

**A FRAMEWORK
FOR SUSTAINABLE
GROWTH**



2.0 A FRAMEWORK FOR SUSTAINABLE GROWTH

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2.0 A FRAMEWORK FOR SUSTAINABLE GROWTH

The land use framework set out in this Official Plan is informed by, and aligns with, the principles of sustainable community development. It is consistent with, and reflects, the common goals, policies and targets set out in Markham's endorsed Growth Alternative to 2031, Markham's Greenprint Community Sustainability Plan, York Region's Official Plan and the Provincial Growth Plan. It is based on a shared understanding that the essence of sustainability is balance. This Plan will guide decisions on a wide range of issues including land use planning, transportation and infrastructure, and urban form and sustainable development in the interest of safeguarding and enhancing environmental systems, building healthy neighbourhoods and *complete communities*, and maintaining a strong and diverse economy.

Section 2.0 subject to Area/Site Specific Appeal No. 24 (Issue 284)

2.1 MANAGING SUSTAINABLE GROWTH – THE VISION TO 2031

Growth presents challenges. Unchecked and poorly managed it can lead to, among other things, urban sprawl, loss of green space, traffic gridlock and increased costs associated with physical and social infrastructure. For over two decades, Markham has recognized that the continued expansion of the urban area for low-density, suburban-style residential development is not sustainable over time. Not only is there limited land available to accommodate all of the projected population growth, but continued unfettered expansion of the urban area without appropriate controls on the pattern of development would result in significant increases in traffic congestion, travel-to-work time, infrastructure costs, and environmental impacts.

Growth also provides opportunities. If it is well managed, and the resulting development is well designed, it can enhance the quality of life for those who come to live, work, play and learn in Markham. The concept of an urban structure directing growth to well-planned, concentrated *built-up areas* and compact development within the urban area has been the key growth management approach in Markham for over 20 years. In managing growth to 2031, Markham will continue to direct the majority of growth to centres and corridors in the urban area with an emphasis on the creation of compact and efficient communities, well served by public transit and with a balance of residential and employment opportunities.

Markham's vision for managing sustainable growth to 2031 was established through extensive consultation with Markham residents, businesses and workers on corporate strategic priorities, community sustainability priorities and growth management priorities. It reflects a community vision that is based on a planning philosophy of building more compact *complete communities* that address the environmental, economic and social needs of the community.

In managing sustainable growth to 2031, Markham will be a strong, vibrant and productive City with its residents, businesses and workers leading the way together to liveable neighbourhoods, healthy people and continuing prosperity. This vision is based on 4 key themes: Protecting the Natural Environment, Building Complete Communities, Increasing Mobility

Section 2.1 subject to Area/Site Specific Appeal No. 22 (Issues 280 a) and m))

In managing sustainable growth to 2031, Markham will be a strong, vibrant and productive City with its residents, businesses and workers leading the way together to liveable neighbourhoods, healthy people and continuing prosperity.

Section 2.1 subject to Area/Site Specific Appeal No. 22 (Issues 280 a) and m))

Options, and Maintaining a Vibrant and Competitive Economy.

Protecting the Natural Environment and Agricultural Lands

Markham will continue to be a leader in natural heritage preservation, protection and enhancement. The vision for accommodating growth outlined in this Plan places the highest priority on maximizing protection of natural heritage and agricultural lands, and directing as much growth as feasible to the existing urban area through *intensification*. By placing a priority on protecting natural heritage and agricultural lands within the Greenway System, Markham will protect approximately 33 percent of the City's land area, encompassing waterways, woodlands and wetlands, and a linked and connected system of natural heritage and hydrologic features, will remain untouched by future urban development.

