

What We Heard

City Plan: Richmond Hill Official Plan Update

Spring 2025 Engagement Summary Report

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Prepared for the City of Richmond Hill

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Executive Summary

The City of Richmond Hill is updating the City's Official Plan to provide a clear vision for planning and development and attract more businesses, jobs, and residents for the next 25 years and beyond. The conformity and enhancement update will consider new opportunities while aligning with the current provincial direction.

A key component of the project is an extensive engagement program designed to raise broader interest and awareness and help shape the City's vision and goals for the future. This report summarizes the engagement process and the feedback received during the spring 2025 events as part of Richmond Hill's Official Plan Update.

The engagement aims to inform the participants of the proposed Official Plan updates. Given that the City of Richmond Hill's Official Plan is dated 2010, it needs to be updated to reflect the current provincial direction. Many of the changes are technical in nature and do not change the overall structure and objective of the City's Official Plan. The purpose is to add new sections to comply with the provincial and regional direction and improve the implementation of the Official Plan.

This report summarizes the feedback received during the spring 2025 engagements, including webinars held on March 27th, April 22nd, and June 12th, 2025, as well as an in-person session held on May 28th, 2025. The March 27th, 2025, webinar covered housekeeping policies relating to climate change, natural heritage, water resources, prime agriculture areas, mineral aggregates, wildland fire, and excess soil management. The April 22nd, 2025, webinar covered employment areas, affordable housing, cultural heritage resources, archaeological resources, community uses, transportation, Indigenous engagement and monitoring and targets. The May 28th in-person session and the June 12th virtual session covered Protected Major Transit Station Areas (PMTSAs), why they are important to Richmond Hill's long-term growth, and the plan for the Regional Mixed-Use Corridors along Yonge Street and Highway 7.

Through the March and April webinars, we heard a wide range of perspectives, including the need for employment growth near the Newkirk GO Station, affordable and subsidized housing availability, and clarity on land use designation, such as the exclusion of particular office uses. There were inquiries about the City's evaluation of employment land under new provincial policies, the types of development planned for areas like Yonge Street and Bloomington, and whether commercial components would be included.

There were questions about agricultural land protection, building restrictions in aquifer-vulnerable and wildfire-prone areas and whether Richmond Hill can exceed provincial guidelines for safety and environmental sustainability. Environmental concerns are also raised around excess soil use, options for disposing of garden soil responsibly, and the sustainability of agriculture by 2050.

During the May and June events, participants had the opportunity to ask questions about PMTSAs and the RMUCs. Through these sessions, participants explored the benefits and impacts of increased density in these areas. They identified public spaces,

amenities, and community uses to make the area more vibrant, convenient, and livable for residents, workers, and visitors.

Presentations are available on the [City's webpage](#).

Engagement

A summary of the total engagement and communication reach is included below.

166



Open House
Attendees/
Viewers

1,593+



Twitter
Impressions

2,654+



Project Web
Page Views

17,371+



People
reached on
Facebook

The feedback received will inform the relevant policies within the Draft Official Plan Amendment, which is anticipated to be released and made available for public comment in late 2025. The City will subsequently host a statutory public Open House and a Council Public Meeting for endorsement anticipated in the spring of 2026.

Section 1: Project Background

The City of Richmond Hill is updating its Official Plan (OP) to guide the growth of businesses, jobs and residents for the next 25 years, while aligning with provincial policies. This report summarizes feedback engagement from spring 2025 activities that will inform the Official Plan Update (OPU).

Engagement Objectives

Updating the City's Official Plan provides a significant opportunity to engage the public and key stakeholders. A key component of the project is an extensive engagement program designed to raise broader interest and awareness and help shape the City's vision and goals for the future.

Specific objectives of the City Plan 2051 engagement program are to:

- Facilitate authentic and meaningful opportunities for engagement
- Engage broad members of the Richmond Hill community
- Report back on key outcomes

The current engagement focuses on topics identified below.

Spring 2025 Engagement Topics

The City has made significant progress in updating the Official Plan by adopting OPA 18.3 on Vision and City Structure and 18.4 on Neighbourhoods in 2022. In 2023, the City adopted OPA 18.5 through 18.8 on Local Centres and the Key Development Area, which amended policies for three local centres and one key development area. These amendments provide long-term direction for growth and development in these intensification areas.

