cold calling techniques, and strategic planning for 2010.

Sales and marketing rural outreach webinar pilot series, funded by the province, will be finalized by March 31, 2009

The Sales and Marketing webinar series will be completed on March 10, 2009. The remaining three of five topics to be presented in 2009 are:

- The 7 Musts of Marketing
- Detailing and Perfecting your Sales Process
• How to Keep Clients Forever and Dramatically Increase your Profits.

**E-Business Event Series funded with $6,000 from the province will be hosted at all Northern Six Municipalities in February/March 2009**

To supplement the workshops and seminars, the Ministry of Small Business and Consumer Services accepted a proposal for an E-Business series and will provide $6,000.

The series will be held from February 25 to March 26, 2009. The Northern Six municipalities will each host one Introduction to E-business for Small and Medium Sized Enterprises seminar at their location. The introductory seminars are supplemented by two online webinars on advanced E-business topics (Getting Started Online and E-Business Marketing) for entrepreneurs from all Northern Six municipalities.

**Enterprising Women’s Conference in September 2009 will partner with York Small Business Enterprise Centre**

The Women’s Centre of York Region has partnered with the York Small Business Enterprise Centre for five years. In the fall of 2009 the Women’s Centre will re-launch the Enterprising Women program. The 6th Annual Enterprising Women’s Conference will be held in September 2009 to kick off the new program, which will focus on helping women develop business plans or workplace development skills.

**Bridges to Better Business Conference planned for January 2010 will focus on sales and marketing**

The Bridges to Better Business Conference is scheduled for January 2010, within the Ministry of Small Business and Consumer Services Fiscal Year. The planned conference theme is Sales and Marketing based on a client survey conducted in 2008 that indicated that 47% of the Centre’s clients are interested in this topic.

**Youth Program: Summer Company begins in February and ends in August and will be mentored by the volunteer Advisory Group**

The York Small Business Enterprise Centre expects that the response to Summer Company will result in 10 approved applications. Program questions and submissions are incoming from the Region’s local high school students. Members of the Centre’s Advisory Group will continue to be involved as volunteer mentors for the program.

**Youth Program: Business Plan Challenge will end in November and will be mentored by the volunteer Advisory Group**

The Ontario Secondary School Business Plan Competition is open to all high school students in Ontario and is a great opportunity for high school students to show their creativity and entrepreneurial spirit. The Centre will commence marketing and promotion for the 2009
Business Plan Challenge in March 2009. The Region’s secondary schools will be invited to participate in the 2009 challenge. The deadline for submissions is June 2009 with the provincial competition scheduled for fall 2009.

Lessons Learned

The York Region Small Business Enterprise Centre will continue to experience high growth in 2009 with the current economic conditions encouraging new business start-ups, the move to the 1st Floor of the Administration building, and the implementation of new projects, and enhanced workshops, seminars and conferences.

With the increase of clients by 46% in 2008 versus 2007, the Centre has developed project plans to address the growth of client consultation requests.

- The Small Business Assistant will become more involved in pre-screening the clients by providing an information form to complete with the prospective entrepreneur’s concept, target market, revenue model, and value proposition.
- The Small Business Consultant will meet with groups of start-up entrepreneurs once weekly.
- Youth Programs, conferences, and new initiatives that arise throughout the year have been scheduled into the workload and will be managed well in advance.

Collaboration with the Northern Six municipal economic development offices to host workshops and display small business information has enhanced media coverage and added visibility for the York Region Small Business Enterprise Centre and will continue in 2009.

Relationship to Vision 2026

The York Small Business Enterprise Centre facilitates the growth of entrepreneurship and small business in York Region and supports the Vibrant Economy goal of Vision 2026.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Funding Sources</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ontario Ministry of Small Business and Consumer Services</td>
<td>$ 74,900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>York Region</td>
<td>$ 68,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$ 142,900</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

York Region’s share of the operating cost for the Centre has been included in the proposed Economic Development Budget for 2009. The total net cost to the Region is proposed at $68,000.
6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

The York Small Business Enterprise Centre serves entrepreneurs and small businesses in the Northern Six Municipalities of Aurora, East Gwillimbury, Georgina, King, Newmarket and Whitchurch-Stouffville. Partnerships have been established with the centres in Richmond Hill and Vaughan to deliver programs such as Summer Company and Business Plan Challenge. These partnerships have increased the exposure of the three small Business Enterprise Centres and have improved the efficiency and effectiveness of services being delivered to small businesses in the Region as a whole.