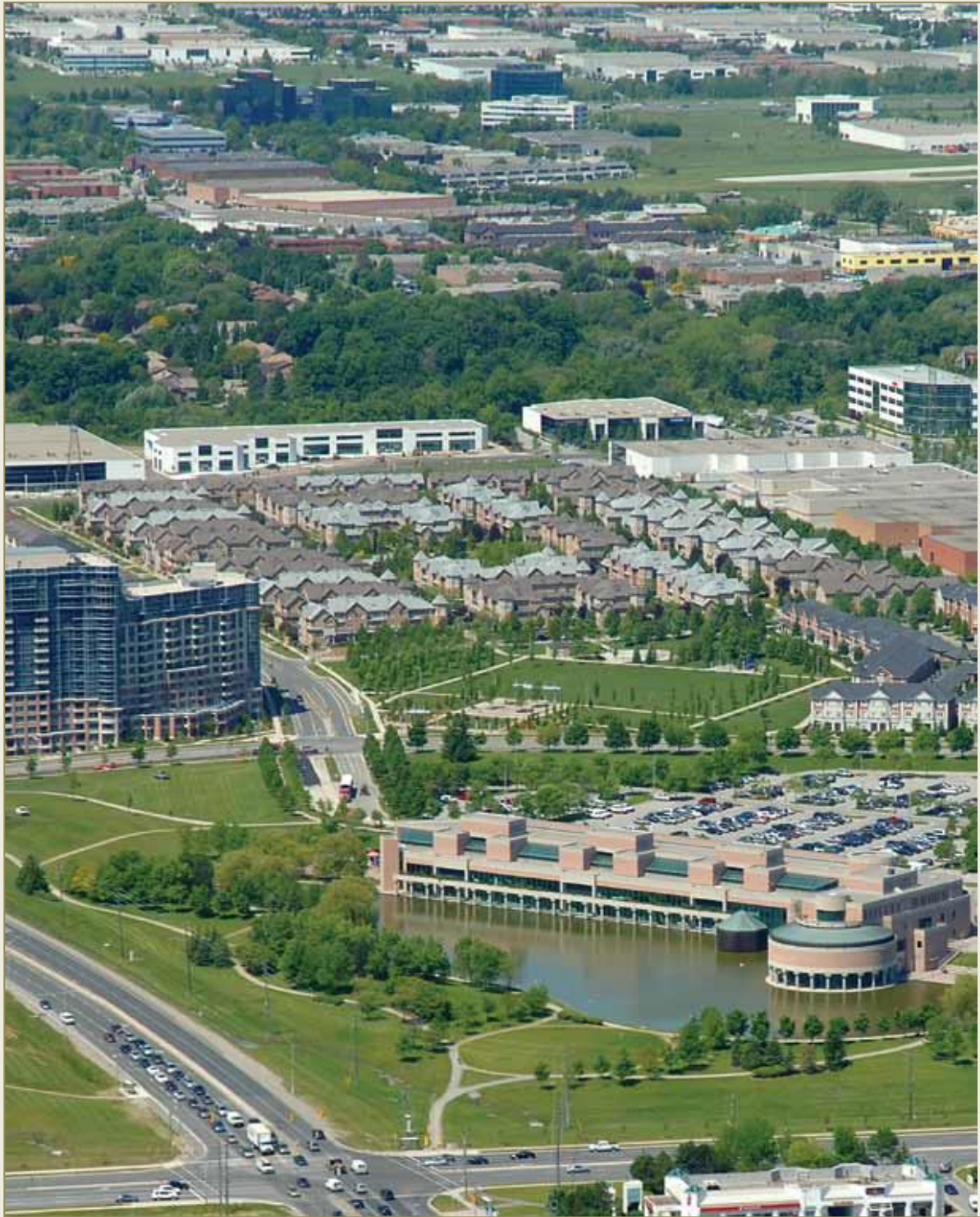
This Official Plan defines and protects the Greenway System through leading edge preservation policies for natural heritage and hydrologic features and their functions. Markham's landforms and watercourses provide key *ecological functions* and linkages within a broader ecosystem encompassing the Oak Ridges Moraine, the Niagara Escarpment and the surrounding watershed systems. In particular, the tributaries of the Rouge watershed and the Little Rouge River in Markham serve as vital ecological corridors linking environmental systems from Lake Ontario to the Oak Ridges Moraine. A Greenway System of linked natural heritage and hydrologic features, identified through a comprehensive Environmental Policy Review, establishes limits and priorities for protection of Markham's significant environmental features.

The agricultural functions within Markham are also important to the sustainability of Markham. Markham has a rich history as a settled agricultural community and contains some of the most productive agricultural lands in southern Ontario. Lands outside the urban settlement boundary reflect a rural landscape typical of urban edge conditions including a variety of agricultural operations such as growing fruits and vegetables, cash crops, nurseries, sod farms and hobby farms, and other non-agricultural uses. These countryside areas complement the natural heritage areas by providing additional environmental benefits and at the same time, have the potential to support a viable and sustainable agricultural presence.

Building Complete Communities

Markham will work hard with its stakeholders to create *complete communities* with compact urban development, accommodating a mix and range of housing and jobs based on walking, cycling and convenient access to public transportation, while preserving and enhancing the natural environment and cultural heritage.

By placing a priority on protecting natural heritage and agricultural lands within the Greenway System, Markham will ensure that approximately 33 percent of the City's land area, will remain untouched by future urban development.