Due to significant legislative changes over the last few years, the City had to recalibrate the timing and approach to complete the Official Plan Update. Some of the legislative changes include Bill 23 and Bill 185. In addition, the Province introduced the new Provincial Planning Statement while removing the Growth Plan. The OPU had to adjust its work plan to account for the provincial changes. Many of the remaining changes are technical in nature and do not change the overall structure and objective of the City's Official Plan. The remainder of the OPU has four main components.

- **Employment Area:** The Province has tightened the list of permitted uses in designated employment lands and allowed employment land conversion to occur outside of a municipal comprehensive review. As such, the City's Official Plan must reflect provincial direction.
- **Housekeeping and Technical:** These are the last set of policy amendments. The following topics are included:
 - **Climate Change:** The OP aims to address climate change by aiming for net-zero emissions by 2050 and preparing for extreme weather.

- **Prime Agricultural Area:** The OP designates a Prime Agricultural Area in northeast Richmond Hill to support local farming and food systems with protection for high-quality soils. This will permit agri-food and on-farm diversified uses while abiding by the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan.
- **Sustainable Design:** Updates will encourage renewable energy systems, water, and energy-efficient buildings.
- **Natural Heritage System:** The OP will continue to protect critical ecological areas like wetlands, woodlands and wildlife habitats in alignment with regional and provincial conservation plans.
- **Wildland Fire:** The City will manage wildland fire risks by steering development away from high-risk forested areas and requiring fire mitigation strategies where development occurs.
- **Excess Soil Management:** The OP will include policies promoting the safe and sustainable reuse of excess soil from construction sites to reduce landfill waste.
- **Mineral Aggregated Resource:** The City will protect sand and gravel deposits in the northern part of Richmond Hill for future extraction.
- **Community Uses:** New policies will allow more flexibility for community services like day programs, food banks, schools and places of worship in built-up areas.
- **Employment Area:** The employment area will be protected for industrial, manufacturing, and warehouse uses aligned with the recent provincial planning changes.
- **Affordable Housing:** The OP will adopt updated affordable ownership and rental housing definitions to align with provincial and regional standards.
- **Cultural Heritage Resource:** The City will enhance its ability to protect designated and listed heritage properties through new conditions for development and demolition. The policies will also promote integrating adaptive reuse and heritage buildings into new development.
- **Archaeological Resource:** The OP will use regional tools to identify archeological potential and protect Indigenous resources in situ where possible. Indigenous communities will be engaged appropriately during archaeological assessments and reviews.
- **Indigenous Engagement:** The OP will recognize treaty and Indigenous land rights and embed respectful engagement practices in the planning process.
- **Transportation:** The transportation policies will prioritize multimodal travel, barrier-free design, and sustainable options in line with the 2023 Transportation Master Plan.
- **Protected Major Transit Station Areas (PMTSAs):** York Region's Official Plan has identified 17 PMTSAs in Richmond Hill. Following the *Planning Act*, the City's official plan must include land use, height, and density policies for each PMTSA.
- **Regional Mixed-Use Corridors (RMUCs):** Regional mixed-use corridors (RMUCs) are lands along specific Yonge Street and Highway 7 segments. In 2024, Council directed staff to explore opportunities for additional growth in these designated RMUCs.

Section 2: What We Heard

Housekeeping and Employment Areas

This section provides a high-level summary of the feedback and questions heard during the housekeeping and employment areas webinars. The topics of greatest interest to participants were water resources, the prime agriculture area, wildland fire, excessive soil management, archaeological resources, employment areas, and transportation. No comments or questions were received about housekeeping matters relating to climate change, sustainable design, the natural heritage system, mineral aggregate resources, community uses, cultural heritage resources or Indigenous engagement.

During the housekeeping webinars, attendees could ask questions. The following is a non-verbatim summary. Questions are marked with a "Q", answers with an "A" and comments with a "C."

Water Resources

The City will protect water resources through watershed-scale planning and identify key hydrologic areas such as recharge zones and aquifers.

Q: Are high-rise buildings permitted in high aquifer vulnerability areas?

