



# Business Community Workshop

April 27, 2021



# Tonight's Agenda

- Welcome and Introductions
- Purpose of Workshop
- Official Plan Update Background
- Current Context
- Questions
- Workshop – Break out rooms
  - Business Parks
  - Intensification Areas
- Report back
- Next Steps

# Purpose of Workshop

To receive advice from the business community on what planning direction is needed to achieve the City's economic goals for job creation and investment retention and attraction.

# Poll #1: What is your involvement in the current business market today?

- a) Land owner
- b) Realtor
- c) Commercial business operator
- d) Industrial business operator
- e) Institutional business operator
- f) Office user/operator
- g) Other

Choose all that apply.

# Official Plan Update Background



Gather  
Feedback on  
Vision, Pillars,  
Urban  
Structure

2021  
Prepare and  
Consult on Key  
Directions\*

2022  
Prepare and  
Consult on  
Official Plan  
Amendments

July 2022  
Recommend  
Adoption of  
proposed  
Amendments  
to Council

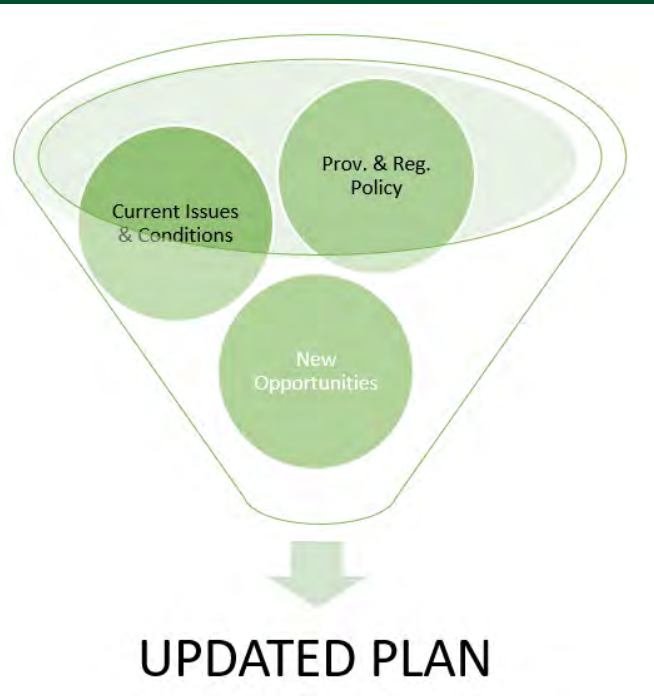
Key  
Directions

*Richmond Hill*



\*: Area Specific Workshops – April to June  
Key Directions Report Public Open House – October  
Council Endorsement of Key Directions – December

# Purpose of Update



To update Richmond Hill's policies and schedules in accordance with Provincial and Regional policy and legislation

To shape our city to respond to our need for places to **live, work/learn/innovate**, and **play/rest**, and for **how we get there**.

To respond to issues and opportunities, like:

- Changing demographics
- Responding to climate change
- Accommodating changes in technology
- Responding to changes in our economy

# Proposed 2041 Vision

“ By 2041, the City of Richmond Hill will be the centerpiece of York Region and one of the most prominent, complete communities in the Greater Toronto Area. ”



*How can we work with the business community to achieve Council priorities and this vision?*



# Opportunities for Richmond Hill

## David Dixon's Advice

### Two decades of opportunity: Richmond Hill 2020-41

- Economic development imperative
- Demographic opportunity
- Climate change
- Technology innovations'



Cube Lofts  
(Toronto)



- “Talent” are seeking complete communities
- Complete communities attract business investment
- Business investment = jobs in RH
- Jobs in RH = improved quality of life



# Complete Community Principles

## David Dixon's Advice

### URBAN DESIGN PRINCIPLES: placemaking unlocks opportunities for Richmond Hill

- **Walkability** that enhances community, economic opportunity, public health
- **Connectivity** that builds quality of life
- **Public realm** that enriches lives and celebrates diversity
- **Choices** that invite people to live, work, play, learn and innovate
- **Authenticity** that tells the community's stories and embodies its living culture



CITY  
PLAN  
2041

What makes/will make business parks and intensification areas:

- Walkable?
- Connected?
- Publicly accessible?
- Fostering of choice ?
- Authentic?

# Pillars of the OP Update



*How do we plan for Business Parks and intensification areas to address these pillars of the OP Update?*

