

Clause No. 12 in Report No. 11 of Committee of the Whole was adopted, without amendment, by the Council of The Regional Municipality of York at its meeting held on June 26, 2014.

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REGIONAL CENTRES AND CORRIDORS PROGRAM UPDATE

Committee of the Whole recommends:

- 1. Receipt of the presentation by Valerie Shuttleworth, Director, Long Range Planning and Karen Whitney, Director, Community Planning.**
- 2. Adoption of the following recommendations contained in the report dated May 29, 2014 from the Commissioner of Transportation and Community Planning:**

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

1. Council continue to advocate for infrastructure investment to support Regional Centres and Corridors development, including the Yonge subway extension.
2. The Regional Clerk forward this report to the Provincial Minister of Infrastructure to provide an update on growth in the Regional Centres and Corridors.

2. PURPOSE

This report provides an update of the Centres and Corridors program, including an overview of the current state of development in the Region's centres and corridors and the ongoing initiatives to help realize the vision of creating vibrant, transit-friendly and complete urban communities. The last Regional Centres and Corridors update was provided to Committee and Council in February 2013.

3. BACKGROUND

The Centres and Corridors are of strategic importance in ensuring a balanced approach to growth and intensification in York Region

The Region's Centres and Corridors are the most prominent and preferred locations for intensification in the Region and are highly desirable locations for people to live, work and play. The framework that established the network of Regional Centres and Corridors has been in place since the Region's first Official Plan in 1994. York Region continues to build on that policy framework through the development of programs and resources to support intensification and development in the Regional Centres and Corridors.

In 2006, the Provincial Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe confirmed the Region's Centres and Corridors approach to managing growth and intensification. The Provincial Growth plan designated the Region's four Regional Centres as "Urban Growth Centres" and established intensification and minimum density targets of 200 persons and jobs per hectare within these Centres.

Through the development of Official Plan and secondary plan policies, the Province, York Region and our local municipal partners continue to ensure a strong collective vision and policy framework to support the planning and development of Centres and Corridors that are vibrant, mixed-use and pedestrian-friendly urban places. Secondary plans for the four Regional Centres are either underway or are awaiting approval from the Ontario Municipal Board and will help to provide appropriate direction and guidance on heights, densities and development targets for each Centre. Regional staff have a strong relationship and will continue to work collaboratively with local municipal staff throughout the development and implementation of these secondary plans.

Substantial investment in transportation infrastructure to support growth within the Centres and Corridors is planned or under construction

In November 2013, the tunnel boring machines for the Toronto-York Spadina Subway Extension Project completed their last tunnel drive for the 8.6 kilometre extension of the Toronto Transit Commission's Yonge-University-Spadina subway line to the Vaughan Metropolitan Centre at Highway 7 and Jane Street. In addition, Viva bus rapid transit service began operating on the first 2.5 kilometre section of rapidways on Highway 7 in August 2013. An additional 3.9 kilometres of rapidways along Highway 7 approaching Markham Centre will open in 2014. VivaNext rapidway construction is also well underway in Newmarket on Davis Drive and the design/build contract for portions of Yonge Street in Newmarket and Richmond Hill has been awarded.

Additional investment in transportation infrastructure, including the Yonge Subway extension from Finch Avenue in Toronto to the Richmond Hill/Langstaff Gateway Regional Centre is required to support full build-out of the centre beyond phase 1. Staff

will continue to advocate for this important transit connection which will help unlock future development potential along the Yonge Street Corridor in Thornhill and in the Richmond Hill/Langstaff Gateway Regional Centre.

Water and wastewater servicing capacity is largely unconstrained in the Centres and Corridors; however, an Environmental Assessment for water and wastewater servicing to support the long-term planned growth within the Richmond Hill/Langstaff Gateway is currently underway

Planning and investment in water and wastewater infrastructure to support planned growth in the Region and the Centres and Corridors continues, including studies to specifically address areas such as the Richmond Hill/Langstaff Gateway Urban Growth Centre and Regional Centre. An Environmental Assessment to address water and wastewater capacity constraints within this centre commenced in February 2014. The Environmental Assessment will look at providing additional wastewater servicing capacity to the Richmond Hill Langstaff Gateway Urban Growth Centre and evaluate alternative alignments for water supply infrastructure consistent with local municipal plans for the Regional Centre.

