

CITY OF VAUGHAN OFFICIAL PLAN
BACKGROUND PAPER ON
POPULATION AND HOUSING

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April 2008

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City of Vaughan has initiated a process to prepare a new official plan (OP) as part of the City's Consolidated Growth Management Strategy. This OP will be prepared to be in conformity with the Province of Ontario's *Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe*. As part of the background information for this process, the focus of this paper is on describing the population and housing characteristics of Vaughan. It identifies current and future trends and key policy issues to be addressed in the next phases of the OP process.

As an overview of Vaughan's population growth in recent decades, the City grew from 17,800 in 1976 to 238,900 in 2006. This growth has been mainly concentrated in Woodbridge, Thornhill and Maple. While these areas will continue to grow and evolve, other parts of the City such as Vellore Village will see significant future growth. Also, Vaughan's growth has been mainly based on migration of families into the city to occupy new ground-related housing, which has allowed the city to maintain a multicultural and younger than average population profile. The City's housing stock has traditionally been dominated by ground-related housing, but over time this housing stock is becoming more diverse, with more apartments being built in recent years.

There are a number of important factors that will affect future growth in Vaughan. Factors such as the age structure of the population, the tendency to live in ground-related housing, and the tendency for seniors to 'age in place' are relevant issues. Overall, the population will be aging and there will be a diversification of the housing stock, but the preference for ground-related housing will be strong. As such, meeting intensification targets for Vaughan as outlined in the *Growth Plan* will be challenging, and medium and high density housing alternatives will have to be attractive to achieve this objective.

This report concludes with questions to be considered during the remainder of the Vaughan OP process. Given that the population of Vaughan will continue to grow and that the population will be aging, and given that Provincial policies set standards for development, this section identifies some major questions to be addressed.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	i
I BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION	1
II POPULATION AND HOUSING IN VAUGHAN AND CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CURRENT POPULATION	2
A. Vaughan’s Population Has Been Growing Rapidly for over 25 Years	2
B. Characteristics of Vaughan’s Households and Housing Have Changed Significantly in the Past 20 Years	12
III FACTORS INFLUENCING FUTURE GROWTH	16
A. Vaughan Will Continue to Accommodate Significant Population Growth in the Coming Decades	16
B. Age Structure and Household Type Remain Primary Determinants of Housing Choices and Development Patterns	18
IV QUESTIONS TO BE ADDRESSED IN THE OFFICIAL PLAN REVIEW	24

I BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION

The City of Vaughan has initiated a process to prepare a new official plan (OP) as part of the City's Consolidated Growth Management Strategy. As part of the background information for this process, the focus of this paper is on describing the population and housing characteristics of Vaughan, including the outlook for growth and demographic trends. The purpose here is not to provide a specific forecast for growth as the basis of the OP, but to establish the guiding demographic trends and to identify key policy issues to be addressed in the next phase of the OP process as specific forecasts and plans to accommodate growth are established.

Vaughan's OP is being prepared to be in conformity with the *Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe* (the *Growth Plan*). The *Growth Plan* is a land use policy framework which sets policies on how regional and local municipalities in the Greater Golden Horseshoe should plan for future development.

The remainder of this paper is organised into three chapters. The first chapter provides an overview of the history of growth in Vaughan and current demographic and housing trends. The second chapter provides a discussion of some of the key growth and demographic trends that will have implications for the structure and growth of the City and the policy challenges for the new OP. The third chapter identifies questions that are relevant to the Vaughan OP process based on the population and housing trends.

II POPULATION AND HOUSING IN VAUGHAN AND CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CURRENT POPULATION

This chapter provides an overview of historical population, housing and demographic trends in Vaughan. It identifies some of the sources of Vaughan's growth and development patterns.

A. VAUGHAN'S POPULATION HAS BEEN GROWING RAPIDLY FOR OVER 25 YEARS

This section discusses Vaughan's population growth since 1976. It outlines the substantial growth that the City has seen in this period, and identifies some of the characteristics of this growth. Households are specifically discussed in the second part of this chapter.