7. CONCLUSION

The York Small Business Enterprise Centre is a member of a network of 46 Small Business Enterprise Centres across Ontario, created as a partnership between the Region and the Provincial Government (Ministry of Small Business and Consumer Services). The increasing number of clients served by the Centre in the Northern Six Municipalities is testimony to the entrepreneurial spirit in the Region.

It is recommended that Council continue to offer its support to the York Small Business Enterprise Centre program, and that the Regional Chair and Regional Clerk be authorized to execute the necessary funding agreements with the Province and other sponsors.

For more information on this report, please contact Sharon Végh, Program Manager, Economic Strategy at (905) 830 4444, Ext. 1509 or Patrick Draper, Director, Economic Strategy & Tourism Ext. 1503.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.

12

FIVE YEAR MAINTENANCE AGREEMENT FOR PROPERTY AND OWNERSHIP INFORMATION 2010 - 2015

The Planning and Economic Development Committee recommends the adoption of the recommendations contained in the following report dated March 3, 2009, from the Commissioner of Planning and Development Services.
1. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

   It is recommended that:
   
   1. Regional Council authorize the renewal of product maintenance agreements between the Region and Teranet Enterprises Inc. for provision of updated property and ownership information.
   
   2. The term of the contract be for a period of five (5) years, for a cost not to exceed $100,500 per year inclusive of PST and GST and a total contract value of $502,500.
   
   3. The Regional Chair and Regional Clerk be authorized to execute the renewal of the product maintenance agreements, subject to the approval of Legal Services as to form and content.

2. **PURPOSE**

   This report seeks Council authorization to renew the maintenance agreements for a 5 year term with Teranet Enterprises Inc. to provide up-to-date information on properties and ownership to a maximum annual cost of $100,500 for a term of five years. The purchasing by-law (Clause 18.1d) requires that Council authorize this expenditure because it is for a period longer than three years and will be a sole source purchase above $500,000.

3. **BACKGROUND**

   **Property and ownership information a valuable resource for Regional operations for infrastructure improvement projects**

   As approved by Council (February 10, 2004, Report No. 3 of the Planning and Economic Development Committee – Property Ownership Transfer and Easement Reports) since 2004, the Region has acquired monthly updates for property and ownership information from Teranet Enterprises Inc., which includes transfer, right-of-way/easement and owner databases to meet Regional needs. The existing five year maintenance agreements with Teranet Enterprises Inc. expire in 2009.

   More than 5,000 new parcels are added in York Region every year, and there are ongoing real estate transactions, all having associated property and ownership information. This includes owner’s name, transfer of ownership and right-of-ways/easements. This information is essential to a number of Regional operations.

   Property transfer, right-of-way/easement and owner databases include the Polaris Identification Number (PIN) as a unique reference, which links to the both assessment and ownership parcels for spatial analysis.
All of this information is linked with the Region’s parcel fabric. The property boundary data is used for change detection and quality control in editing the York Region parcel fabric. This verifies and improves the accuracy of the parcel boundary information.

The parcel and ownership information is made available to the corporation through the spatial data warehouse for use with other Regional information such as roads and orthophotography. Specific applications provide this information to users in the context of Regional operations such as, AtlasPlus and property viewing and notification tools.

Property and ownership information is required to support growth-related activity, particularly for infrastructure improvements, utility approvals and VIVA project planning and construction. It is also used by the Realty Services Branch in support of property acquisition, right-of-way/easement and land access negotiations for road-widening projects, sewer and watermain installations, and general public works.

**Teranet Enterprises Inc. only authorized provider of property and ownership information**

Property and ownership information is only available through Teranet Enterprises Inc., the agent of the Ontario Government for land registry and associated data and documents since 1991 and whose current exclusive contract will expire in 2017. Through standard five year maintenance agreements York Region has received bulk delivery of owner information for all properties, followed by monthly updates, so that the Region’s ownership information would be current within two months of the transactions, reported to the land registry office. Teranet Enterprises Inc. usually delivers right-of-way/easement information as a one-time delivery, but in recognition of the high level of growth in York Region that results in many new right-of-ways/easements, they agreed to supply annual updates reflecting any changes.