In June 2013, a multi-year water and wastewater servicing capacity assignment was provided to support growth to 2017. This assignment included 7,400 persons capacity to be used only for intensification within Centres and Corridors. This assignment is a tool to assist municipalities in prioritizing growth and must be used for high-rise developments with a higher standard of water efficiency and inflow and infiltration control.

York Region is building affordable housing within the Centres and Corridors

York Region's Council-approved principles for investing in affordable housing include supporting the intensification of Centres and Corridors, which is reflected in the development of the Richmond Hill Housing and Community Hub. Scheduled to open in 2016, this development will add 202 mixed-income units and a youth service hub to the Yonge Street Corridor. By encouraging new affordable housing developments in these growth areas, tenants are better connected to transit, services and employment.

4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

In September 2013, York Region released the latest version of the Best Practices for Planning Centres and Corridors to continue the dialogue with our partners and residents about city-building in the Region

The Best Practices discussion paper is an ideas document and tool for engaging in informed discussions with our local municipal partners, the development industry and residents about innovative solutions for realizing the vision of Centres and Corridors. The latest version of the Best Practices for Planning Centres and Corridors was endorsed by Council in September 2013.

Secondary plans to guide growth and intensification in Newmarket Centre and Richmond Hill Centre are currently underway

Secondary plans for all four Regional Centres are at various stages of development and approval.

Newmarket staff presented a draft of their Urban Centres Secondary Plan to Town Council in early 2014. This secondary plan provides guidance on land-use, heights and densities within Newmarket Centre and the Yonge Street and Davis Drive Regional Corridors. Adoption of this secondary plan is anticipated later in 2014 and will be forwarded to the Region for approval at that time.

Richmond Hill staff are in the process of preparing a comprehensive secondary plan for Richmond Hill Centre which will build upon the work previously undertaken through the Town's Regional Centre Design and Land Use Study. No timeframe for completion has been identified at this time, given a number of outstanding site specific appeals to the new Richmond Hill Official Plan for lands within the Centre.

The Vaughan Metropolitan Centre Secondary Plan was endorsed by Regional Council in June 2013 and is awaiting resolution at the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB).

The City of Markham continues to progress with the implementation of the Markham Centre Secondary Plan.

There are 36 multi-storey residential and mixed-used buildings currently under construction in the Centres and Corridors

Residential development continues to be strong in York Region in general, and specifically within the Centres and Corridors. Based on a detailed review of data provided through RealNet Canada Inc. (a provider of property market information), there

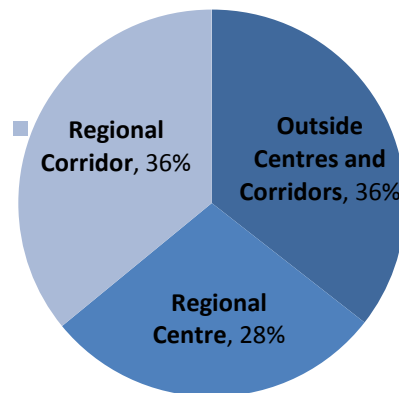
are currently 36 multi-storey residential and mixed-use buildings under construction within the Centres and Corridors comprising approximately 7,500 new residential units.

An increasing share of the Region's high-density development is locating in Regional Centres and Corridors

Since 2006, approximately 64 per cent of all new multi-storey residential apartment units in the Region were built within the Centres and Corridors (see Figure 1). In the last three years, this measure has jumped to 75 per cent. This trend is encouraging and reinforces the strength of planning policy in York Region to direct higher-density residential growth to the Region's Centres and Corridors.

In addition, condominium apartment units have comprised approximately 94 per cent (10,312 units) of the housing stock within the Centres and Corridors since 2006, followed by townhouse units at 5 per cent (520 units) and seniors rental housing at 1 per cent (130 units).

