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York Region Municipal Comprehensive Review – 2051 Forecast Staff Report to Council

Report Number: 2021-42

Department(s): Planning and Building Services

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Meeting Date: June 14, 2021

Recommendations

1. That the report entitled York Region Municipal Comprehensive Review – 2051 Forecast dated June 14, 2021 be received; and,
2. That Council endorse the comments outlined in this report; and,
3. That Staff be directed to forward this report to the Regional Municipality of York for its consideration as part of the Municipal Comprehensive Review; and,
4. That Staff be authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to this resolution.

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide comments to York Region on the proposed 2051 Population and Employment Forecasts for Newmarket that have been prepared as part of the York Region's municipal comprehensive review.

Background

The Regional Municipality of York (York Region) is conducting a municipal comprehensive review (MCR) and has been releasing [background and/or policy direction reports](#) since 2019. On March 18, 2021, York Region released a report titled [Proposed 2051 Forecast and Land Needs Assessment](#) (Proposed 2051 Forecast Report), which presents York Region's land needs to 2051, proposed population and employment forecasts by local municipalities, intensification targets, and an integrated approach to growth management. At the May 25, 2021 Town of Newmarket Committee

of the Whole meeting, Regional staff presented highlights of the main topics discussed in the Proposed 2051 Forecast Report and next steps of the MCR.

York Region has requested comments on the proposed forecasts from local municipal councils by July 2021. Planning staff have reviewed the Proposed 2051 Forecast Report and have outlined comments on the Region’s population and employment forecasts for Newmarket for Council’s consideration.

Discussion

York Region is Forecast to Reach a Population of 2.02 Million and 990,000 Jobs by 2051

In accordance with A Place to Grow – Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2020 (Growth Plan), York Region is forecast to reach a population of 2.02 million and 990,000 jobs by 2051. To accommodate this growth, the Region is required to plan for a minimum Region-wide intensification target of 50% (i.e. within existing built-up area as shown on Attachment 1) and a minimum density target of 50 residents and jobs per hectare in designated greenfield areas (DGA). Based on the results of the land needs assessment and factors such as market considerations, Regional staff has advised that York Region is well positioned to meet or exceed the Growth Plan targets.

York Region’s intensification targets are then distributed and assigned to the nine local municipalities. Each local municipality is required to update its intensification target to achieve the minimum targets as identified in the new Regional Official Plan.

York Region’s Forecasted Population and Employment Growth for Newmarket

Town of Newmarket is forecast to a population of 110,700 people and 57,600 jobs by 2051. These forecasts represent a 3% share of York Region’s overall population and employment growth. Table 1 below summarizes the Town of Newmarket’s population and employment forecasts found in the [Proposed 2051 Forecast Report](#):

Table 1 Newmarket 2051 Population and Employment Forecasts

	2016	2051	2016-2051 (35 years)	
			Total Growth	Average Annual Growth
Population (People)	86,800	110,700	23,900	683 (0.7%)
Employment (Jobs)	45,000	57,600	12,600	360 (0.7%)
Jobs/Population	51.8%	49.2%		

Most of the forecast population growth is planned within the Urban Centre Secondary Plan area along Yonge Street and Davis Drive. Furthermore, as presented in the

Proposed 2051 Forecast Report, Newmarket is anticipated to attract approximately 4,000 major office jobs over the forecast period, mostly to be accommodated in the Urban Centres, and approximately 3,500 jobs on vacant employment lands and intensification elsewhere in the municipality.

Planning staff agree with Regional staff that population growth in Newmarket will be increasing and achieved through intensification, as DGAs are largely built out. Planning staff also recognize that growth may be further constrained by the delay associated with the completion of the Upper York Water Reclamation Centre in the short term.

Town of Newmarket is likely to Exceed York Region's Forecasted Population and Employment Growth

However, Planning staff do have a concern with the annual growth rate that York Region has applied to the Town, being 0.7%. This appears to be quite low. An average annual growth of 683 people is equivalent to approximately 367 apartment units per year. To put that into perspective, Briarwood Development's project, which is nearing the end of the site plan approval process, includes 339 apartment units, and Rose Corporation's Deerfield project (phases 1 and 2), which are under construction, include a total of 435 apartment units. As Council is aware, staff is also processing a number of applications in the Urban Centres that are also expected to be built in the next few years.