Markham is forecast to grow to 420,000 residents and 240,000 Jobs by 2031.



Markham's vision for managing sustainable growth to 2031 is based on a philosophy of building more compact, complete communities that address the environmental, economic and social needs of the community.

Within the urban area, the goal is to create communities in which all of the needs of Markham's residents, including housing, employment, recreation, shopping, health care, education and personal service, are met. Markham is committed to the delivery of services that responds to the community at large and the City is engaged in community infrastructure planning that responds to its diverse population. While Markham's live/work ratio is one of the highest in the Greater Toronto Area, striving for an even higher ratio of people who both live and work in Markham will help address traffic congestion, support rapid transit and compact urban development, strengthen its diverse economic base, and improve the quality of life for Markham residents.

To encourage housing and employment opportunities in close proximity, Markham will need to, among other things, diversify the forms of available housing and tenure; increase the supply of employment lands to accommodate a range of job opportunities; and facilitate *intensification* and redevelopment with mixed-use, higher-density developments in the centres and corridors located along the rapid transit network. A clear benefit of directing mixed-use, higher-density growth to prioritized *intensification areas* and *redevelopment areas* served by rapid transit is the protection of established residential neighbourhoods, unique heritage districts and diverse employment areas within the existing urban area.

Markham's ability to achieve *intensification* and *redevelopment* with mixed-use development is premised on high-quality urban design and sustainable development practices. To gain community acceptance of *intensification* and *redevelopment* with mixed-use development, local community values will be respected and effective community design and sustainable development principles will be applied. The vision for these areas is to have attractive buildings housing a variety of compatible activities aligned along compact, interesting, tree-lined, pedestrian-friendly streets arranged in a grid-like pattern with parks, squares and open spaces at key locations.

Many of Markham's existing neighbourhoods have been established at lower densities with ground-oriented building forms on a non-traditional street grid. While there may be opportunities to improve the connectivity of the existing neighbourhoods, and enhance the pedestrian access to services through small-scale infill, the character and pattern of these established neighbourhoods will be maintained.

Markham's *urban growth centres*: Markham Centre and the Langstaff Gateway will be the focus for a significant amount of intensification characterized by vibrant and compact development emphasizing a diversity of choices for living, working and enjoying culture. Cornell and other new communities will be characterized by compact, walkable residential neighbourhoods with mixed-use and employment areas along main streets and rapid transit corridors, interconnected with a parks and open space system. The historic villages of Thornhill, Markham Village, Unionville and Buttonville are designated as *heritage conservation districts* and, along with Markham's other *cultural heritage resources* and *archaeological resources*, will continue to be protected and conserved to strengthen the connections of Markham's residents, businesses and workers to their community.

**Section 2.1 subject to
Area/Site Specific
Appeal No. 22 (Issues
280 a) and m))**

A clear benefit of directing mixed-use, higher-density growth to prioritized intensification areas and redevelopment areas served by rapid transit is the protection of established residential neighbourhoods, unique heritage districts and diverse employment areas.

Increasing Mobility Options

Managing the interface between land use and transportation planning will be a priority for Markham. One of the key components of *complete communities* is the availability of travel options for residents, businesses and workers. By investing in transit as a priority, pursuing transit-supportive development and implementing transportation demand management strategies, Markham will promote a more balanced choice of mobility options for all users, including pedestrians, cyclists and transit riders.

Most of Markham's new growth will be directed to prioritized *intensification areas* and *redevelopment areas* with mixed-use, higher-density development served by rapid transit. Transit-supportive land use planning will emphasize walkable streets and integrate more pedestrian and transit-oriented land uses with improved pedestrian, cycling and transit access. The future urban area will also be developed as compact, *complete communities* designed to be served by transit and accessible by pedestrians and cyclists.

Markham recognizes that great streets make great communities and will work in collaboration with York Region to plan and design streets to better balance the needs of all users, and make people, rather than vehicles the focus of street activity.

Maintaining a Vibrant and Competitive Economy

The vision for compact, *complete communities* also relies on a vibrant, competitive economy that meets the financial needs of residents and the municipality. Markham will retain and build on its success as a major employment centre within the GTA and York Region, and continue to offer attractive accommodation to businesses of all types, including industrial, warehousing, office and service employment uses.

Markham will protect its employment areas from conversion to non-employment uses and the introduction of incompatible uses, consistent with Provincial and Regional policy, in order to ensure their long-term viability. Major office employment will be encouraged within Regional Centres and *key development areas* served by rapid transit; this will help to focus the development of prestige, light industrial uses, on the remaining lands in established and developing business parks.