Figure 1
New Multi-Storey Residential Development
(Building Permits 2006 – 2013)



Employers are attracted by the access to transit and amenities available in the Centres and Corridors

Over the same period (2006 - 2013), approximately 94,000 square metres (one-million square feet) of new office space in 20 office buildings has been created within the Centres and Corridors. This represents approximately 38 per cent of all new office space constructed in the Region since 2006.

Of all the office space created in the Region's Centres and Corridors, the most active market has been in Markham Centre. Aviva Canada, one of this country's largest general insurance companies, recently announced it is relocating its head office to a 32,000 square metre (350,000 square foot) office building in Markham Centre in 2017, bringing approximately 1,500 new jobs to the area. Aviva Canada cited, amongst others, access to amenities, transit and green space as reasons for choosing Markham Centre as the location for their new head office.

In addition, construction is underway for a new 28,000 square metre (300,000 square foot), 15-storey office building for KPMG in Vaughan Metropolitan Centre. This building is incorporated as part of a larger planned mixed-use development. Both examples, and the other quality employers already located in these areas, show strength within certain markets of the Centres and Corridors for major commercial office development.

A study is underway to evaluate the current office market and opportunities to attract future major office development to the Centres and Corridors

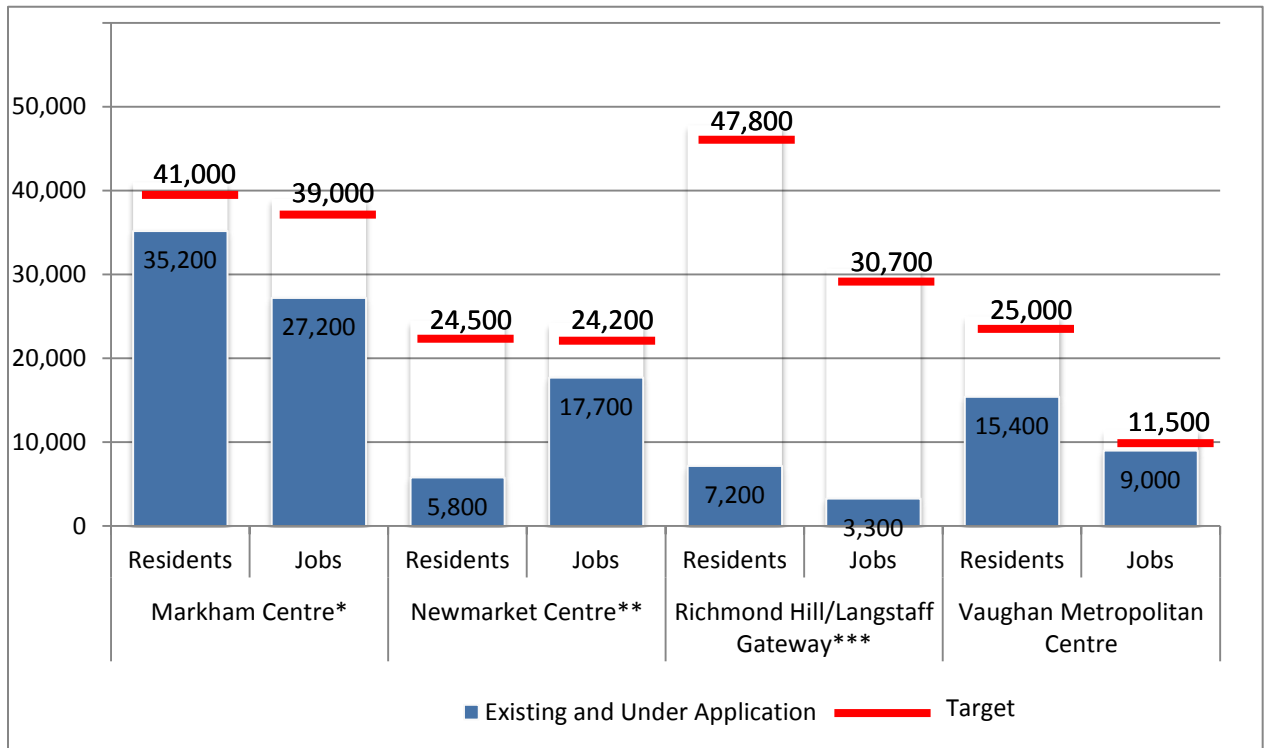
Although there has been some office development activity in the Centres and Corridors, the Greater Toronto Area's softening office market and the high level of office development activity in downtown Toronto pose significant challenges in attracting new major office tenants to meet planned employment targets within the Centres and Corridors.