Growing Our Economy



Design Excellence



Green and Sustainable



Protect and Enhance



WALKABLE – CONNECTED – PUBLIC – CHOICES – AUTHENTIC

# Policy context for this area

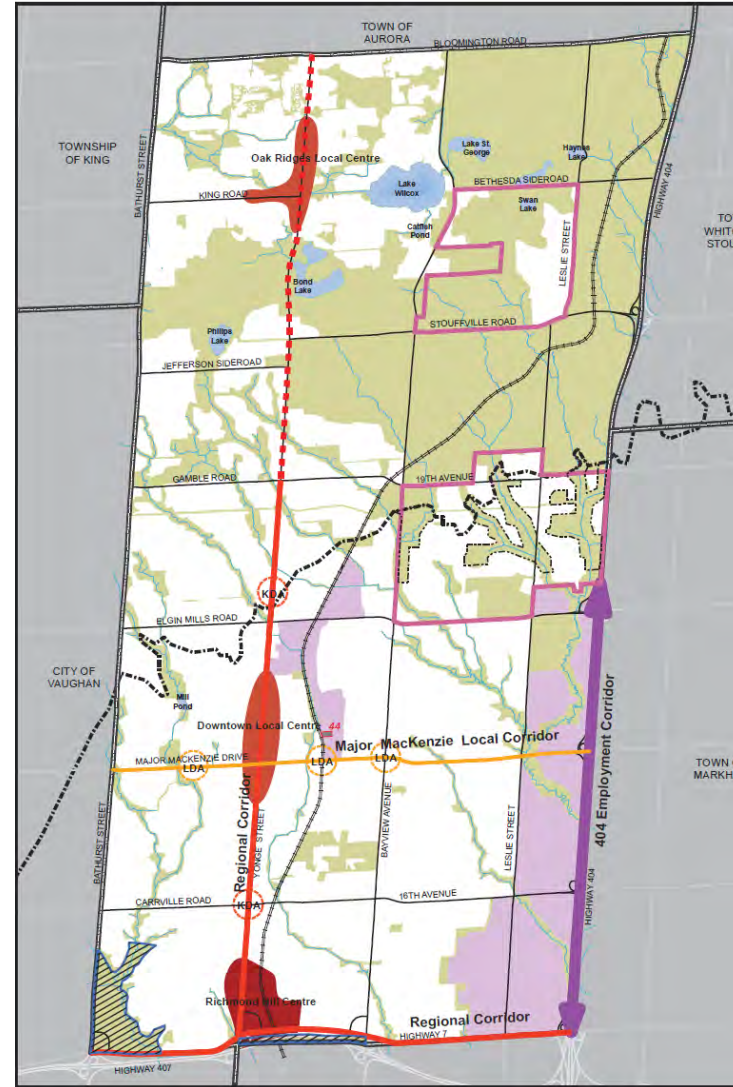
- **Provincial and Regional** policies state that:
  - Lands, especially those that are proximate to goods movement corridors, should be designated for employment uses and protected from incompatible development over the long term.
  - Intensification areas should be focused on lands adjacent to major transit routes, at densities and in a form that is transit supportive, providing a mix of uses.
  - Office uses should be directed to mixed use areas, especially urban growth centres (i.e. Richmond Hill Centre) to capitalize on transit investment and attract business investment from that sector.



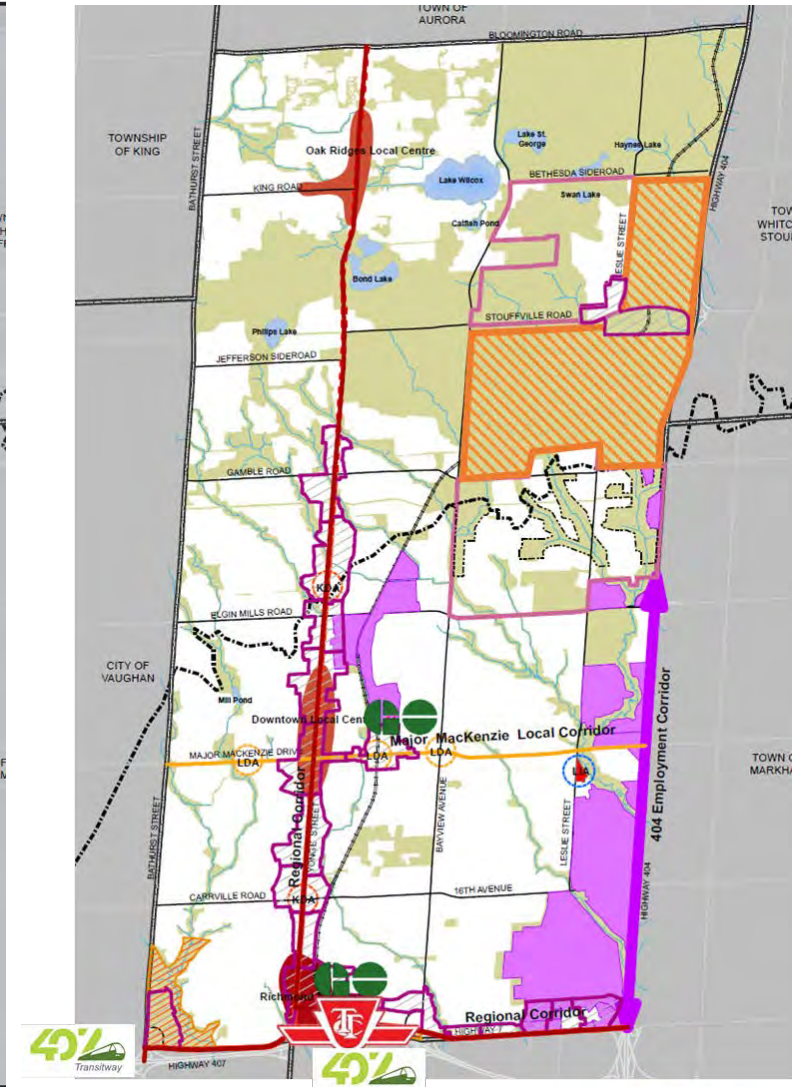


# Policy Context: City Urban Structure

- Continue to promote business within employment areas
- Direct more population related business & office to our intensification areas