Retail and service sectors are important components of a *complete community* and a strong economy. By providing for new retail and service opportunities, including large scale retail development, in a mixed-use context, Markham will make these economic sectors more sustainable, transit-supportive and pedestrian-friendly over time.

2.2 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The following goals and objectives are derived from the vision for growth identified in Section 2.1 and form the basis of the policies outlined in the Plan as well as the information shown on Maps.

It is the policy of Council that all Official Plan policies and future

Section 2.1 subject to Area/Site Specific Appeal No. 22 (Issues 280 a) and m))

By investing in transit as a priority, pursuing transit-supportive development and implementing transportation demand management strategies, Markham will promote a more balanced choice of mobility options for all users, including pedestrians, cyclists and transit riders.

Markham will retain and build on its success as a major employment centre within the GTA and York Region, and continue to offer attractive accommodation to businesses of all types including industrial, warehousing, office and service employment uses.

amendments shall be consistent with the following goals and strategic objectives:

2.2.1 Goal: Protecting the Natural Environment and Agricultural Lands

To ensure the protection and enhancement of Markham's waterways, woodlands and wetlands, and promote the enhancement of ecological corridors and the protection of agricultural lands.

Strategic Objectives:

2.2.1.1 **To establish** an interconnected Greenway System within Markham, protecting and enhancing existing natural heritage and hydrologic features and supporting *biodiversity*.

2.2.1.2 **To sustain** a local food system by protecting agricultural lands, encouraging urban food production and supporting complementary agri-business activities.

2.2.2 Goal: Building Complete Communities

To develop sustainable, compact and *complete communities* incorporating healthy active living, excellence in community design, efficient infrastructure, housing choices for all, and facilities and services meeting community needs, including a range of travel choices.

Strategic Objectives:

2.2.2.1 **To provide** for an appropriate mix and density of land uses within walking distance of transit, with multi-storey buildings integrating retail and service activities, and community facilities to support the needs of residents, businesses and workers.

2.2.2.2 **To effectively** move people and goods within and beyond Markham by providing residents, employees and businesses with choices and accessibility in travel and movement, with particular attention to the promotion of walking, cycling and increased transit ridership.

2.2.2.3 **To protect** established neighbourhoods, *heritage conservation districts* and employment areas by ensuring that new development is compatible and complementary in terms of use, built form and scale.

2.2.2.4 **To provide** opportunities to increase the proportion of Markham residents who work in Markham in order to reduce traffic congestion, commuting times and other health issues related to poor air quality.

2.2.2.5 **To increase** adaptability in the community through the introduction of green infrastructure (water, waste, energy), innovative technology, resource conservation and other sustainable practices to address long term climate change impacts.

2.2.2.6 **To celebrate** Markham's unique character by protecting *cultural heritage resources* and *archaeological resources*, establishing landmarks and creating attractive and engaging public spaces to foster interaction between people and connections to their community.

2.2.2.7 **To celebrate** cultural diversity and uniqueness through planning for the needs of all members of the community.

Sections 2.2.2, 2.2.2.1 and 2.2.2.4 subject to Area/Site Specific Appeal No. 22 (Issues 280 a) and m))

2.2.3 Goal: Increasing Mobility Options

To increase the level of accessibility and travel options for all residents, while reducing the environmental impacts of transportation.

Strategic Objectives:

- 2.2.3.1 **To support** patterns of growth and land use that will ultimately require less travel for everyday activities and which encourage travel by transit, cycling and walking.
- 2.2.3.2 **To increase** the efficiency of the transportation system by working with the business community to implement transportation demand management initiatives such as flexible work hours, telecommuting, and ridesharing; and by managing the parking supply.

Sections 2.2.3 and 2.2.3.1 subject to Area/Site Specific Appeal No. 22 (Issue 280 b))

2.2.4 Goal: Maintaining a Vibrant and Competitive Economy

To provide for a vibrant, competitive economy to sustain the financial health of residents, businesses and the municipality.

Strategic Objective:

- 2.2.4.1 **To maintain** a prosperous and competitive economy, by:
- accommodating a balanced and diverse range of employment opportunities on existing and future employment lands with access to high quality transit and efficient road systems;
 - protecting employment lands; and
 - providing an efficient and effective multi-modal transportation system.

Sections 2.2.4 subject to Area/Site Specific Appeal No. 22 (Issues 280 e, k))

2.2.5 Goal: Implementation

To ensure that planned growth to 2031 is achieved in an efficient, financially and environmentally responsible manner, with the continued involvement of the citizens of Markham.

