



Planning for Tomorrow
York Region Growth Management

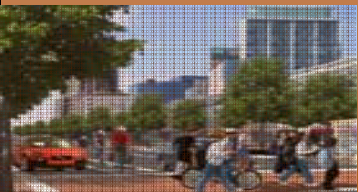
Towards a Sustainable Region

**Town of Newmarket
Town Hall Meeting Feedback
September 25, 2008**

Feedback



- The following comments, questions and suggestions are a summary of the public input received at the consultation session held in the Town of Newmarket. Regional staff attempted to respond to questions and provide additional input. Please contact the Region if this summary does not adequately reflect your input or ideas, or if you have any additional thoughts.
- Comments from the public are recorded in black.
- *Regional staff comments are recorded in blue italics.*



Feedback



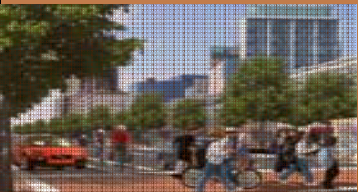
- I sell real estate. I know these plans but still see “big box” stores popping up. Things built now are going to be around for a while, why do we not see apartments above them?
- *As we become more urban we will see more and more of this. Planners still not sure what to do with big box stores. We must experiment with organizing them differently.*
- In NYC you have mall below, condos above; we currently see growth going to the north (Davis Drive) that are ideal locations for these types of buildings. These things should be done now - we're losing the current opportunities.
- *In North York, a grocery store was built underneath high-rise condos and is one of the largest grossing stores around. This is a good example of how to mix uses.*
- The electricity system appears to be stressed at times. How will the electrical system handle all of the stresses of this proposed growth – what are the current plans for the electrical grid?
- *Planning for electricity is done by Province. Hydro providers are aware of the forecasts and will have to meet that level of electrical capability/transmission. But we must also build buildings that use less electricity, water, gas, etc. Some local municipalities require all new buildings to reach Energy Star ratings.*



Feedback



- What are the thoughts on including things like solar panels to generate electricity in the building codes? What about bringing in more transmission lines?
- *New standards will be in place for 2012, but we should not be waiting that long to implement - perhaps the thousands of new homes we will build before then should have higher standards too.*
- *We're also looking into incentives or "carrots" to encourage better development. For example, Regional Council adopted a policy where if you build to a LEED standard, you will get the equivalent of what you save to create additional new units in the building.*
- There are many countries that use solar panels to generate electricity. This is a prime opportunity for York Region to initiate these programs and look into this area.



Feedback



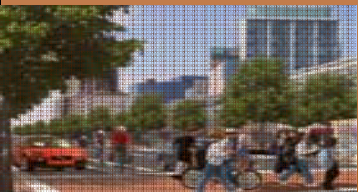
- Concerned about the various housing options. I see people who are just starting out and are beginning to raise families, looking for housing with backyards to play with their kids in. These people do not want to be in apartment buildings, they want the pseudo-countryside. How do you change this mindset?
- *Previously, there was little choice in terms of housing types in York Region. We're now seeing a change and need to continue with a broader array of housing and affordability choices. If we build good communities with lots of choices, people will elect to use them.*
- *York Region sent out a survey asking employers what they look for when choosing where to locate their business. Affordable housing and transit were key concerns.*
- I liked the pie charts shown today, but I wanted to see more on employment. We have seen huge growth retail, but these are often lower wage jobs. Often these workers must move to Toronto, as they can't afford homes in York Region. What are we doing about this? Where do you see each economic sector across York Region?
- *We are meeting with the municipal Economic Directors to discuss these issues, and continue to annually survey local businesses to monitor how employment is changing*
- *We do need more high quality jobs in York Region. We also realize that having only one type of job in a municipality is not healthy, it needs to be diverse.*