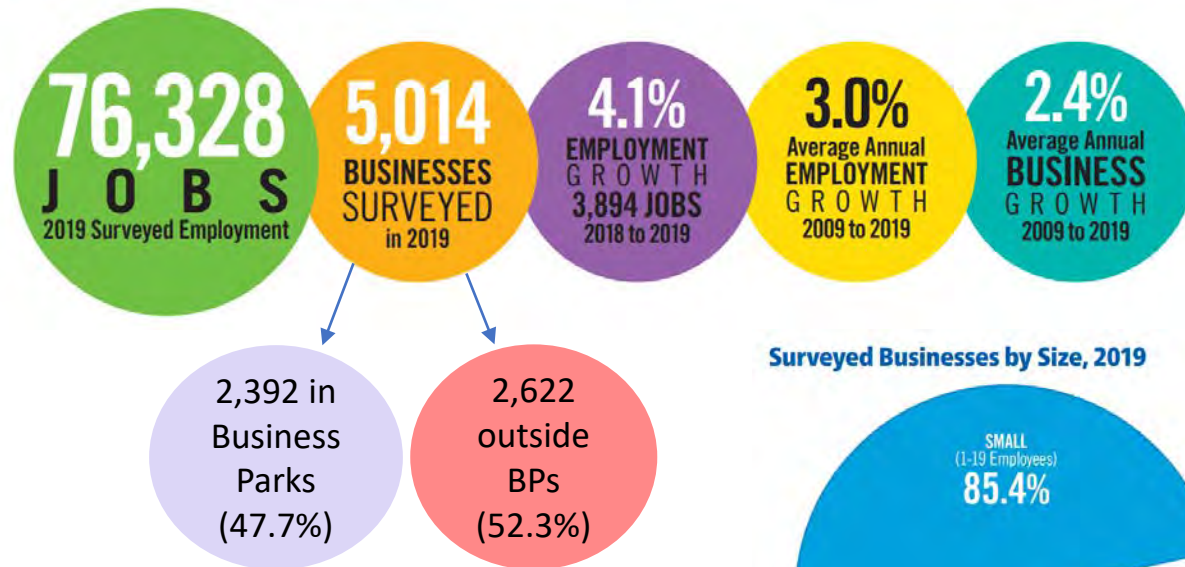
Current Urban Structure



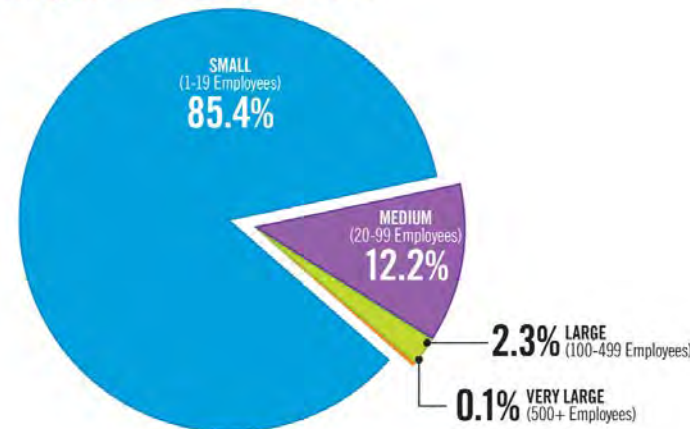
Emerging Urban Structure

# What do we know about business in Richmond Hill today?

## 2019 EMPLOYMENT SURVEY RESULTS RICHMOND HILL



Surveyed Businesses by Size, 2019



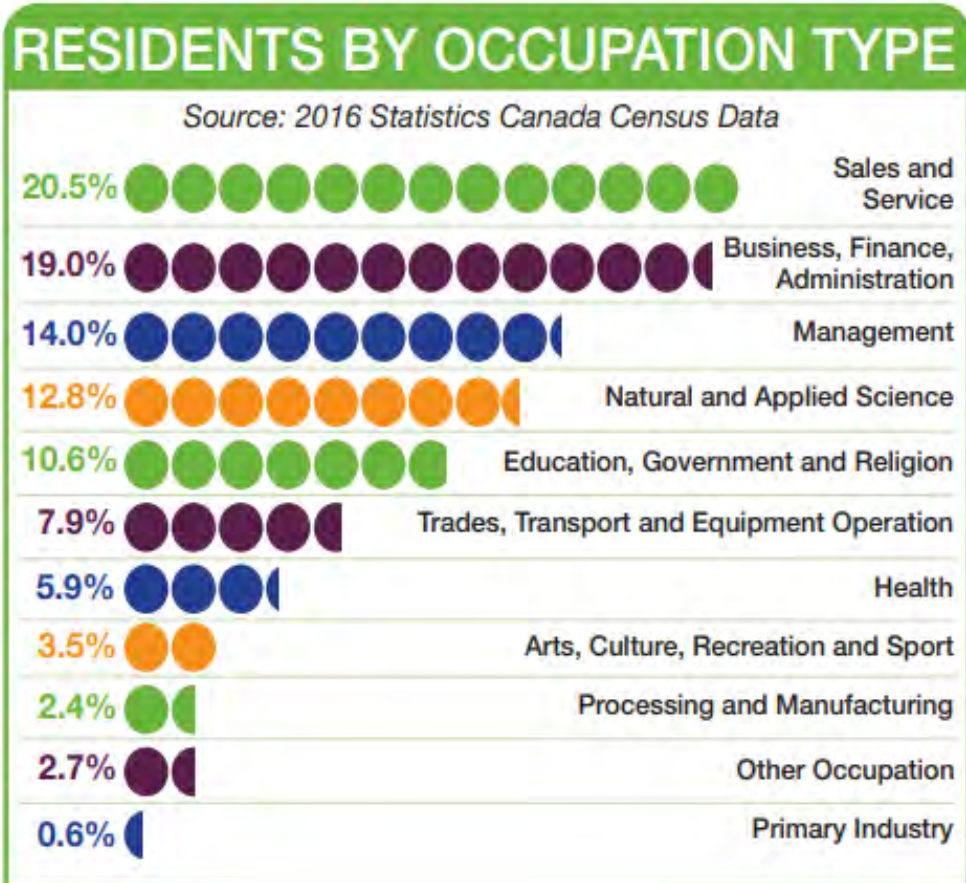
- The number of surveyed **businesses** has grown by **27%** or almost 1,100 businesses since 2009
- Majority of Business is classified as “small”
- Since 2009, **full-time employment** in Richmond Hill has:

own by approximately 6,500 jobs, id

counts for 62% of the City's employment in 2019



# A few of the trends in Richmond Hill that this workshop could address...(2016 data)



Richmond Hill boasts the highest number of graduates in engineering, science and math per capita. Over **77% of Richmond Hill residents have a post-secondary education.**



## Mismatch of residents and place of work

- 76% of working age residents work outside of Richmond Hill
- 64% of workers live outside of RH