A: Specific policies are in place for highly vulnerable aquifers to protect these sensitive areas. Unlike low-rise or detached homes, high-rise buildings require deeper footing and often include underground parking. These underground parking features can impact nearby aquifers, especially in highly vulnerable areas. For that reason, there are protective policies to manage this risk.

High rises may not be permitted depending on the location and whether it falls under source water protection areas. If they are permitted, developers are required to complete a water balance report. This report evaluates how much water enters and leaves the site due to land use changes and increased surface impermeability. This application undergoes extensive technical review by City staff and the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority, focusing on water quantity impacts.

Additional information on source water protection can be found on the City website or by contacting the City directly.

Prime Agricultural Area

The Official Plan designated a Prime Agricultural Area in northeast Richmond Hill supporting local farming and food systems with protections for high-quality soils. This will permit agri-food and on-farm diversified uses while abiding by the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan.

Q: Why are agriculture-related on-farm diversified uses not permitted in areas not identified as prime agriculture?

A: The 2014 Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan (ORMCP) Update expanded agriculture-related and on-farm diversified uses. We are currently updating our Official Plan to conform to this provincial direction. Under the ORMCP, these two types of uses are only permitted on lands identified as prime agricultural areas. However, outside of the prime agricultural area, in areas designated as "countryside," these uses are also permitted. Richmond Hill contains some countryside-designated land, so agricultural-related and on-farm diversified uses would also be permitted.

Q: Why are other agricultural lands not included in the Prime Agricultural Area?

A: The province initially identified the prime agricultural areas through the Agricultural System. This involved consultations with municipalities across the Greater Golden Horseshoe from 2017 to 2018. Based on the provincial mapping, York Region further redefined the agricultural area through its Official Plan review. A technical study was completed, and the boundaries were defined. York Region consulted with local municipalities, including the City of Richmond Hill, as part of the process. The City agreed with the boundaries of the area. When York Region finalized the Official Plan, it designated the northeastern quadrant of Richmond Hill as a prime agricultural area. That mapping schedule was approved through the Region's Official Plan update and approved by the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. The regional schedule and its associated policies are now in force.

Q: Does or will the future agriculture land use local water resources like self-sustainable farming in 2025?

A: The City may request an agricultural impact assessment as part of a development application for agricultural uses, whether general agricultural use, agriculture-related uses or an on-farm diversified use. This assessment helps determine if the proposed use would negatively affect existing or potential agricultural operations. The assessment may consider the impact on water resources. The City's sustainable design policies encourage sustainable development. However, it is up to farmers to research and implement sustainable agriculture practices. Organizations such as the Ontario Farming Association offer training and educational opportunities. Some farmers also receive grants to invest in advanced equipment, such as tools for sustainable tilling practices.

Wildland Fire

The City will manage wildland fire risks by steering development away from forested areas and requiring fire mitigation strategies where development occurs.

Q: Why would we allow development in high-risk areas (for wildland fires), even if mitigation is provided? Can the City of Richmond Hill policies go beyond the provincial guidelines?

A: The Provincial Planning Statement indicates municipalities are expected to direct development away from areas with high or extreme wildland fire risk. However, this does not prevent an applicant from proposing development in those areas if they can demonstrate the risk can be mitigated or reduced. The City is aligning this direction and incorporating it into our Official Plan.

Excess Soil Management

The Official Plan will include policies promoting the safe and sustainable reuse of excess soil from construction sites to reduce landfill waste.

Q: What is excess soil, and where is this evacuated soil coming from?

A: Excess soil is typically excavated or dug up during construction, such as when a high-rise or mid-rise development needs deeper footings or during infrastructure projects, such as the City installing underground pipes.

Q: When residents have a garden and need to replace the soil, is there an environmentally friendly way to get rid of old soil?

A: You can reuse existing garden soil. Soil does not need to be disposed of completely. Most of the time, people modify the soil and use compost.

Employment Area

The employment area will be protected for industrial, manufacturing, and warehouse uses aligned with the recent provincial planning changes.

Q: What expansion and employment near the GO Station Newkirk area is envisioned, since the city's website indicates there's no vacant land available for business there?