Feedback



- The Toronto Real Estate Board comment on how they want to lower business taxes to keep business in Toronto, but we want them to locate up here.
- *York Region has done a pretty good job at getting our share of jobs; our level of jobs is approximately equal to those in the labour force – however a large number of residents commute outside of York Region to work. We have a lot of manufacturing in York Region, but not a lot of homes that these workers can necessarily afford.*
- What does York Region intend to do about affordable housing? Second suites are only available in Newmarket and East Gwillimbury. As we see people moving towards condos (whether for lifestyle or affordability), are there any other options?
- *This is a big issue and we're not sure of the answers yet. We have done a housing strategy and research into the affordability situation. We build as many affordable housing units as we can with government funding, but we haven't done enough for affordability. We need new strategies, perhaps with the development industry to be able to provide these units. We also speak with the Human Service Planning Coalition about these issues.*
- In some parts of the world they sell the shell of an apartment. The unit is not finished inside, so it is cheaper, and people can then choose to finish it the way they want, when they can afford it. This can help with affordability, as people can do things at any price point over any length of time.



Feedback



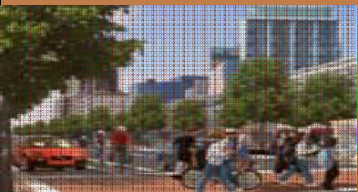
- Has York Region considered looking at retrofitting older buildings? Older homes that use motors to vent our furnaces and water heaters (using electricity) use a lot of power.
- *We have done some retrofitting. It can be costly, but the payback period can be very quick. With increases in energy costs, we will likely see more movement towards retrofitting.*
- When addressing human services, we've talked about schools and health services but we cannot forget that poverty is rising at an alarming rate. Children are being fed by volunteer food banks and not getting enough recreation programs. This is not being talked about enough – we all think we live in a fairly rich community and that it doesn't exist, but beautiful homes on the outside can have multiple families inside. The current systems are not meeting the needs of these individuals and we must advocate this more to the Province and Federal government to help with this.
- *There is a significant homelessness problem, and thousands of families only one paycheque away from homelessness. It is far more common than we're aware of and need to do more.*



Feedback



- I have 100 acres that straddles the Greenbelt and Oak Ridges Moraine. We talk of sustainability and protection, but now need to “walk the talk”. With all the anticipated growth, you will be going into these protected areas one way or another (i.e. roads), and this can change the character and put pressures on these lands. (i.e. the Holland junction) Where do we go with 21st century solutions for people who own property and are looking to pass it on to other generations/sell it – but not for development, we want to keep these lands green.
- *Just a few years ago we didn't have these green plans. Today we have a much better basis for protecting it. The line was drawn very clearly in legislated plans, so these land uses will require an amendment to change. There will be pressures, but many people have invested time and effort to ensure these plans remain in place and these lands are protected.*
- *On the other hand, we also hear people who have protected land who want to develop on it and want compensation because they can't.*



Feedback



- Want more information on the Transportation Master Plan. The spillover from these growing urban areas impact the countryside in King Township in various ways, such as transportation. For residents of King (who want to live in a country setting), these roads can be threatening. These growth plans need to be aware of how communities outside the urban areas will be affected by them. Both major highways and country roads are affected.
- As a resident, I would not like to see more roads. Without doing so, how do you deal with the impending traffic and keep it safe? We see lots of major transport truck traffic along these roads. Who will compensate the townships for the extra traffic on these rural roads so they can be maintained?
- *This issue came up at King Council earlier too. There is increasing traffic on all our roads (urban and rural). No one compensates the townships for the traffic on the roads.*
- *We are trying to take an approach to transportation that emphasizes shorter trips, carpooling, and other ways to ease congestion. We invite you to come to Transportation Master Plan meetings and hear what they have to say.*



Feedback



- If you get a high efficiency furnace or other newer technologies, you can get a grant. Young people are often doing this, but older people tend to be unwilling to change. There are seniors with large two storey houses wanting to move but cannot afford to live in bungalows in the city. Many young people are willing to move into smaller units without the big backyard and living room. However, older people often do not want to live without those features and will choose to move farther and farther north, where they can afford homes with these features. These people should not be moving farther away from hospitals and services.
- Are there any plans to highlight the Regional forest tracts in the future? Perhaps we can create places where you can safely park and utilize these areas, as there are many places where it is not safe to park on the side of the road. For larger tracts, we should have more than one parking spot, as there are many diverse and interesting spots.
- *York Region is looking at the possibility of creating a Regional Trail System, which can go through these Regional forests and beyond. Will bring this to Regional Council in the future.*