Strategic Objectives:

- 2.2.5.1 **To promote** and expand upon Markham's leadership and innovation in planning, urban design, civil engineering, and development standards and compliance, and the integration of planning and development with all aspects of municipal management and operations.
- 2.2.5.2 **To manage** growth and development through monitoring, phasing and the concurrent delivery of public infrastructure and community services.
- 2.2.5.3 **To engage** the community in the continuing process of land use planning in Markham, including the implementation of the Official Plan.

Section 2.3 preamble subject to City-wide Appeal No. 32 (Issue 372) and Section 2.3 Area/Site Specific Appeal No. 1 (Issue 224) and 22 (Issue 280 f))

2.3 MARKHAM STRUCTURE

The York Region Official Plan growth forecast for Markham, together with the 2011 Census, shown in Table 2.3 below, propose almost 150,000 residents and 100,000 new jobs in Markham between 2006 and 2031. This represents over one-quarter of the population growth, and almost one-third of the employment growth within York Region during this period.

POPULATION AND EMPLOYMENT FORECASTS FOR MARKHAM

| | 2006 | 2011 | 2016 | 2021 | 2026 | 2031 |
|------------|---------|--------------------|----------------|---------|----------------|---------|
| Population | 273,000 | 309,300 | <u>337,800</u> | 370,300 | <u>398,300</u> | 421,600 |
| Employment | 144,800 | 159,700 | <u>200,300</u> | 221,500 | <u>231,200</u> | 240,400 |

Table 2.3 - Source: York Region Official Plan, 2010, and related forecasts (YR Mod. 3)

Growth forecasts propose almost 150,000 residents and 100,000 new jobs in Markham between 2006 and 2031.

Markham’s vision for accommodating forecast population and employment growth to 2031 translates into the City structure shown on Map 1 – Markham Structure and further detailed on Map 2 – Centres and Corridors and Transit Network. It represents the intended physical make-up of the City over the long term and provides a comprehensive framework to guide growth. The basic thrust of the structure is to protect environmental areas and features, agricultural lands, heritage areas and existing neighbourhoods, while accommodating at least 60 percent of future residential growth to 2031 through *intensification* within the urban area and the remainder in the ‘Future Urban Area.’

Markham’s Structure will be influenced by:

- a) the protection of natural heritage and countryside areas for environmental and agricultural purposes;
- b) the retention and careful management of established neighbourhoods, employment areas and heritage centres; and
- c) the planning of future neighbourhood and employment areas and mixed-use neighbourhoods with a particular focus on *intensification* of centres and corridors served by rapid transit.

The components of the structure include: an integrated Greenway System, Countryside Area and Hamlets, Employment Areas, Neighbourhood Areas, Mixed-Use Neighbourhood Areas, Centres and Corridors including Heritage Centres, and major Transportation/Utility Corridors including the Transit Network and Mobility Hubs.

It is the policy of Council:

Section 2.3 subject to Area/Site Specific Appeal No. 1 (Issue 224)

2.3.1 **That** the York Region Official Plan population and employment forecasts be used as the basis for the planning of new development to 2031.

2.3.2 **That** the policies of this Plan be based on the structure shown on Map 1 – Markham Structure and further articulated on Map 2 – Centres and Corridors and Transit Network, which include the following components:

- a) Greenway System – comprising natural heritage features (e.g., valleylands, wetlands, woodlots and enhancement areas) to be protected from urban development, including all of the lands within the Oak Ridges Moraine and the Provincial Greenbelt, as well as natural heritage features and hydrologic features outside these Plan areas;
- b) Countryside Area and Hamlets – including identified hamlets, and lands outside of the Greenway System and outside of the urban settlement area to be used primarily for agricultural uses;

Section 2.3.1 subject to City-wide Appeal No. 32 (Issue 372) and Section 2.3.2 a) and b) subject to Area/Site Specific Appeal No. 24 (Issue 72)

- c) Employment Areas – including lands for general employment, business park uses including office development, and supporting services, accommodating the majority of the economic activity within Markham;
- d) Neighbourhood Areas – including residential lands, developed primarily with ground-related housing forms, together with supporting parkland, and lands devoted to institutional, retail and service uses;
- e) Mixed-Use Neighbourhood Areas – centres and *intensification areas* along major transit corridors, intended to be a focus for higher density mixed-use residential development;
- f) Centres and Corridors – including Regional Centres and Regional Corridors/*key development areas*, Local Centres and Local Corridors and Heritage Centres;
- g) A Transit Network – including Provincial GO Rail Service and the Highway 407 Transitway, Regional Rapid Transit Corridors and the Yonge Subway and related Mobility Hubs; and
- h) Transportation/Utility Areas – lands relating primarily to 400-series highways, and major hydro and utility corridors.