A: The area around the Newkirk GO Station is part of the Newkirk Local Centre and has been designated a Protected Major Transit Station Area. Over the long term, the City expects mixed-use redevelopment around the station parking lots. These lands have already been removed from the city's employment land supply to support future residential and commercial development.

Q: Can you clarify what the OP policies will permit in terms of new office buildings?

A: Under the provincial direction, new office buildings are no longer permitted within designated employment lands. Instead, future office development should be directed to areas like centres or corridors with better transit access. These are more suited for major new office projects.

Q: Will the city evaluate its employment land need (land area) in the context of the new PPS employment area permitted uses?

A: The City is reviewing our employment land needs as part of a broader growth management and forecasting exercise. In the City of Richmond Hill, expansion is very limited due to the Oak Ridges Moraine, which restricts available land. As a result, we are focused on preserving existing employment lands and exploring ways to intensify and use those lands more efficiently to meet future needs.

Affordable Housing

The Official Plan will adopt updated affordable ownership and rental housing definitions to align with provincial and regional standards.

Q: Do you have any plans for subsidized apartments?

A: The City does not manage or operate supportive housing. The responsibility falls under York Region through Housing York Inc. Please visit the York Region website for more information, including contact details.

Q: What does "where possible" mean in the Archeological Resource matters?

A: Indigenous archeological resources shall be protected in situ where possible. This is not to disturb the artifact or the burial site. If it is not possible to keep the resources on the site, the City will work with First Nations, who may want these artifacts.

Transportation

The transportation policies will prioritize multimodal travel, barrier-free design, and sustainable options in line with the 2023 Transportation Master Plan.

Q: Can you provide an update on the Yonge North Subway Extension?

A: According to our understanding, this project has already started, but Metrolinx has yet to confirm the timeline.

Q: Are there plans for GO transit expansion between Richmond Hill, Newkirk, and Gormley stations?

A: This is currently part of our draft Transportation Master Plan. The transit schedules are being developed in our Official Plan.

Protected Major Transit Station Areas (PMTSAs) and Regional Mixed-Use Corridors (RMUCs)

This section provides a high-level summary of the feedback heard during the PMTSAs and RMUCs engagement sessions organized under key discussion questions.

What do you think the areas along Yonge Street and Highway 7 need to feel like to create a great place to live, work and visit?

- **Family friendly**
 - Ensure there are more public amenities available.
- **Walkable with designated paths**
 - Upgrade the area to increase walkability. Consider making it a pedestrian- and cycling-only route.
- **Accessible transportation and transit**
 - Improve transit flow and traffic conditions along Yonge Street to make movement enjoyable.
 - Provide driver-friendly routes and parking.
 - Improve the streetscape adjacent to Yonge and Highway 7.
- **Mixed-use with dynamic streetscape destinations**
 - Foster a dynamic streetscape accessible to local shops, diverse restaurants, and active storefronts to create a lively commercial environment.
 - Include mixed amenities on the 1st floor of development.
 - Provide accessible open space, indoor green spaces and parks for all ages.
- **Integrated green space and environment**
 - Integrate meaningful green spaces and landscaping around buildings to support a greener, healthier, and visually appealing urban experience.
 - Add trees around the main corridors or the commercial space.
- **Community amenities**
 - Prioritize community infrastructure such as libraries, schools and community centres to encourage socializing and community sense.
 - Integrate comfortable rest spots and indoor amenities into development.
- **Heritage and design**
 - Develop a village-like and heritage feel in varied streetscaping and building designs.
 - Incorporate art installations and space at intersections.

What benefits do you see from increased density areas?

- **Community and public spaces**
 - Lively public spaces that foster stronger, more walkable communities.
 - Integrated public places with grades like retail, shops and restaurants.
- **Housing supply and affordability**
 - Increased housing options, including affordable choices and lower overall cost of living.