# Business Parks and Intensification Areas support majority of Business in Richmond Hill

## Business parks:

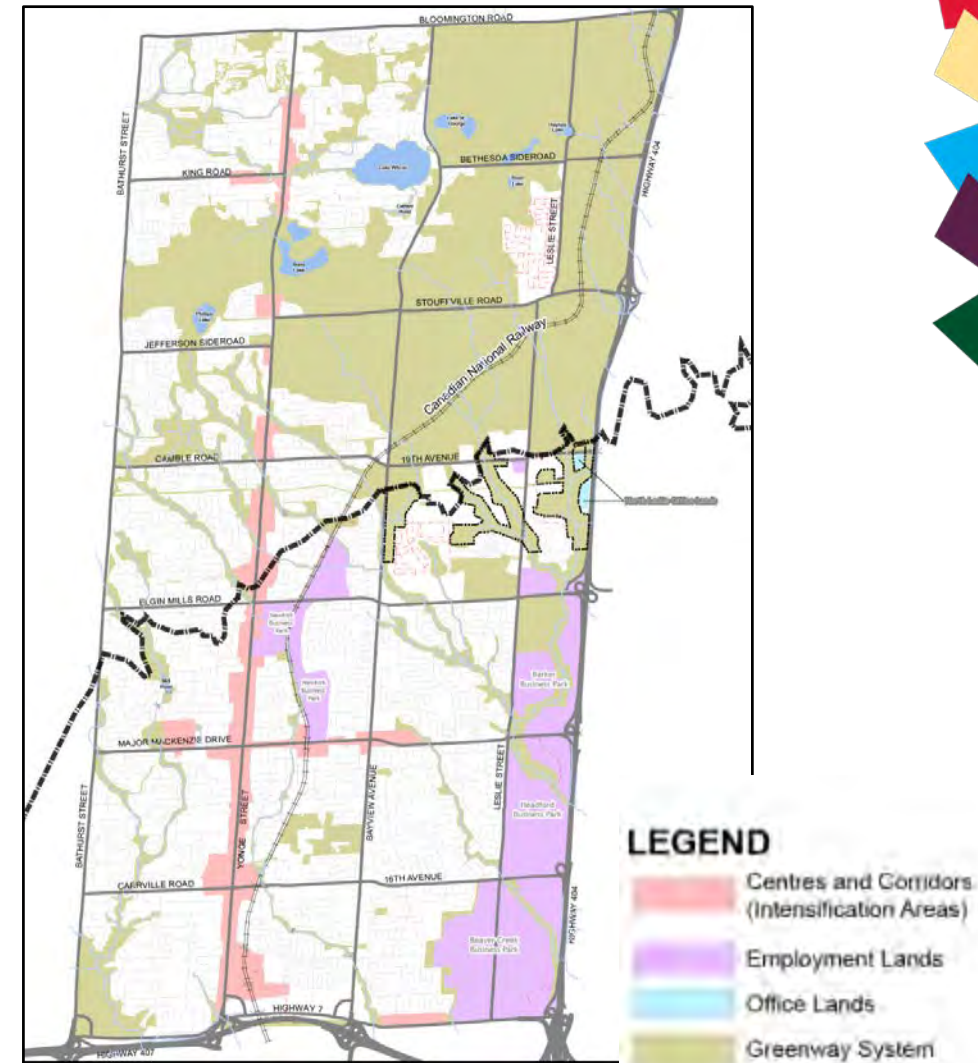
- Comprised of office and industrial companies
- Designated as Employment Area, Employment Corridor or Office

## Intensification areas:

- Comprised of residential, retail and professional offices
- Designated as “Centre” or “Corridor”

## Neighbourhood Commercial area:

- Comprised of major retail, retail, & service
- Designated as “Neighbourhood” (see Appendix 7)





## Poll #2a: What area(s) of Richmond Hill are of interest to you?

- a) Employment Area (Business Park)
- b) Intensification Area (Yonge and/or Hwy 7 corridor)
- c) Neighbourhood Commercial area
- d) Rural Area

(Choose all that apply.)

## Poll #2b: What are other trends that we need to consider?

- a) Technological change
- b) Automation & reduction in employees
- c) Automation & increasing demand for high-skills labour
- d) Employee attraction
- e) Employee mobility
- f) Goods movement
- g) Just-in-time delivery
- h) Online shopping
- i) Climate change/green economy
- j) Work from home

(Choose all that apply.)

Questions?

# Workshop – Let's Discuss

**Objective:** For participants to brainstorm on how Official Plan policy can better foster economic development.

**Groups:** People interested in:

- Business Parks
- Intensification Areas (i.e. Yonge and Hwy 7 corridors)

## **Workshop Approach:**

Drawing from your experience and knowledge, let's discuss emerging trends and how the City could respond to them through the Official Plan update to better support businesses and the goal of job creation.

# Workshop Approach & “Ground Rules”

- One voice at a time
- Share ideas, and allow others an opportunity to do so as well
- Be respectful of and openminded to others’ ideas
- Stay focused on the discussion at hand
- This workshop is one of several inputs that will be considered
  - Others include online surveys and open house sessions.

# Break Out Session



# Introductions

- State your name.
- State the type of business you are from.
- State why you are interested in intensification/employment areas.

# Step 1.

Emerging Trends  
Let's discuss.

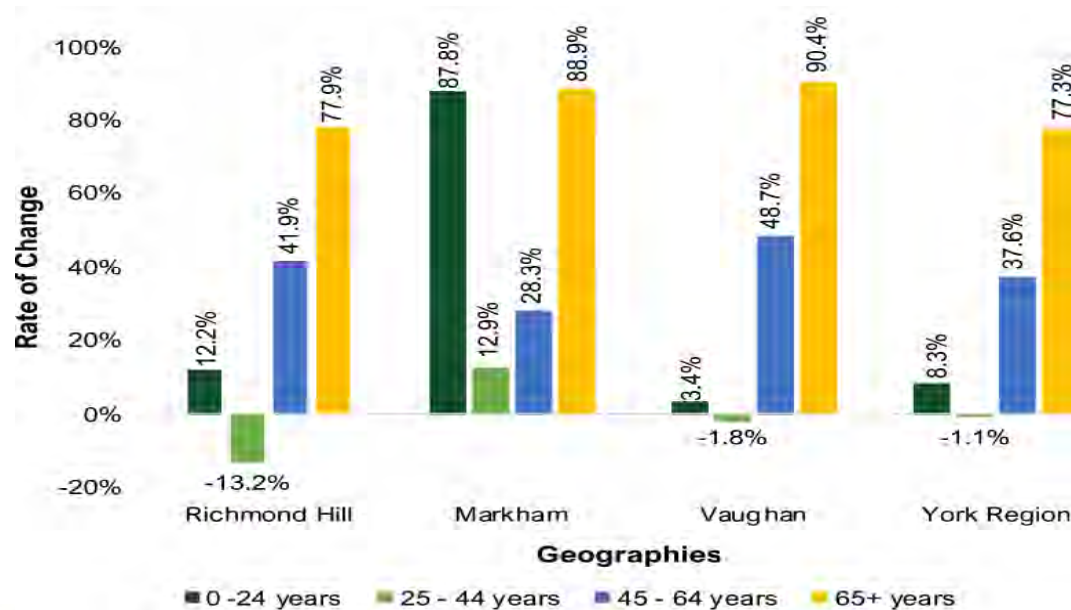
As a group, let's consider a number of emerging trends.