Section 2.3 subject to Area/Site Specific Appeal No. 1 (Issue 224) Section 2.3.2 c) to h) subject to Area/Site Specific Appeal No. 22 (Issue 280 f) and Section 2.3.2 d) subject to Area/Site Specific Appeal No. 24 (Issue 285)

2.3.3 **That** expansions to the urban area shown on Map 12 – Urban Area and Built-Up Area shall only be initiated by York Region, in consultation with Markham, as part of a *municipal comprehensive* review in conformity with Policy 2.2.8 of the Provincial Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe and the York Region Official Plan policies.

2.4 INTENSIFICATION STRATEGY

The York Region Official Plan identifies an *intensification* target for Markham of 31,590 residential units, over a period from 2006 to 2031 in order to meet the Provincial Growth Plan density target of a minimum 40 percent of all residential development occurring annually within York Region's *built-up area*.

Markham's endorsed growth alternative to 2031 is more aggressive than the York Region Plan and incorporates an *intensification* strategy that targets 60 percent or greater of all residential development and approximately two-thirds of new jobs added in Markham before 2031 being located within the *built-up area* shown on Map 12 – Urban Area and Built-Up Area. This new residential and employment development will be, for the most part, accommodated in predominantly mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented areas served by higher-order or improved transit services. Small scale residential infill development which is compatible with its surroundings will not be considered an essential component of the *intensification* strategy.

Markham's priority *intensification areas* are delineated on Map 1 – Markham Structure and Map 2 – Centres and Corridors and Transit Network. They include lands within Regional Centres and *key development areas* on Regional Corridors and certain Local Centres and Corridors. *Intensification* along transit corridors optimizes the use of land and infrastructure, resulting in more sustainable, higher-density, mixed-use communities. The result will be a variety of housing choices and employment opportunities close to where people live, at densities that make public transit financially feasible.

Section 2.4 subject to Area/Site Specific Appeal No. 22 (Issue 280 g)

Council endorsed Growth Alternative to 2031 subject to Area/Site Specific Appeal No. 24 (Issue 284)

Intensification of centres and corridors optimizes the use of land and infrastructure, resulting in a variety of housing choices and employment opportunities close to where people live, at densities that make public transit financially feasible.

The *intensification* strategy supports a diversity of housing and employment options by increasing opportunities for an improved live-work relationship in Markham, particularly in Markham Centre and the Langstaff Gateway Regional Centres.

It is the policy of Council:

- 2.4.1 **To work** in cooperation with the Region to ensure that by the year 2015 and each year thereafter, a minimum of 40 percent of all residential development in York Region occur within the *built-up area* of York Region.
- 2.4.2 **To plan** for the location of 60 percent or greater of all residential development in Markham within the *built-up area* of Markham, shown on Map 12 – Urban Area and Built-Up Area, between 2006 and 2031.
- 2.4.3 **To accommodate** residential *intensification* within the *built-up area* without significantly impacting established residential neighbourhoods, *heritage conservation districts* and business parks, and by generally maintaining the function of existing retail areas or sites as they redevelop into mixed-use areas.
- 2.4.4 **To accommodate** employment *intensification* on fully serviced employment lands within the *built-up area*, particularly in Regional Centres and *key development areas*.
- 2.4.5 **To accommodate** the majority of residential *intensification* in Regional Centres and *key development areas* along Regional Corridors, and in Local Centres and Corridors shown as *intensification areas* on Map 1 – Markham Structure, Map 2 – Centres and Corridors and Transit Network and Map 3 – Land Use. Small scale residential infill development which is compatible with its surroundings will not be considered essential to meet the target identified in Section 2.4.2.
- 2.4.6 **To retain** employment uses and employment areas serving Markham residents and businesses, and create new job opportunities through *intensification* of employment areas and mixed-use neighbourhood development in transit nodes and corridors.
- 2.4.7 **That** *intensification* be directed and phased to *intensification areas* identified on Map 1 – Markham Structure, Map 2 – Centres and Corridors and Transit Network and Map 3 – Land Use, and linked to service and infrastructure delivery.
- 2.4.8 **To focus** *intensification* in areas that have a reduced impact on City or Regional infrastructure, or which justify investment in new and sustainable infrastructure.