- **Economic benefits**
 - Potential to boost property tax revenue and support economic growth to fund local services and developments.
 - Increased density may also encourage local restaurants and shops (e.g. Kleinberg has a good mix of local shops and restaurants).
 - Increased density can support more activities around the area, such as cultural events and gatherings.
 - More jobs can be created around the area.
- **Proximity to key hubs**
 - Being near major hubs such as Richmond Hill Centre improves accessibility and enhances the area.
 - Higher densities can support businesses and amenities to stay open longer. This can also build affordability for residents.
- **Public services and infrastructure**
 - Higher density supports improvements in public transport and health care services for a growing population.
 - More people could take public transit, increasing service frequency.
- **Mixed-use and community spaces**
 - Higher densities can consider live-work units and integrated community areas.
- **Infrastructure upgrades**
 - Sewage, utilities and public service improvements.
- **Public Parking Solutions**
 - Multi-level parking and better parking management for drivers.

What impacts do you anticipate with increased height and density in PMTSAs and Corridor? How can the City best address these impacts?

- **Transportation, traffic and parking**
 - Increased traffic congestion and parking challenges. The City should plan for improved public transportation options and parking management strategies to create better flow.
 - More travel demand and frequent transit use strain city infrastructure, requiring significant investment, coordination and planning.
- **Building design**
 - Need for setback and open areas to maintain livability.
 - Taller buildings impact adjacent housing, which can cause less natural light. There could also be microclimate effects, such as urban heat islands. Thoughtful urban design is needed.

- **Infrastructure improvement and pressure**
 - Greater demand for infrastructure such as sewers, hospitals, and recreation facilities.
 - Pressure on public amenities like hospitals, recreational spaces and retail.
- **Sense of community and safety**
 - Higher densities can reduce the sense of community, especially in high-rise neighbourhoods. Higher densities can also decrease the sense of community if not designed well.
 - There may be increased safety concerns in some areas. There are opportunities to consider safety in the design of new spaces.
- **Employment**
 - There is a need to protect employment lands and ensure employment opportunities in these areas. The City can highlight employment areas and attract jobs for people to live and work.
- **Loss of green space and wildlife**
 - Reduced parks and outdoor community areas.
 - Higher density may impact bird routes and local life. The City should consider designing bird-friendly buildings.
- **Development contributions**
 - Developers should provide community benefits and public spaces.
- **Protect landmarks**
 - Special consideration must be given to sites like David Dunlap Observatory to preserve their integrity.

What kinds of public space, amenities or street level features would make you more likely to walk or bike along Yonge Street or Highway 7 and help make the corridor feel more welcoming?

- **Events and activation space**
 - Street festivals, live music and community events create a vibrant atmosphere.
- **Greenery and beautification**
 - More green spaces, native plants/trees, flower beds, plantings, and water features to enhance visual appeal.
- **Transit, cycling and pedestrian infrastructure**
 - Protected bike lanes (like in Leslie Street) and fewer vehicle lanes.
 - Walkable and accessible retail.
 - PATH-style indoor connections like in Toronto.
 - Better transit and free shuttles between key destinations to reduce the reliance on cars and support public transit.

- **Public amenities and spaces**
 - Well-lit, comfortable, winter-friendly and safe public spaces. Open public spaces that encourage people to activate the streets.
 - Seating away from traffic.
 - Public spaces for gathering and shaded rest spots.
 - Accessible common spaces, parks, pop-up events and cultural spaces.
 - Public and private partnerships. Public Own Private Spaces (POPS).
 - VIVA stations at every intersection on Yonge and Highway for people to stand. Continuous raised crosswalk at a minor intersection and a driveway.
 - Condos that are connected to Hillcrest Mall or walkable to public amenities.
 - Better signage identifying Richmond Hill.
- **Community services**
 - Social services, including homeless outreach and support.
- **Convenient shops and café**
 - Street-level retail, restaurants and cafés that are local to foster a lively, active streetscape
 - Grocery stores within walking distance.

What types of community uses (such as commercial, retail, office spaces, restaurants or live-work units) would you like to see along Yonge Street and Highway 7 to make the area more vibrant, convenient, and livable for residents, work, and visitors?