Share your thoughts and ideas ...



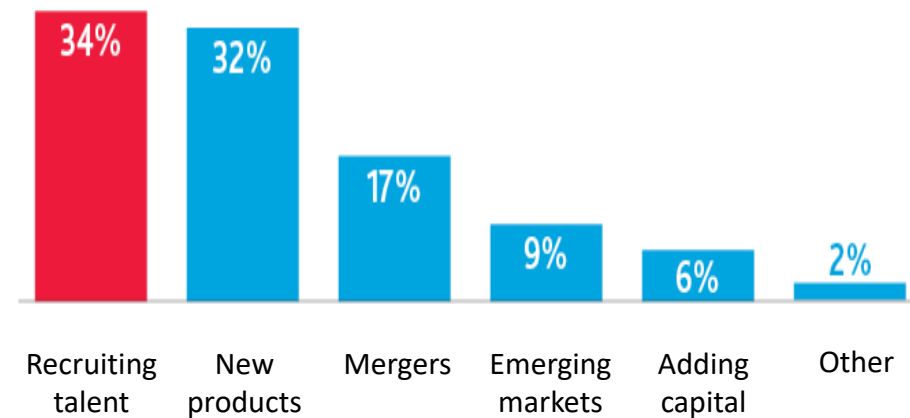
# There is a decreasing millennial population in RH – how does this impact business?

2006-16 Richmond Hill's millennial population declined



Source: City of Richmond Hill/SHS

...as tech increasingly prioritizes recruiting talent to fuel their growth



Source: Deloitte

# If mixed-use, walkable centers and corridors promote investment – how does this support business?

*David Dixon comments:*

- Talent strongly prefers lively, walkable, mixed-use— “urban” — environments...and places that don't require commuting in a car
- Rapidly growing virtual workforce— strongly prefers community-rich, walkable, places



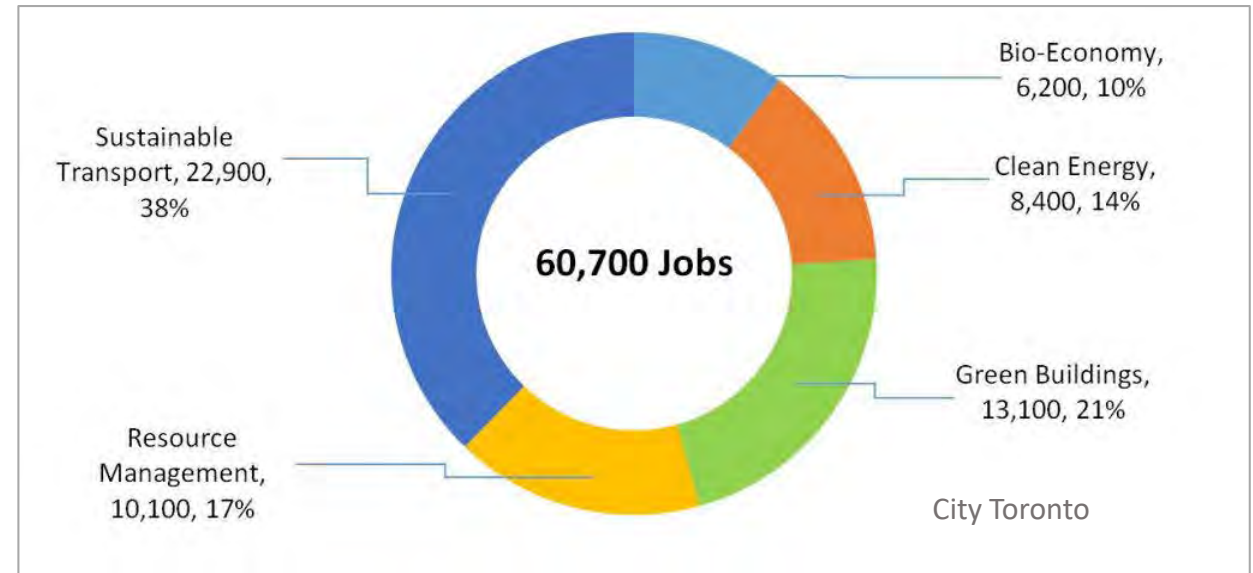
Sherwood Park, Alberta (above)  
Bracebridge Barrelhouse, Ontario (below)



# Response to **Climate Change** builds a more economically competitive future – how are businesses responding?

*David Dixon comments:*

- Environmentally responsible development attracts a growing mix of green industries...and jobs
- HR directors report the first two questions prospective employees ask are “how green is your company?” and “how diverse is your company?”