Section 2.4.3 subject to Area/Site Specific Appeal No. 22 (Issue 280 c))

Section 2.4.5 subject to Area/Site Specific Appeal No. 22 (Issue 280 h))

- 2.4.9 **To ensure** that *intensification* is appropriate to the area context in which occurs, through the preparation of area studies that will determine appropriate built form of development, height and density, the appropriate mix of uses, and the relationship to the surrounding community form and function.

Section 2.4.9 subject to City-wide and Area/Site Specific Appeal No. 21 (Issue 143)

- 2.4.10 **That** infill and *redevelopment* in heritage conservation districts will only be considered in accordance with Official Plan policies and Heritage District Conservation Plans.
- 2.4.11 **That** development in *intensification areas* achieve high-quality urban and

sustainable development practices, and promote innovative solutions and pilot projects, where appropriate, in such areas as green energy, green buildings and green infrastructure technologies and practices.

2.5 CENTRES AND CORRIDORS

A primary focus of growth in Markham is for new development and *redevelopment* to be directed to centres and corridors. The Regional Centres and Regional Corridors/*key development areas* will be the prime locations for infill and *intensification*; the most intensive of which being directed to Regional Centres and *key development areas* along the Highway 7 and Yonge Street Regional Corridors. Local Centres and Local Corridors are also prime locations for infill and *intensification*, but at a smaller scale. Markham's priority *intensification areas* include all Regional Centres and *key development areas* on Regional Corridors and certain Local Centres and Corridors.

**Section 2.5 preamble
subject to Area/Site
Specific Appeal No. 22
(Issue 280 i))**

2.5.1 Regional Centres

Markham Centre, located along the Highway 7 Rapid Transit Corridor, and the Langstaff Gateway, located along the Yonge Street Rapid Transit Corridor, are identified as *urban growth centres* in the Provincial Growth Plan and as Regional Centres in York Region's Official Plan. Together these two centres are planned to contain the highest concentration and greatest mix and intensity of uses and activities in Markham, providing a range of housing, employment, live-work, investment, cultural, sports and entertainment and government functions, supported by a range of mobility choices.

These centres contain interfaces for multiple rail and bus transit services and have been identified as Mobility Hubs in the Metrolinx Regional Transportation Plan. As such, they will be the focus for strategic investment in transit, and will be developed as pedestrian and transit-oriented mixed-use centres. Current planning for these centres exceeds the minimum Provincial Growth Plan and York Region Official Plan density target of 200 people and jobs per hectare by 2031.

**Section 2.5.1 subject to
City-wide and
Area/Site Specific
Appeal No. 21 (Issue
130)**

*Markham Centre and
the Langstaff Gateway
are planned to contain
the highest
concentration and
greatest mix and
intensity of uses and
activities in Markham.*

Markham Centre is being planned and developed as Markham's downtown, based on the principles of balanced live-work opportunities, compact urban form, natural heritage protection, and transit-supportive development. With a distinctly urban character, in the form of higher density, mixed-use built form, and high-quality parks and public amenities, it will provide a central location for arts, cultural, sports and entertainment and social activities on a year-round basis.

The Langstaff Gateway is identified as part of the Richmond Hill/Langstaff Gateway *urban growth centre* in the Provincial Growth Plan and the Richmond Hill/Langstaff Gateway Regional Centre in the Regional Official Plan. A secondary plan approved in 2011, provides for a compact, complete, integrated, sustainable, vibrant and well-designed, high-density urban centre that meets the requirements of the Growth Plan and York Region Official Plan.

It is the policy of Council:

2.5.1.1 **That** Markham Centre and the Langstaff Gateway shown on Map 1 – Markham Structure and Map 2 – Centres and Corridors and Transit Network be planned to function as the primary focal points for intensive development in Markham, with the greatest concentration of residential, employment, live-work, mobility, investment, cultural, sports and entertainment and government functions.

2.5.1.2 **That** Markham Centre and the Langstaff Gateway will contain the highest development densities and greatest mix of uses in Markham, and once developed will support an overall long-term density target of:

- a) a minimum of 2.5 floor space index for developable lands in each Centre;
- b) a minimum of 3.5 floor space index for developable lands in the Langstaff Gateway at, and adjacent to the Langstaff/Longbridge and Richmond Hill Centre Stations on the Yonge Subway Extension; and
- c) a gross minimum density of 200 residents and jobs per hectare by 2031 in each Centre based on provincial *urban growth centre* boundaries shown on Map 12 – Urban Area and Built-Up Area.

2.5.1.3 **To support** a long-term resident-to-employee target ratio of 1:1 in Markham Centre and the combined Richmond Hill/Langstaff Gateway Centre.