- **Housing**
 - Protect family-sized housing and community amenities.
 - More housing options, including supportive housing and larger units for families (2-3 bedrooms)
- **Community amenities**
 - Libraries
 - Kids' playground
 - Senior-friendly spaces
 - Mixed commercial and residential spaces
 - Cultural and community facilities for cultural engagement
 - Fountains and art installations
 - Places to talk and sit
- **Office spaces**
 - Independent office spaces
 - Live/workspaces
- **Food and retail**
 - Local restaurants, shops, and businesses

- Create welcoming spaces (e.g. similar to Mississauga, near Square One, which has shopping, parks, and fountains).
- Commercial, retail and restaurants at each intersection of a VIVA station that are aesthetically pleasing.
- **Transit, transport and parking**
 - The traffic on Yonge and Highway 7 is heavy in the morning.
 - Saturday traffic is noticeably heavier in hospitals.
 - The Yonge Street and Highway 7 crossing are too wide.
 - There needs to be better traffic flow, dedicated bus lanes and reliable transit.
 - Development must create a shortcut to the adjacent low-rise neighborhoods (especially since it is a dead-end, with transit within a short walking distance). Sidewalks need linkages.
 - There is a concern about parking removal and its impact on residents.
 - Build a purpose-built parking garage to accommodate the current parking demand and have a plan to convert it to affordable housing. This requires careful design consideration when it starts.
 - Support for parking and adaptable transit schedules.
 - There is a need for off-site parking.
 - Shops and retailers should try to hide the traffic view from the roads.
- **Urban agriculture**
 - Farmable or green space, such as rooftop gardens and community farming areas.
 - Plaza, patios and aesthetically pleasing streetscapes.
- **Planning, density and design**
 - Cohesive planning vision for Richmond Hill.
 - Preserve the employment lands and balance density with infrastructure.
 - Protect hospitals and improve east-west connectivity to maintain essential services.
 - Cap heights and mitigate over-densification better.
 - Require developers to provide community benefits or greenspace for additional height requests.
 - There is a need for a design concept along the corridor that defines the designs and streetscapes.

Additional Questions and Responses

During all sessions, attendees were able to ask questions. The following is a non-verbatim summary. Questions are marked with a "Q", answers with an "A" and comments with a "C."

Major Transit Stations Areas and Protected Designations

Q: Why does Richmond Hill have so many Protected Major Transit Station Areas (PTMSAs)? Can you clarify what 'protected' means?

A: Protected Major Transit Station Areas (PMTSAs) are a subcategory of MTSAAs approved by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing as "protected," under the *Planning Act*. These 'protected' areas mean the land use permissions, minimum or maximum height, and minimum or maximum density set for these areas are not subject to appeal to the Ontario Land Tribunal. This gives residents and businesses certainty about the types of uses, heights, and densities that will be permitted. The PMTSA boundaries were established by the Region and were approved by the Province.

The area has two bus rapid transit stations along Yonge Street, a GO Station, and a future subway planned near Yonge and Highway 7. While the term includes the word station, it refers to the broader surrounding areas centred around key transit hubs.

Q: The Major Mackenzie portion east of the Village Local Centre is designated Local Mixed-Use Corridor in the Major Mackenzie BRT PMTSA. How will the City differentiate between the Local Centre and other lands outside of it, but still within the PMTSA?

A: The PMTSA shown on our maps were delineated by the Region and approved by the Province. The boundaries of these areas can only be changed through a Municipal Comprehensive Review. Currently, the City is not planning or altering the 17 PTMSAs that have been established. All along Yonge Street falls around PMTSA, and each PMTSA has a density target.

The area south of Major Mackenzie, previously part of the Village Local Centre, has been redesignated as a RMUC under the Official Plan Update. This reflects higher intensification potential compared to the Local Centre. As such, while both are PMTSA, their land use designation and policy direction, such as building height, density, and permitted use, will distinguish them moving forward.

Densities, Heights and Development

Q: Will there be incentives for developers or employers to achieve minimum densities? Will there be specifications for types of businesses?

A: The City wants a variety and a different mix of uses within the regional mixed-use corridor. The City is developing policies to encourage various uses along Yonge and Highway 7, especially within the RMUC designations. The goal is to support diverse, mixed employment, including opportunities for entrepreneurs and employers. Some new policies will outline the permitted land uses within the corridors to help attract different types of business and promote a vibrant, mixed-use environment.

Q: When will the proposed building heights be available?