1. Rapid Population Growth Began in Vaughan as Metropolitan Toronto Neared Build-Out of Suburban Lands, and Was Supported by the York–Durham Servicing System

The City of Vaughan has been one of the fastest growing municipalities of the Greater Toronto Area and Hamilton (GTAH), since it was created through the amalgamation of a number of rural communities in 1971. Rapid population growth began in the City following the construction of the York Durham Sewage System (YDSS) in the late 1970s. The YDSS, in providing significant wastewater servicing capacity, provided the fundamental infrastructure needed to accommodate urban growth in southern York Region and western Durham Region communities.

Of course, it is not accidental that Vaughan was created as an urban community, a Regional government was implemented and the YDSS was built near the same time that the former Metropolitan Toronto was reaching full build-out of its suburban lands. As shown in Table 1, Vaughan's population grew from 17,800 in 1976 to 238,900 in 2006, meaning that the population had an extraordinarily high compound annual growth rate of 9.0% over the 30 years, far higher than that of the Region or the GTAH overall.

Vaughan, York Region and GTAH Population: 1976–2006					Table 1
		1976	1986	1996	2006
Vaughan	Population	17,800	65,100	132,500	238,900
	Population Growth & Growth Rate	— —	47,300 13.8%	67,400 7.4%	106,400 6.1%
York Region	Population	203,900	350,600	592,400	892,700
	Population Growth & Growth Rate	— —	146,700 5.6%	241,600 5.4%	300,300 4.2%
GTAH	Population	3,589,600	4,516,400	5,096,700	6,060,600
	Population Growth & Growth Rate	— —	926,800 2.3%	580,300 1.2%	963,900 1.7%

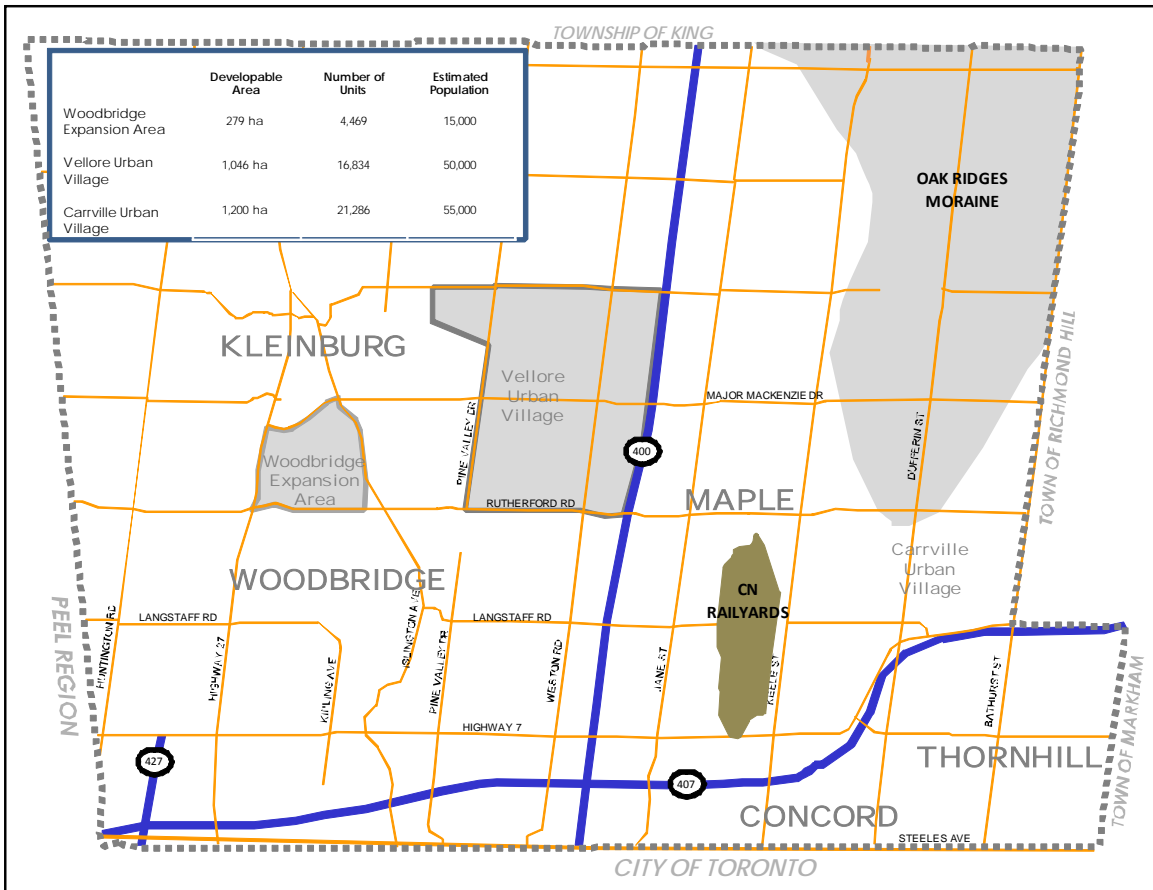
Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Canada