York Region has undertaken a financial and market review of major office development in the Region, and specifically, within the Centres and Corridors. This study provides a better understanding of the office development market competitiveness in the Region and outlines potential tools that the Region may consider in attracting future major office development to the Centres and Corridors.

Development activity in the Region's Centres shows continued progress towards achieving secondary plan targets

Monitoring progress towards achieving the Centres and Corridors targets and directions of the Regional Official Plan are presented in an accompanying June 2014 report to Committee and Council. Figure 2, shows continued progress towards achieving planned person and job targets in the Region's Centres and Corridors based on existing, approved and proposed developments.

Figure 2
 Progress towards Planned Resident and Job Targets



* Markham Centre existing and under application category includes proposed and approved precinct plans

** Represents the entire Newmarket Urban Centres Secondary Plan area

*** The Yonge Subway extension is a required to support the planned full build-out of Richmond Hill/Langstaff Gateway beyond phase 1

The density of development projects in the Centres and Corridors is supportive of the ongoing delivery of vivaNext rapidway infrastructure and vice-versa

The encouraging development activity within the Regional Centres and Corridors supports the significant investment and ongoing delivery of rapid transit infrastructure, including subways and vivaNext rapidways in York Region. The proposed and built development densities within the Centres and Corridors are indicative of the development community’s support for transit oriented development standards and a built form that contributes to the creation of vibrant urban places. Table 1 outlines the planned densities (based on Floor Space Index (FSI)) for a sample of proposed development projects received by the Transportation and Community Planning Branch.

Table 1
 Examples of Planned Development Densities in the Centres and Corridors

Project Name	Description	Proposed Density (FSI)	Municipality	Location
Bremont Homes (File # OP.13.009)	10-storey (152 units) mixed use	2.5 – 3.6	City of Vaughan	4902 and 4908 Highway 7, east of Islington Avenue (Regional Corridor)
1857481 Ontario Inc. (File #D01-12012)	Two 11-storey buildings (623 units) and 22 townhomes	2.6	Town of Richmond Hill	386, 396, 400 Highway 7 East, east of Bayview Avenue (Regional Corridor)
974672 Ontario Ltd. and 668390 Ontario Ltd (File # D09-03-97)	5-storey (74 unit) mixed use	2.32	Town of Aurora	15277, 15283 & 15291 Yonge Street (Regional Corridor)
Sylmatt Investments Limited (File #OP.12.122739)	Three buildings 9-, 19- and 7-storeys (774 units)	4.69	City of Markham	28 Main Street Unionville, north of Enterprise Boulevard (Regional Centre)
1834371 Ontario Inc. (File #OP.12.010)	Four buildings ranging in height from 25 -38 storeys (1,328 units), one 14-storey office building	6.33	City of Vaughan	2951 Highway 7, 190 and 180 Maplecrete Road (Regional Centre)
Dwight Slessor Holdings Ltd. (File #D14-NP-11-15)	Two buildings 19- and 21-storeys (818 units)	3.5	Town of Newmarket	17645 Yonge Street (Regional Centre)

Table Note: As per York Region Official Plan 2010, development within the Regional Centres shall achieve a minimum density of 2.5 FSI per development block, and a minimum density of 3.5 FSI per development block at planned subway stations. Development within the Regional Corridors will support an overall long-term density of 2.5 FSI.

Further investment in transportation infrastructure including roads, transit, pedestrian and cycling facilities and streetscaping, is needed to support implementation of the Regional Centres and Corridors and deliver the vision for complete urban communities where people can live, work and play.