A: The proposed building heights have not yet been released to the public. The City has completed the Growth Management Forecast Study and is conducting a sensitivity analysis. This will help the City assess whether the existing infrastructure can support

the proposed increase in height and density. After that, the City will continue internal review with staff, seek input from commenting agencies and go through the necessary approvals from the Council. A statutory meeting is expected to occur mid-2026, and the proposed height and density policies will be available to the public by spring 2026.

Q: How are density and height limitations determined?

A: The City has undertaken a 3D modelling exercise to help determine appropriate heights and density. This process involved analyzing each parcel along key corridors like Yonge Street and Highway 7 to assess what each site could realistically accommodate regarding built form. In addition, the City reviewed existing development trends and recently approved applications to understand what types of development are already occurring and how they align with our broader planning goals.

It is important to note that while base height and density are established, transition policies and design guidelines are also included. These ensure that any proposed developments respect the surrounding context, such as providing appropriate setbacks and lower building heights near existing low-rise neighbourhoods. This helps maintain a balanced and sensitive urban environment as growth continues.

Q: Are you discussing heights and densities with the City of Markham to align along Yonge Street and Highway 7?

A: The City is committed to working with Markham to achieve the shared goals. As part of our collaborative efforts, the City works closely with public agencies, the province and the Region to coordinate growth and development along Yonge Street and Highway 7. Since the PMTSA along this corridor shares boundaries between Richmond Hill and Markham, the City must align its efforts to meet the minimum density targets for the entire area.

Corridor and Area Specific Planning

Q: Any thoughts on plans for the portion of Major Mackenzie within the Local Mixed-Use Corridor?

A: As part of the Official Plan Amendments, which the City introduced in 2023, we looked at the area around Yonge Street and Major Mackenzie Drive. This includes the Village Local Centre. Previously, the area's southern portion was designated as part of the Local Centre. Still, through the OPA, the City is designing the portion of the land as a RMUC in alignment with our intensification priorities.

RMUC s are intended to accommodate greater building heights and densities than a Local Centre. South of Major Mackenzie, for example, we can expect more significant development in the future.

Meanwhile, the area north of Major Mackenzie will be a part of the Village Local Centre, which will have different policies reflecting its local character. These details can be found on [the website](#).

Q: What is the West Gormley Secondary Plan? What does it mean, and what is the timeline to implement it?

A: The City's West Gormley Secondary Plan was approved in 2010. This area is located within the Oak Ridge Moraine Conservation Plan area and was subject to litigation through the Ontario Municipal Board. It has been resolved and is now in force.

Employment and Land Use

Q: Given the change in the provincial definition of employment areas, will the Official Plan introduce new land use permissions for employment areas?

A: The remaining employment areas, especially the 10 that are still designated, are being addressed through the East Beaver Creek Secondary Plan Study. This is a separate but concurrent project that the City is working on alongside the Official Plan Update. If interested, there is a separate notification list for updates on East Beaver Creek. Please sign up on [the website](#) to be notified.

Transit Infrastructure and Coordination

Q: Where will the extension of the TTC line be on Yonge Street?

A: Metrolinx is currently leading the Yonge North Subway project. While several stations will be along Yonge Street, all the confirmed stations are located south of Richmond Hill. The current alignment has the subway turning east before entering Richmond Hill, with the terminus station planned at High Tech Road near the Richmond Hill Centre. This is where the extension is currently set to end.

The city continues to advocate for the subway to be extended further north, ideally staying aligned with Yonge Street and better supporting transit-oriented development and major transit station areas. However, Metrolinx has not confirmed plans to expand the line beyond High Tech Station.

Q: Are there any plans to change the protected width of the right-of-way (ROW), given that traffic demand might not grow as much now, given the focus towards public transit and no parking minimums?

A: The right-of-way (ROW) road widths are established through the City's Transportation Master Plan, which was approved by the Council in 2023. For the most part, the ROW widths remain the same with a few exceptions for specific corridors. Even though the overall ROW widths stay consistent, there is a noticeable shift in how the space within those rights-of-way will be used. The City is prioritizing a mobility hierarchy, focusing more on active transportation modes like walking and cycling. While physical width is not changing much, how space is allocated will be better for supporting those sustainable transportation options.

Housing and Vacancy

Q: What are the vacancies in Richmond Hill condos?