Note: All figures are Census population and do not include Census undercoverage

2. With Thornhill, Woodbridge and Maple Largely Built Out, New Communities Are Accommodating Most Recent Growth

Vaughan contains four historic communities: Kleinburg, Maple, Thornhill and Woodbridge (see Map 1). Kleinburg was not planned as a major urban residential growth area. Woodbridge and Thornhill now make up over 75% of the population in Vaughan and are now both largely built out for new greenfield development. Maple and its surrounding new areas of Vellore and Carrville Villages are now accommodating most of the recent growth.

City of Vaughan – New Communities

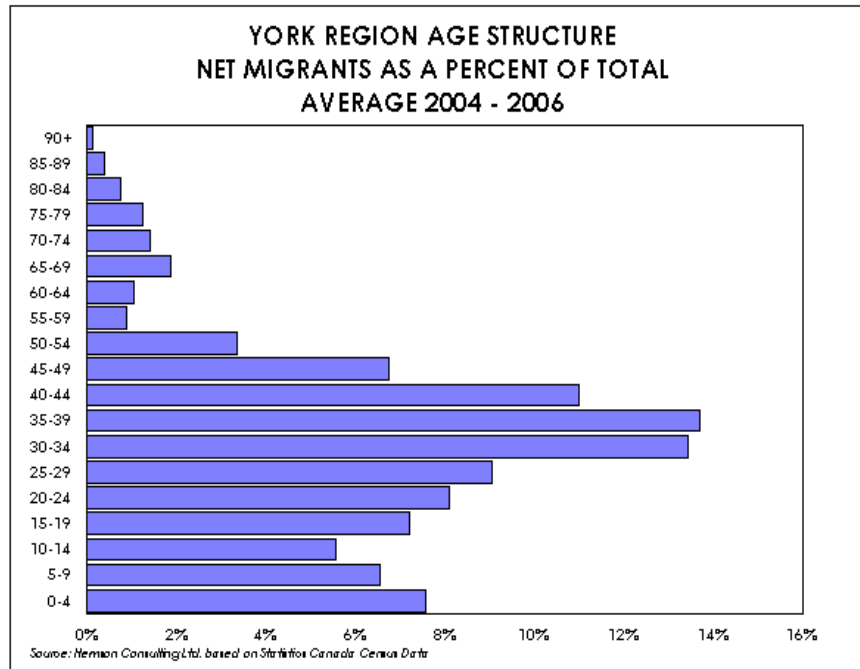


Source: Hemson Consulting Ltd. based upon City of Vaughan's base map and OPA 600.

3. Vaughan's Population Remains Young Due to Continued Addition of Young Families

Over the past 30 years, Vaughan's rapid population growth has been based on the provision of largely ground-related housing, marketed primarily to families mostly from the City of Toronto. The continued addition of population with these characteristics contributes to Vaughan's young population age profile. As shown in the age structure graph below, migrants to York are younger than the average population; they are typically made up of working-age people in their 20s and 30s (see Figure 1). Also, many migrant families bring young children with them when they settle in Vaughan, or have children within a few years.