2.5.1.4 **That** the implementation of the Langstaff Gateway Secondary Plan be coordinated with the implementation of the secondary plan for the adjoining Richmond Hill Centre in the Town of Richmond Hill.

2.5.2 Regional Corridors/Key Development Areas

Key development areas are identified along the Yonge Street and Highway 7 Rapid Transit Corridors. *Key development areas* include *intensification areas* where rapid transit services intersect with major nodes of retail and commercial development and where opportunities exist for *redevelopment* of large land parcels that support new public streets and mixed-use development.

It is the policy of Council:

2.5.2.1 **That** the Highway 7 and Yonge Street Corridors shown on Map 1 – Markham Structure and Map 2 – Centres and Corridors and Transit Network be planned to function as urban main streets that have a compact, mixed-use, well-designed, pedestrian-friendly and transit-oriented built form.

2.5.2.2 **That** the most intensive and widest range of uses within the Corridors be directed to the *key development areas* shown on Map 1 – Markham Structure and Map 2 – Centres and Corridors and Transit Network.

2.5.2.3 **That** *key development areas* will support an overall long-term density target of:

- a) a minimum 2.5 floor space index for developable lands for each *key development area*; and

Section 2.5.1 subject to City-wide and Area/Site Specific Appeal No. 21 (Issue 130)

Section 2.5.2 subject to Area/Site Specific Appeal Nos. 18 (Issue 126) and 7 (Issue 9)

Key development areas include intensification areas where rapid transit services intersect with major nodes of retail and commercial development and where opportunities exist for redevelopment of large land parcels that support new public streets and mixed-use development.

- b) a minimum 3.5 floor space index for developable lands in the Yonge Steeles Corridor *key development area* at, and adjacent to the future Steeles Station as part of the Yonge Subway Extension.

2.5.3 Local Centres and Corridors

Local Centres and Corridors contain a mix of activities similar to Regional Centres and Corridors but on a smaller scale and serving the adjacent community. The Centres are served by local transit offering connections to higher-order transit, and in some cases contain GO stations.

It is the policy of Council:

- 2.5.3.1 **That** the Local Centres and Corridors identified on Map 1 – Markham Structure and Map 2 – Centres and Corridors and Transit Network serve as important neighbourhood focal points and main streets that provide a range of housing, employment, shopping, and recreation opportunities, as well as personal and human services, with appropriate forms and scale that complement the surrounding community.

Section 2.5.3 subject to Area/Site Specific Appeal No. 22 (issue 280 i))

Section 2.5.3.1 subject to Area/Site Specific Appeal No. 22 (issue 280 i))

2.5.4 Heritage Centres

The Heritage Centres of Thornhill, Buttonville, Unionville and Markham Village are shown on Map 2 – Centres and Corridors and Transit Network. Heritage Centres represent Markham's *heritage conservation districts* which recognize and protect the distinct character of heritage buildings, historic sites and landscapes. Infill development and *redevelopment* will be compatible and enhance the heritage character and village like, human scale of development within Heritage Centres.

It is the policy of Council:

- 2.5.4.1 **That** infill and *redevelopment* in Heritage Centres will only be considered in accordance with the *heritage district conservation* plans and Section 4.5 Cultural Heritage Resources and other policies of this Plan.

Heritage Centres represent Markham's heritage conservation districts which recognize and protect the distinct character of heritage buildings, historic sites and landscapes.

2.6 FUTURE URBAN AREA

Markham's 'Future Urban Area' as shown on Map 1 – Markham Structure will be planned in accordance with the land use policies in Section 8.12. For the 'Future Urban Area' lands north of Major Mackenzie Drive, a Conceptual Master Plan will be prepared to inform the secondary planning process set out in Section 10.1.2 of this Plan and the requirements of Sections 4.3 and 5.6 of the Regional Official Plan.

Section 2.6 subject to City-wide Appeal No. 4 (Issues 117, 118)

It is the policy of Council:

- 2.6.1 **That** the lands identified as 'Neighbourhood Area' within the 'Future Urban Area' north of Major Mackenzie Drive as shown on Map 1 – Markham Structure shall be planned to meet or exceed a minimum density of 20 residential units per hectare and a minimum density of 70 residents and jobs per hectare for developable lands.
- 2.6.2 **That** the lands identified as 'Employment Area' within the 'Future Urban Area' north of Major Mackenzie Drive as shown on Map 1 – Markham

Structure shall be planned to accommodate the amount and types of employment required to achieve employment forecasts for Markham to 2031.

(YR Mod. 4)