Regional staff will continue to engage and inform stakeholders about the importance of planning and developing the Region’s Centres and Corridors

Regional staff has participated in a number of public outreach events to engage residents and the public to promote intensification and growth in Regional Centres and Corridors, including attendance at York Region’s public works day, the Markham Fair and most

recently at the Aurora Street Festival on June 1, 2014. More public education events and opportunities are planned in 2014 to continue this important dialogue with the public and key stakeholders. Regular updates, including this report, and materials made available through the Centres and Corridors website help support continued education about the importance of the Region's Centres and Corridors program.

Link to key Council-approved plans

Vision 2051

York Region's Vision 2051 recognizes that the Region is urbanizing and that Regional Centres and Corridors will have the highest levels of intensification in the Region. In addition, Vision 2051 notes that the Centres and Corridors will help the Region maintain economic competitiveness by encouraging major office, institutional, cultural and entertainment facilities with a goal of achieving a balance of employment and residential opportunities. Ongoing activities within the Centres and Corridors program will help promote the Vision 2051 goal of creating livable cities and complete communities.

Regional Official Plan (2010)

Development activities and the ongoing delivery of tools, resources and programs will support the objectives of the Regional Centres and Corridor policies of the Regional Official Plan (2010) in recognizing these areas as those with the greatest density and range and mix of uses.

2011 – 2015 Strategic Plan

Focusing growth in the Region's Centres and Corridors is one of the Strategic Priorities Areas of the 2011 – 2015 Strategic Plan. The strategic objectives of the Plan call for increasing intensified mixed-use development, to maximize the economic development potential and optimize transportation capacity and services within the Regional Centres and Corridors.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Growth and development within Regional Centres and Corridors promotes economic development and optimizes infrastructure investment

Through higher land utilization, growth and development within the Centres and Corridors can optimize investment in capital infrastructure. The strong policy support provided by the Province, Region and local municipalities to support growth and development within the Centres and Corridors will further support economic growth and employment opportunities in these locations.

Capital spending for water, wastewater, waste management, transportation and York Region Rapid Transit Corporation's projects (including the Spadina Subway extension) totalled more than three-quarters of a billion dollars in 2013. Capital spending towards new infrastructure for Centres and Corridors is anticipated to continue. Further investment in infrastructure to support Centres and Corridors (including the Yonge Subway extension to Richmond Hill Centre) is required to fully realize the planned growth in Centres and Corridors.

There are no financial implications as a result of the recommendations of this report.

6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

Staff continues to engage in local municipal planning exercises and development projects in Centres and Corridors

Regional staff will continue to be actively engaged with our local municipal counterparts in planning exercises and programs to support implementation and development of Centres and Corridors. Regional staff plays a key role in working collaboratively with local staff throughout review and approval of development proposals within these locations.

7. CONCLUSION

Planning and development activity in the Centres and Corridors supports the policy framework and collective vision established by York Region and our local municipal partners. Continued growth and activity in the Centres and Corridors supports the long-term city building objectives of the Region and affirms the important role that the Centres and Corridors program plays in providing information, education and outreach to residents. Regular reporting helps keep policy makers, decision makers, the development community and residents informed and keeps a discussion about city-building and intensification in York Region top of mind. *Attachment 1* highlights the activities and progress noted in this report.

Regional staff will continue to monitor development activities and deliver programs and tools to support the realization of complete, sustainable and vibrant urban communities, and the continued investment in infrastructure, including the vivaNext rapidway projects and the Yonge Subway extension.

For more information on this report, please contact Josh Reis, Senior Planner, Centres Corridors and Subways, at ext. 71515.