4. **ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS**

**Access to up-to-date bulk property and ownership information reduces staff time in generating owner lists and right-of-way/easement searches**

Mailing labels to property owners can be produced quickly and accurately based on ownership information. Such mailing labels are used extensively for environmental assessments, public hearings and infrastructure projects, including rapid transit projects. Prior to acquiring this information from Teranet Enterprises Inc. in 2004 and linking it with the Region’s parcel fabric, the Region’s staff and consultants spent significant time, resources and duplication of effort gathering owner/occupant information on a project by project basis.
Acquiring current bulk property and ownership information and linking these with the land parcel substantially reduces staff effort and consultant costs associated with notifying property owners of environmental assessments and public hearings related to infrastructure projects. With the rapid transit program advancing toward initial construction, and many parcels have to be checked for right-of-ways/easements, continuation of the delivery of the right-of-way/easement records represents support of the program to maintain efficiency and currency. For example, there are currently approximately 4,000 parcels on the Yonge and Hwy 7 corridors being considered by the VIVA project, which must be analyzed and reported on through use of the parcel fabric and linked property and ownership information.

Transfer and right-of-way/easement information continue to be available to all regional business processes and to local municipalities and their business processes. The data will continue to be used to generate products to support infrastructure and VIVA projects.

**Financial benefits generates efficiency and reduced staff time, consultant costs over pay per use option**

Ownership data can be acquired in bulk from Teranet Enterprises Inc, and linked with parcels and accessed by all in the corporation. This report advocates renewing the maintenance agreement with Teranet Enterprises Inc., to acquire property and owner information over a five year period based on a set annual fee. The annual cost of the agreement will be no more than $101,500.

Property and ownership data linked with parcels significantly reduce pay-per-use costs on Teranet’s Teraview application. The Realty Services Branch subscribes to this Internet viewer that allows for examination of ownership and right-of-ways/easements one record at a time. The pay per use on a parcel-by-parcel basis at $18 per parcel, plus connection charges to the Teraview database, quickly becomes costly for most projects. The alternative approach through the Region’s applications and spatial data warehouse as a primary viewing tool is more efficient and cost effective. Teraview may still be used for individual property analysis because it links to the legal documents in the land registry office.

The financial and accuracy benefits relating to this information acquisition would mean more efficient data processing, reduced staff time and consultant costs around compiling ownership lists for notification of environmental assessments and public hearings, and lower costs incurred through the Teraview service as well as reduced visits to the land registry office by Realty Services Branch staff. Also, the property and ownership information is more accurate/current than using Municipal Property Assessment Corporation assessment data for property notification.
Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA) and privacy laws restrict access

Provincial restrictions and Teranet Enterprises Inc. licence agreements ensures that owner data is not made available to the private sector. Owner names are not to be released to the public in respect of information privacy laws.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The cost for the delivery of the property and ownership information from Teranet Enterprises Inc. will not exceed $100,500 per year inclusive of PST and GST. The funds required for the five year maintenance agreement are budgeted in the annual Operating Budgets for Geomatics and no additional annual amount is required related to this item.

6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

The Geomatics Branch has been working with the YorkInfo Partners to discuss the opportunities to share the Teranet Enterprises Inc. products to reduce costs to the taxpayer, avoid duplication and also provide a common database to assist with infrastructure projects. The maintenance agreement, as with the previous agreement, allows for the Region to share this information with its YorkInfo Partners, at no additional or royalty costs.

7. CONCLUSION

The property and ownership information from Teranet Enterprises Inc. represent a good information investment for property owner notifications and for right-of-way/easement research for large projects such as the VIVA projects. This report recommends renewing on a five-year term with Teranet Enterprises Inc. to acquire property and ownership information at an annual cost not to exceed $100,500.

For more information on this report, please contact Susan Chin Snelgrove, Manager, Information Management at (905) 830-4444 Ext. 1564 or Nancy Prout, Director, Geomatics at Ext. 1529.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.
13
UPDATE - COMMITTEE PROCEEDINGS

The Planning and Economic Development Committee advises Council of the following matters having been considered by the Planning and Economic Development Committee with the following action:

PRESENTATION

1. Economic Indicators Update – April 8, 2009

Patrick Draper, Director, Economic Strategy and Tourism, made a presentation highlighting the economic indicators for York Region. Received.

COMMUNICATIONS

2. Memorandum from Bryan Tuckey, Commissioner of Planning and Development Services, April 8, 2009, regarding ‘Economic Profile 2009’. (Attachment 1 to the Memorandum was enclosed with the April 8, 2009 agenda.) Received.

3. A. Moore, Town Clerk, Town of Newmarket, February 24, 2009, regarding the Bradford By-Pass. Received.


The Planning and Economic Development Committee adjourned at 2:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

April 8, 2009                          T. Wong
Newmarket, Ontario                   Chair

(Report No. 4 of the Planning and Economic Development Committee was adopted without amendment, by the Council of The Regional Municipality of York at its meeting on April 23, 2009.)

Karin Price
(905) 830-4444 x 1322