Toronto's green jobs (top),  
high tech photo voltaic cells  
produced in Ontario



# Technological innovation is constantly changing – how do these changes impact business now and in the future?

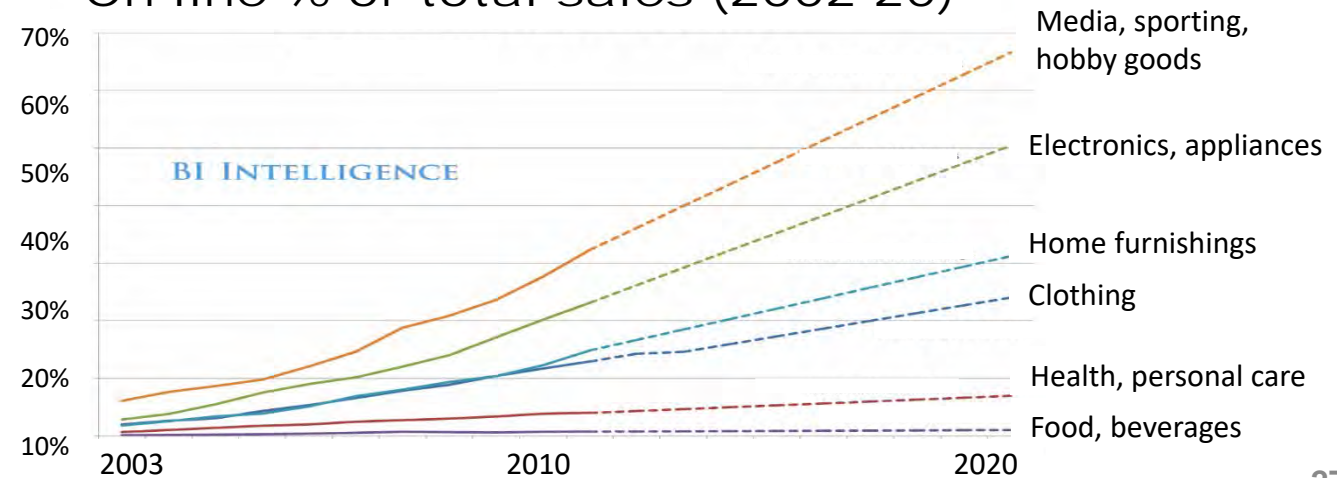
*David Dixon comments:*

- Fibre optic cable and 5G represent core knowledge industry infrastructure
- Online retail is reducing auto-oriented and big box retail, shifting retail growth to walkable retail along Yonge and in emerging centers and corridors
- ...creating demand for a new generation of distribution centers in underutilized areas with good highway access (without requiring visibility...)

Tech + density unlock innovation



On-line % of total sales (2002-20)



# Transit improvements are underway – how do they impact business?





# During COVID, there was an increase in remote workers – where will people work post-COVID?

Statistics Canada reports that on March 30, 2020:

- 38% of businesses in Ontario had less than 1% of their staff working remotely (whereas in February of 2020 it was 63% of businesses)
- Business types with all or most employees **working on site**
  - **Agriculture** (66% of all such businesses vs. 79% in February 2020)
  - **Retail** (55% of all such businesses vs. 77%)
  - **Transportation & Warehousing** (47.5% of all such businesses vs. 73%)
- Business types with more than 70% of staff **working remotely**
  - **Information and cultural industries** (81% of all such businesses vs. 25%)
  - **Management of companies and enterprises** (68% of all such businesses vs. 33%)
  - **Professional, scientific and technical services** (61% of all such businesses vs. 22%)

# What is the future of office?

*The Wall Street Journal*  
“The Joys of Urban Teach”

“Goodbye, office parks. Drawn by amenities and talent, tech firms are opting for cities.”

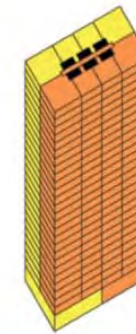


The Main Street retail space is located in one-level structures lining separate high-rise residential towers in the center of the blocks. (CR-Codina Partners)

Source: ULI



Staggered



Side by Side



Stacked

Work and living spaces could take various configurations, but would have separate access for residents and office visitors.

Sources: ULI and Urban Strategies



## Step 2.

Official Plan  
policy  
Let's discuss!

As a group, let's discuss key policy direction in the Official Plan related to:

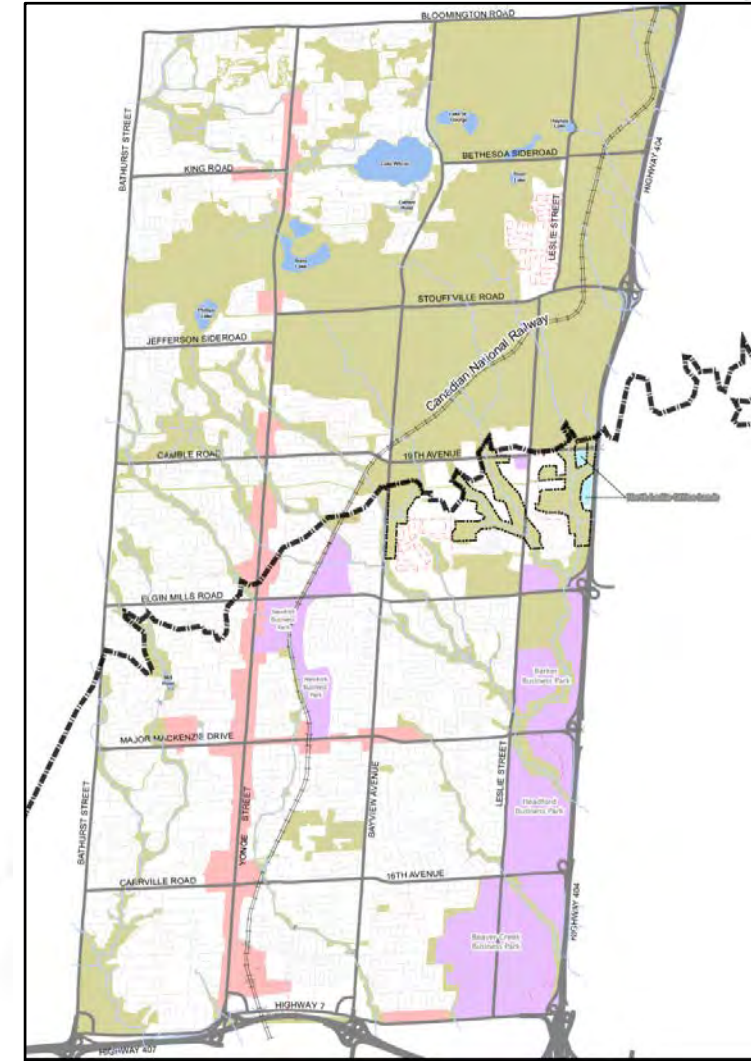
- Permitted/prohibited uses
- Built form/urban design

Based on the preceding discussion, what policy changes should the City consider?