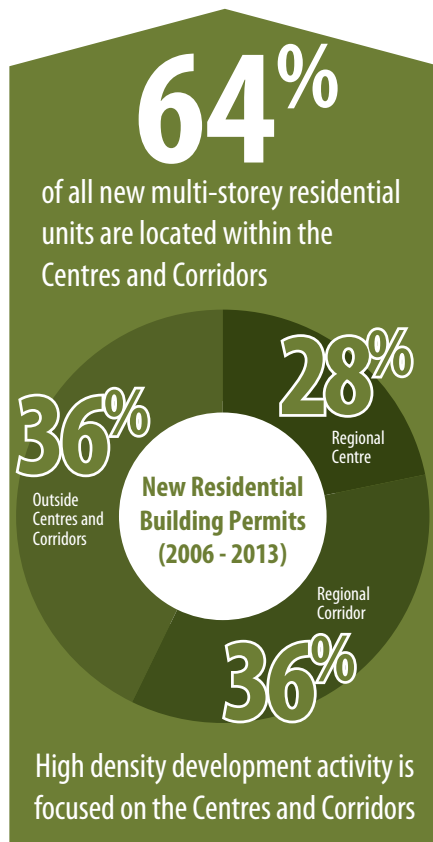
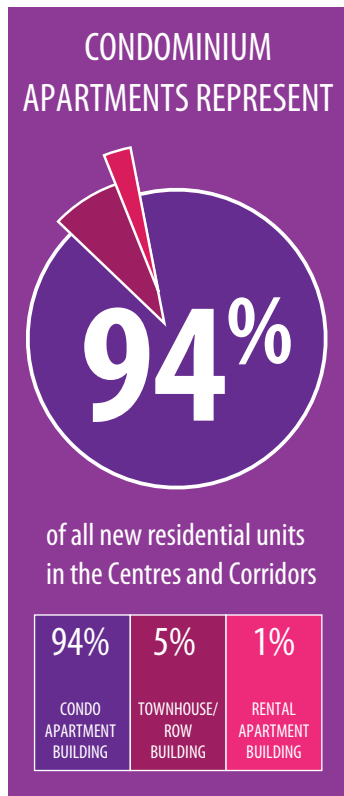
The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.

Attachments (1)

York Region's Centres and Corridors Program is about city-building. Centres and Corridors is the term that is used to describe the foundation of York Region's planned urban structure. It is an integrated approach that combines the planning of urban pedestrian friendly/walkable communities with the construction of new rapid transit that connects York Region and the GTA. Key goals include providing a range of housing and travel options, employment opportunities, conserving resources and creating lively sustainable communities within walking distance of transit and other services. Our vision of city-building is:

- Growing up, not out
- Mixing compatible land uses together
- Providing travel alternatives to the car
- Creating vibrant and successful public spaces
- Encouraging efficiency and sustainability

The Region's Centres and Corridors will continue to evolve into highly active urban areas served by rapid transit. Innovation in planning, city building and design will make these great places to live, work and play.



Progress Towards Targets within the Regional Centres

Legend: ■ 2013 Existing and Under Construction □ 2013 Under Application

Markham Centre

2031 Residential Target: 41,000 Residents* 2031 Job Target: 39,000 Jobs*

Category	2013 Existing and Under Construction	2013 Under Application
Residents	~30%	~55%
Jobs	~25%	~45%

Newmarket Centre Secondary Plan

2031 Residential Target: 21,000 Residents* 2031 Job Target: 20,000 Jobs*

Category	2013 Existing and Under Construction	2013 Under Application
Residents	~15%	~25%
Jobs	~75%	~85%

Vaughan Metropolitan Centre

2031 Residential Target: 25,000 Residents* 2031 Job Target: 20,000 Jobs*

Category	2013 Existing and Under Construction	2013 Under Application
Residents	~55%	~65%
Jobs	~50%	~80%

Richmond Hill / Langstaff Gateway

2031 Residential Target: 48,000 Residents* 2031 Job Target: 31,000 Jobs*

Category	2013 Existing and Under Construction	2013 Under Application
Residents	~15%	~25%
Jobs	~15%	~25%