A: The City does not have specific data regarding the condominium vacancy rates in Richmond Hill.

A: The right-of-way (ROW) road widths are established through the City's Transportation Master Plan, which was approved by the Council in 2023. For the most part, the ROW widths remain the same with a few exceptions for specific corridors. Even though the overall ROW widths stay consistent, there is a noticeable shift in how the space within those rights-of-way will be used. The City is prioritizing a mobility hierarchy, focusing more on active transportation modes like walking and cycling. While physical width is not changing much, how space is allocated will be better for supporting those sustainable transportation options.

Sustainability and Innovation

Q: Has the City considered shared electric vehicle infrastructure programs?

A: The City is currently undertaking a micromobility strategy. As part of this, the City is building on the Province's pilot program that allows municipalities to create bylaws regulating shared electric devices such as scooters and e-bikes. The strategy and draft recommendations are still under review and have not yet been approved by Council.

Other Feedback Received

Participants provided the following additional suggestions relating to the process:

- Ensure consistent planning and coordination with adjacent municipalities for a consistent and cohesive feel.
- Consider an open tender for private companies to develop ideas with the community.
- Consider additional communication, including multilingual, hard/soft copy materials and outreach to youth to foster greater participation.

Section 3: Engagement Process and Communication Methods

Engagement Methods

The engagement methods for seeking feedback from the community are detailed below.

Virtual Webinars

- **March 27th, 2025**, focused on climate change, the natural heritage system, water resources, prime agricultural areas, mineral aggregates, wildland fire and excess soil management. Fifty (50) people attended.
- **April 22nd, 2025**, focused on affordable housing, cultural heritage resources, community use, transportation, Indigenous engagement and monitoring and targets. The webinars contained presentations on the issues and facilitated question-and-answer sessions were provided during the keynote presentation. Sixty (60) people attended.
- **June 12th, 2025**, focused on PMTSAs and RMUCs. The presentation covered why PTMSAs and RMUCs are important to Richmond Hill's long-term growth, and the plan for the RMUCs along Yonge Street and Highway 7. The webinar

included a facilitated question-and-answer period and discussion session. Thirty six (36) people attended.

In-Person Public Open House

An in-person open house was held on May 28th, 2025, to discuss PMTSAs and RMUCs. The presentation covered why PTMSAs and RMUCs are important to Richmond Hill's long-term growth, and the plan for the RMUCs along Yonge Street and Highway 7. The presentation was followed by a facilitated question-and-answer period. Twenty (20) people attended.

Communication Methods

The following communication methods were used to share information about the engagement opportunities.

- **Social Media:** posts promoted the engagement events through the City's Twitter and Facebook accounts, with 7 X (formerly) known as Twitter posts and 3 Facebook posts.
- **Homepage Static Banner:** Notices of the engagement opportunities were posted on the City's Home page on March 11th, April 10th and May 20th, 2025.
- **Project Webpage**
 - Notices for the March 27th, 2025, webinar on Environmental and Resource Policies were posted on the project page from updated from March 11th, 2025.
 - Notices for the April 22nd, 2025, webinar on Affordable Housing, Transportation, Community Uses and Other Topics were posted on the project page from April 10th, 2025.
 - Notices for the May 28th and June 12th, 2025, engagement events for PMTSAs and RMUCs were posted on the project page from May 20th, 2025.
- **Email:** Emails to prescribed bodies, individuals who subscribed to the sign-up list and individuals who indicated they wanted to be notified about the project were sent out to promote the spring engagement opportunities.
- **Newsletter:** The City promoted engagement opportunities in the City e-newsletter.
- **Digital Ads and Posters:** The engagement opportunities were promoted using digital ads and posters two weeks before events.
- **Curbex Signs:** The engagement opportunities were promoted using Curbex signs on May 12th, 2025.
- **LED Signage:** Advertisements were included in the City's LED signs at all Richmond Hill community centres and arenas on May 12th, 2025.

Section 4: Next Steps

The feedback received from the spring 2025 engagement events will inform the relevant policies within the Draft Official Plan Amendment and will be released and available for public comment in late 2025. The City will subsequently host a statutory public Open House and a Council Public Meeting for endorsement in the spring of 2026.