# Existing Policies: Centres & Corridors

## Permitted uses

- Residential (medium/high density)
- Office
  - “Major” office (10,000 m<sup>2</sup> or more) directed to RHC and KDAs
- Commercial
- Retail
  - “Major” retail (10,000 m<sup>2</sup> or more) expected in compact form or integrated into development
- Community uses
- Parks and urban open spaces
- Live-work units



# Existing Policies: Centres & Corridors

## Urban Design

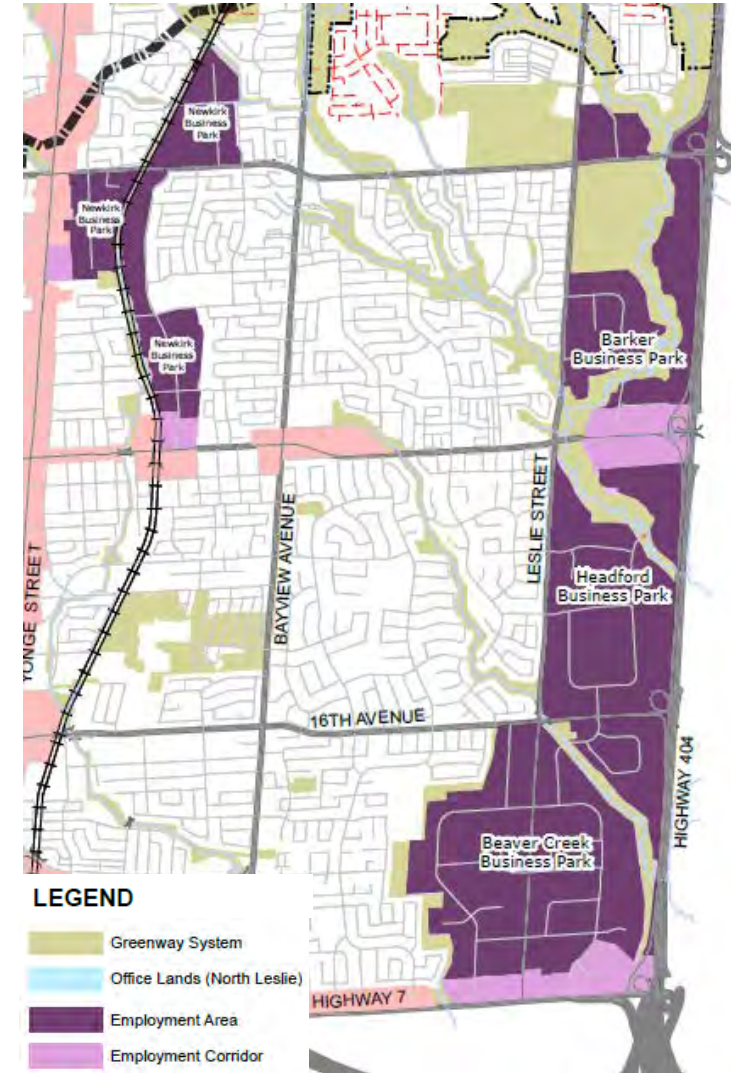
- Ground floor retail required fronting major streets
  - Yonge, Highway 7, 16<sup>th</sup>, Carrville, Bernard
- Generally promote buildings to locate close to street
- Parking directed behind building, underground or in structure
- Policies promote “tower-and-podium” type of design
- Non-residential buildings exempted from slender tower floorplate requirement
- No requirement for minimum % of non-residential uses in buildings
- Maximum building height varies

# Existing Policies: Employment Area/Corridor

## Permitted uses

- High performance industrial (manufacturing, assembling, processing, fabricating, servicing, wholesaling, etc.)
- Warehousing/enclosed storage (associated with high performance industrial)
- Major Office/Office\*
- Hotels, convention centres, banquet facilities\*
- Automotive Service Commercial (gas stations)\*