REGION OF YORK

RESIDENTIAL & COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY WITHIN CENTRES & CORRIDORS

Residential Dwelling Units Constructed 2006 - 2013

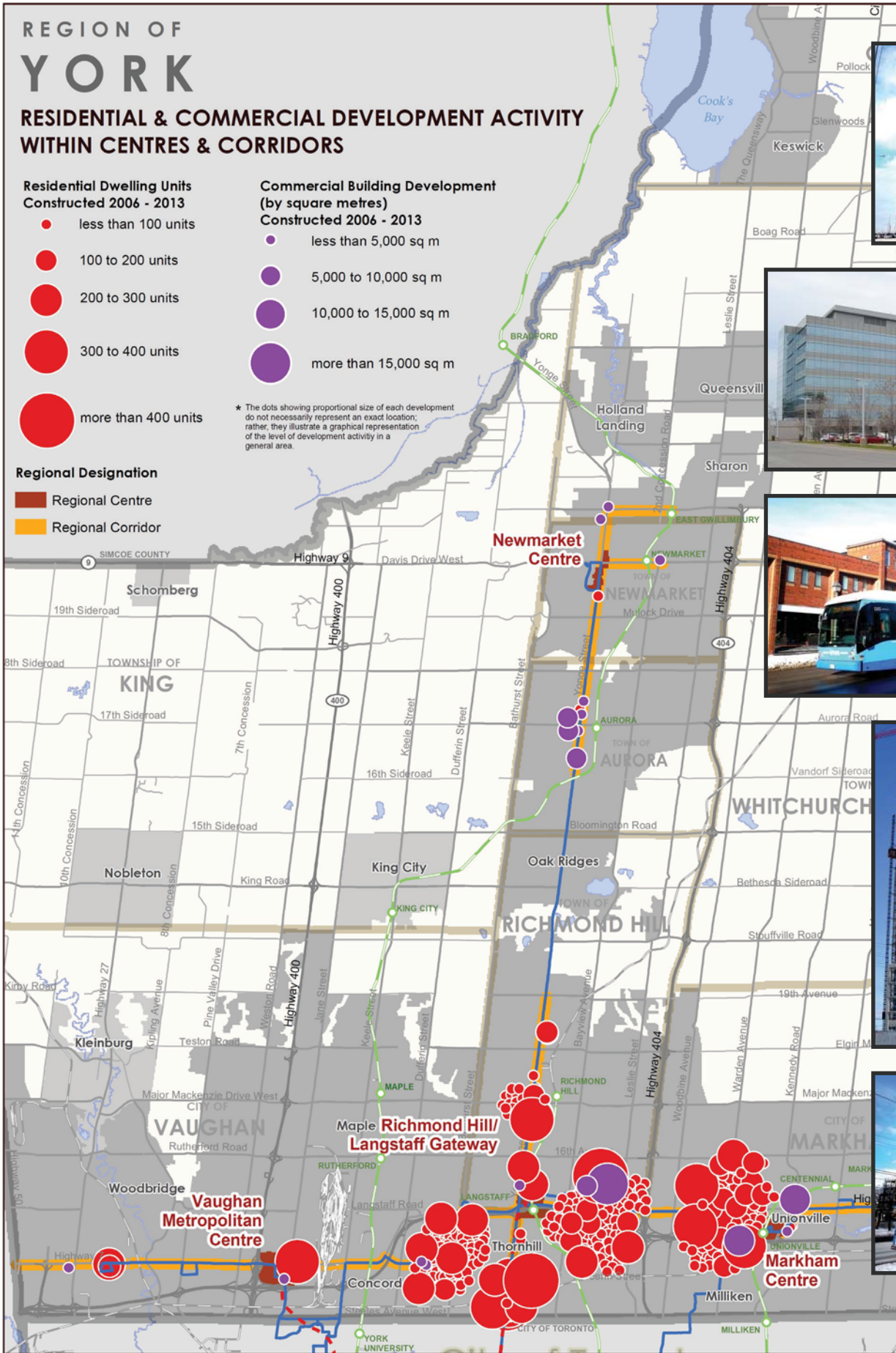
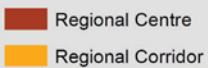


Commercial Building Development (by square metres) Constructed 2006 - 2013

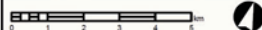
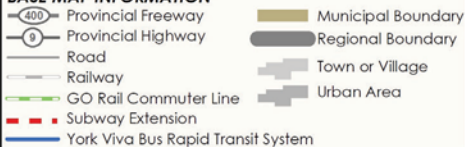


* The dots showing proportional size of each development do not necessarily represent an exact location; rather, they illustrate a graphical representation of the level of development activity in a general area.

Regional Designation



BASE MAP INFORMATION



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Transportation & Community Planning Department
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