According to Statistics Canada, Newmarket's population increased by 5.3% from 2011 to 2016, representing an average annual growth rate of 1.06%. It is estimated that Newmarket's population was just over 90,000 people at the end of 2020, which represents an estimated average annual growth rate of approximately 1.7% between 2016 and 2020, indicating a moderately increasing growth rate. Historically, Newmarket's annual growth has not been below 1%, and the most recent numbers as outlined suggest this rate is increasing. To illustrate with an example, using a conservative estimate where only two apartment buildings (total 435 units) get occupied each year, this would represent approximately 850 people growth per year (1% growth).

Town of Newmarket will likely Exceed the Proposed Intensification Target of 8,700 Units between 2016 and 2051

The Growth Plan requires municipalities to develop an intensification strategy to achieve the Growth Plan's minimum intensification target. For York Region, a minimum of 50% of all new housing units constructed on an annual basis must be accommodated within the built-up area (refer to Attachment 1).

Within the built-up area, York Region is proposing the following hierarchical list providing a descending priority level for growth. This is done, in part, to make most efficient use of servicing infrastructure that exists in these areas, which supports the Region's goal of aligning growth with infrastructure.

1. Regional Centres;
2. Major Transit Station Areas (MTSA);
3. Regional Corridors, and
4. Local Centres and Corridors

To support the minimum 50% Region-wide intensification target, each local municipality contributes at different levels depending on a number of factors:

- The extent of intensification opportunities within Regional Centres and Corridors as well as local centres and corridors;
- The level of existing and planned transit and servicing infrastructure; and
- The geographic extent of the built-up area within the municipality.

Based on the above considerations, York Region is proposing to assign the highest intensification target of 86% to Newmarket, followed by the City of Richmond Hill at 77%. This is because the majority of Newmarket is within the built-up area with a Regional Centre, 12 MTSAs and Regional Corridors along Yonge Street and Davis Drive. Planning staff anticipates that Newmarket will exceed the intensification target of 8700 units.

Currently, there are approximately 2300 units being proposed, processed, and/or under construction in the above noted intensification areas in Newmarket, excluding the Mulock GO MTSA. Assuming the Upper Canada Mall Master Plan will be at 50% built out by 2051 (approximately 2500 units), plus an additional 200 units per year from future development applications, Planning staff estimate that approximately 10,600 new residential units could be built within the Regional Centre, MTSAs and Regional Corridors between 2021 and 2051, subject to servicing capacity availability.

Town of Newmarket will Meet or Exceed the Proposed Designated Greenfield Area Density Target of 40 Residents and Jobs per Hectare

Newmarket's DGAs are shown in Attachment 1 of this report. Generally, they are located at the southwest and northwest quadrants of Newmarket. The DGA in the northwest quadrant is nearly built-out with an estimated density of approximately 70 residents and jobs per hectare. The lands in the southwest quadrant DGA are currently subject of an Official Plan Amendment application seeking to allow for urban uses.

Infrastructure to Support Newmarket's Growth

It is a goal of the Region to align growth with infrastructure. This is because to support the forecasted growth, significant investments will be required for infrastructure such as water, wastewater and transit. These capital investments will need to be closely aligned with the timing and location of actual growth. Aligning existing infrastructure and prioritizing and staging future investments will be key for achieving better integration of land use and infrastructure planning in a fiscally sustainable fashion.

As discussed above, Newmarket will likely exceed the targets as proposed by York Region in the Proposed 2051 Forecast Report. When considering York Region's fiscal capacity, phasing and staging of growth, Planning staff recommend that Regional staff

reconsider the resources for water and wastewater infrastructure, road improvements and transit services to support Newmarket's anticipated growth as outlined in this report.

Conclusion

York Region has completed its 2051 Forecast and Land Need Assessment. Based on the information available to Town staff, Newmarket will almost certainly exceed the population and employment targets as proposed by York Region. Planning staff recommend that Regional staff carefully reconsider the population and employment growth assigned to Newmarket and ensure that the phasing and staging of growth are aligned with Newmarket's needs.

Business Plan and Strategic Plan Linkages

- Economic Leadership and Job Creation
- Vibrancy on Yonge, Davis, and Mulock

Consultation

None

Human Resource Considerations

None

Budget Impact

None

Attachments

Attachment 1 – York Region Land Use Categories

Submitted by

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Approved for Submission

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