\* Uses directed towards arterial roads and Employment Corridor designation

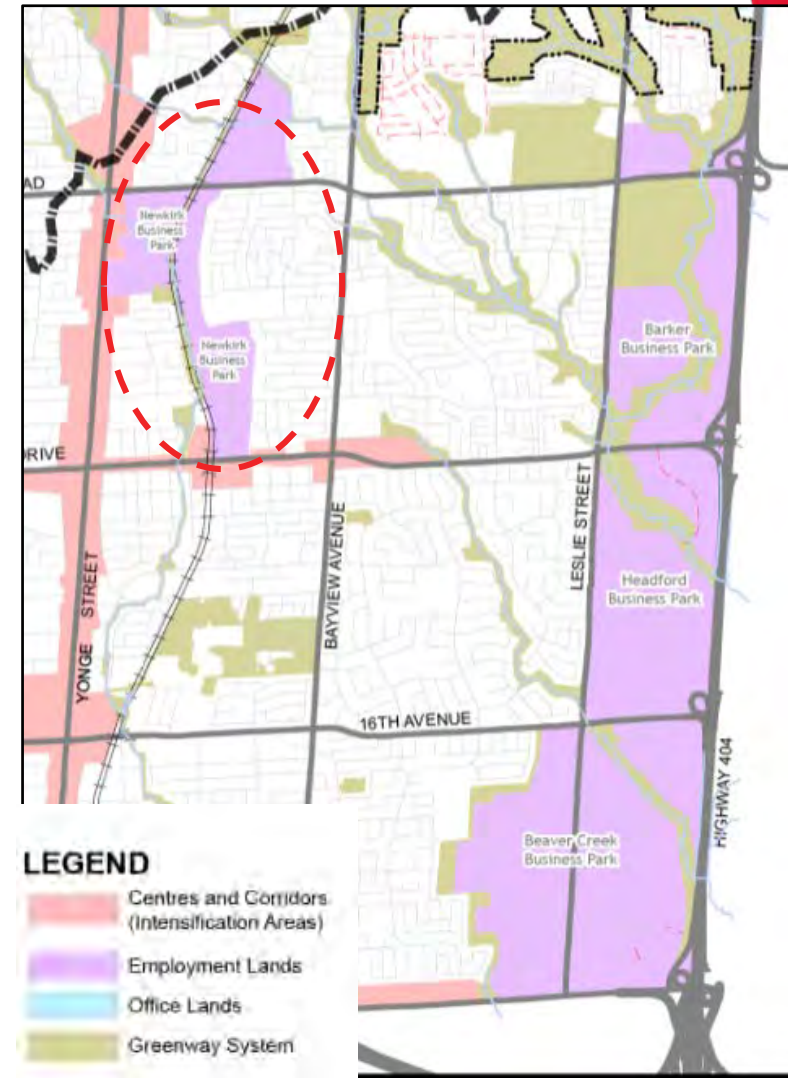




# Existing Policies: Employment Area/Corridor

## Permitted uses with size/location restrictions

- Ancillary commercial/retail or day care
  - Max. 500m<sup>2</sup>
  - Must be integrated in an office building
- Automotive repair/service
  - Only permitted in Newkirk Business Park, west of CN tracks
- Outdoor storage
  - Only permitted in Newkirk Business Park



# Existing Policies: Employment Area/Corridor

## Prohibited uses

- Businesses geared towards selling to the general public
- Recreational uses (other than public parks)
- Stand-alone retail, commercial, restaurants
- Residential development

# Existing Policies: Employment Area/Corridor

## Urban Design

- Buildings should be environmentally friendly
  - Protect/enhance Greenway System
  - Designed to conserve water and energy
- Provide a prestige image within business park
- Follow urban design guidelines for Headford and Barker Business Parks
- Provide outdoor amenity space for employees
- Provide appropriate transition to neighbouring uses, including residential
  - i.e. screening, landscaping, buffer/distance separation, etc.
- Max Height varies from 3 – 15 storeys depending on location and type of use



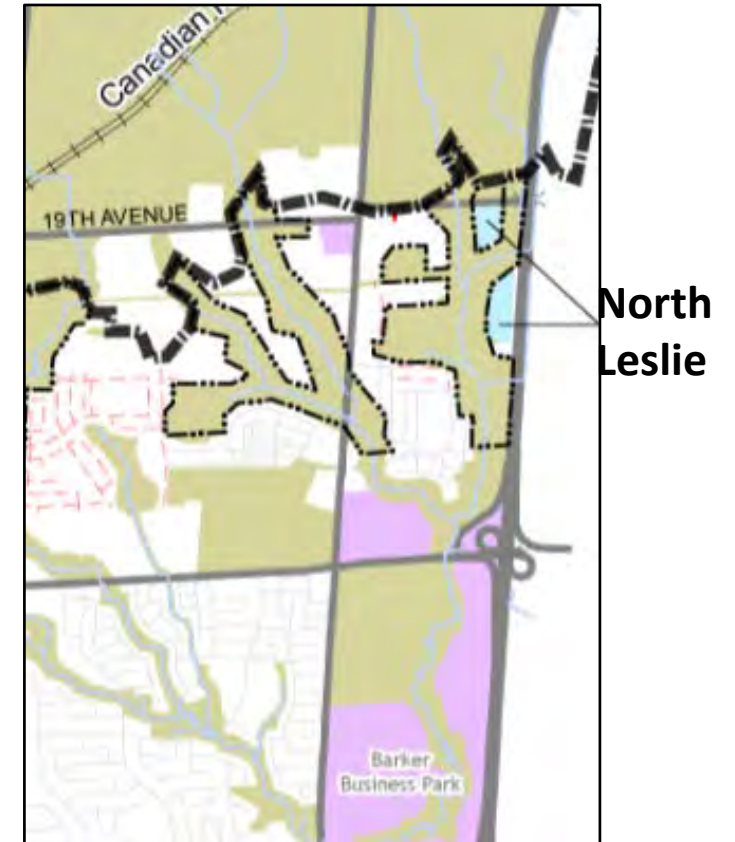
# Existing Policies: Office (North Leslie)

## Permitted uses

- Office and Major Office
- Hotels, convention centres, banquet facilities and private schools
  - Allowed on area bordering 19<sup>th</sup> Avenue
- Ancillary institutional, retail and service uses and day care facilities
  - Max. 2000m<sup>2</sup> or 20% of floor area for each area

## Urban Design

- Maximum building height = 10 storeys
- Integrate natural heritage system within urban fabric
- Special regard shall be given for design of buildings adjacent to 404 and natural area due to visibility.



### LEGEND

- Centres and Corridors (Intensification Areas)
- Employment Lands
- Office Lands
- Greenway System

Report Back



# Report Back

Share your break out room highlights...

# Next Steps

# Next Steps

- **Centre Specific Public Workshops** (May 6 – 20)
- **Online surveys**
- Consolidate comments and feedback
- Official Plan Update Committee Meeting September 2021
- **City Plan 2041 Open House October 2021**
- Summarize findings in *Key Directions Report*
- Finalize *Key Directions Report* for Council consideration
- Policy development to start after Council endorsement of *Key Directions Report*

# Stay involved and *Let's Plan Our City!*



Complete online survey about the topics covered in the workshop. Survey ends May 12.



Attend future meetings.



Register for updates on the topics that matter to you.



Discuss issues and concerns with staff, your Regional and Local representatives, as well as your colleagues and neighbours.



Learn more about the Official Plan, how it is used, and think about what matters to you.



Make oral/written submissions at Council meetings.



Pin your favourite place at "My Favourite Places".

**Visit:** [Richmondhill.ca/OPUpdate](https://richmondhill.ca/OPUpdate)

**E-mail:** [OPUpdate@richmondhill.ca](mailto:OPUpdate@richmondhill.ca)

# Thank You!

To serve you better, please complete the event feedback survey.