

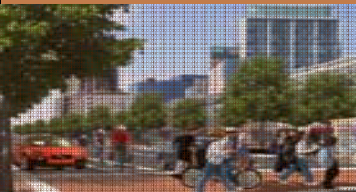


Planning for Tomorrow
York Region Growth Management

Towards a Sustainable Region

**Town of Richmond Hill
Town Hall Meeting Feedback
September 24, 2008**

- The following comments, questions and suggestions are a summary of the public input received at the consultation session held in the Town of Richmond Hill. 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



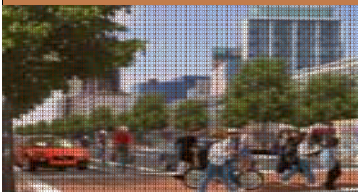
- We support intensification but are concerned that there are still far too many single detached homes and strip malls being built.
- How can we put more jobs in employment areas?
- *Much of this depends on the type of use. York Region is currently looking into different structures and the densities of employees per hectare.*
- We are representatives of the Observatory Hill Home Owners Association. Concerned about road plans, particularly the expansions of Bayview Avenue and 16th Avenue. These are mature neighbourhoods with schools, homes and senior residents. Noise, safety and pollution are problems. We are aware of the Regional Transportation Master Plan, but does not feel that 6 lane roads are the solution.
- What are the plans around intensification in Richmond Hill itself?
- *(RH Staff) The “People Plan” process is one of the background studies to look at intensification – but we do know a lot of growth will be directed towards Highway 7, Yonge Street and Richmond Hill Centre. We will be out over the next year to talk to residents about growth and intensification.*
- David Dunlop lands should be preserved as greenspace.



Feedback



- Only two municipalities in York Region currently permit second suites as-of-right. These units help to provide more affordable and safe housing.
- Concern about rate of property tax increases.
- There is an acute need for affordable housing in York Region. This area of responsibility tends to be Regional but this aspect of social planning also needs to be local - there must be a dialogue at the community level to properly address these issues.
- 13% of our population, 112,000 persons live below the low income cutoff.
- More Federal and Provincial funding is required, but there will always be challenges because we don't speak at the local level about affordability and NIMBY-ism.
- *We need to redouble our efforts on this – we need to do a new housing study in York Region to understand the issues and update our housing strategy.*
- The waiting lists are still the same – 5,500 households for affordable housing.
- Wouldn't allowing secondary suites in all local municipalities help solve this issue? But people oppose this in local community meetings.



Feedback



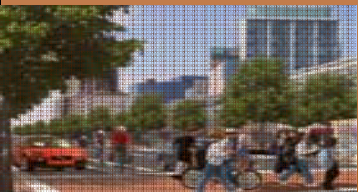
- Water supply in Richmond Hill is from Lake Ontario and it's pumped 7 times on the way. This is expensive and energy intensive. What are the possible changes to this?
- *York Region is landlocked, which is an issue. Local sources like aquifers and Lake Simcoe are limited. We are taking a comprehensive look at this through our Water and Wastewater Master Plan. We also need to rethink how we use water and pursue sustainable ideas, such as drought resistant plants, using rainwater, etc.*
- Funding available for bike trails all over York Region – Vaughan and Markham have received funding, what about Richmond Hill?
- *We have an annual funding program to assist local municipalities in constructing local bicycling facilities. Local municipalities must submit projects. Richmond Hill has not yet submitted a project because it is in the process of preparing a Bicycling Master Plan.*



Feedback



- Intensification is a very important concept in terms of transit, cycling, walking, mixed use, but it is a “tough nut to crack” in terms of NIMBY-ism. How are we going to approach this issue, encourage developers to build this way and get local residents who live along these corridors accept the type of development that is needed?
- *Over the past 5-6 years, there has been an increased understanding of what intensification is and how it can accommodate the varying needs of our communities/residents, such as where our children are going to live. We have been developing tools to help show people what intensification will look like and how it will fit.*
- *(RH Staff) The Oak Ridges Moraine and Greenbelt plans are relatively new, but people now recognize that sprawl is a problem and there is now a reasonable expectation that things are going to change. People see that by clustering development closer together, we get to keep more green spaces.*
- *(RH Staff) For example, a local community worked with the Town and a developer to arrive at an agreement around the type and form of a more intense form of housing.*



Feedback



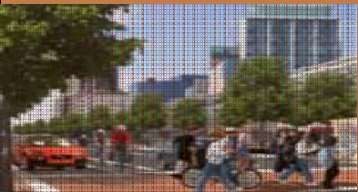
- Leadership is a big factor, a perfect example of this is Mayor Mazel McCallion on her bike for “Car Free Day”.
- There’s nothing about democracy in the literature on the planning process. Would like to see more discussion at the local level.
- Should adopt “two will do” to stop increased population growth.
- York Region was a “stitch up” of the Davis government. Farmers controlled the north end and this should continue. The southern 3 municipalities are not connected enough with the Regional Centre (Administration Building) – it should have been located in the south.
- Should divide York Region, because northern and southern areas do not related to one another – residents in Markham don’t know, or care, about what is happening in Georgina.
- *Region of York exists because issues are so large, we need to take a bigger picture, systematic approach. For example, water and sewer systems, roadways and transportation systems.*



Feedback



- Is it possible to talk about planning on a watershed basis? There is no mention of it in any of the papers – this should be in the materials.
- *Over the past 5 years, Regional Council has funded updates of our watershed plans which will inform our processes.*
- I'm on the Yonge Street Subway Committee. Concerned about lack of communication regarding the water systems in other local municipalities. If you cross Yonge Street, Markham doesn't know what Vaughan is doing and vice versa. York Region should have some role in ensuring municipalities (especially those sharing borders) are talking to each other about water.
- *York Region is currently rationing sewage capacity and is being careful about where we allow it until we get more capacity online. We have discussions going with Markham and Vaughan to work together on capacity.*



Feedback



- We ask that Bayview Avenue and Bathurst Street not be widened or have construction on them while the subway is being built on Yonge Street. Drivers will move over to these streets, causing more traffic issues.
- *York Region avoids working on parallel roads simultaneously.*
- Should advertise Regional meetings like this one on the Richmond Hill website. More availability of public notification would get more people showing up.
- *We welcome any ideas on how to get information to people – for example, ask on our website to be added to mailing list.*