Figure 1



The result of these trends is that Vaughan's age structure is young relative to York Region and the Province of Ontario. Vaughan's median age is 35.9 years, whereas York Region and the Province have higher median ages of 37.5 and 39, respectively. As shown in Table 2 and Figure 2, there is a clear pattern of a few older people at the top of the graph, but a substantial working-age population and their children in the middle and bottom parts of the graph.

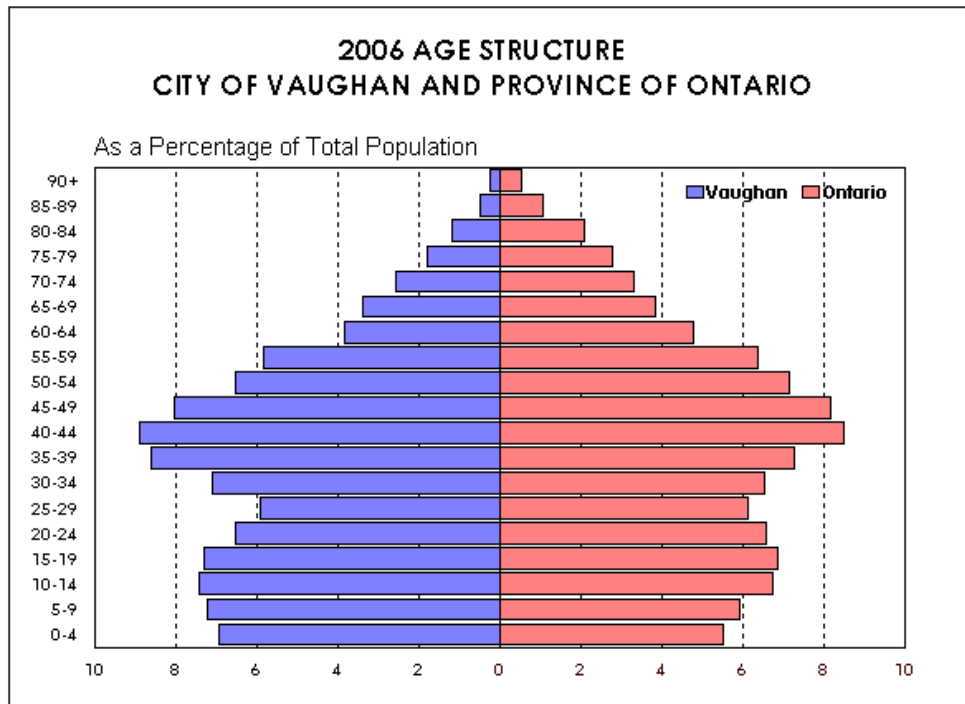
Table 2				
Population Age Structures: Vaughan, York Region, Ontario (2006)				
Age Groups		Vaughan	York Region	Ontario
Pre-School and School Age	0-19	69,100 28.9%	245,500 27.5%	3,043,900 25.0%
Young Adults	20-34	46,700 19.5%	166,500 18.7%	2,332,900 19.2%
Early Middle Age	35-49	61,000 25.5%	229,200 25.6%	2,908,400 23.9%
Late Middle Age	50-64	38,800 16.2%	159,600 17.9%	2,225,900 18.3%
Seniors	65+	23,300 9.8%	91,900 10.3%	1,649,200 13.6%

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Canada

Notes: All figures are Census population and do not include Census undercoverage
Totals may not add due to rounding

As shown in these figures, Vaughan has a smaller proportion of people in the late middle age and seniors (26% combined) than York Region or Ontario. Conversely, Vaughan has a larger proportion of pre-school and school age young and young adults than York Region or Ontario.

Figure 2



Source: Hemson Consulting Ltd. based on Statistics Canada Census Data

4. Vaughan Has an Increasingly Diverse Population

Vaughan is one of the more multicultural municipalities in the GTA. There are a number of ways of looking at diversity, among them are the immigrant population, ethnic origin and presence of visible minorities. As shown in Table 3 below, approximately 45% of Vaughan's population are immigrants. Vaughan has a similar proportion of immigrants to York Region as a whole, and only 5% less than Toronto. Among immigrants, however, Vaughan has a lower proportion of recent immigrants, indicating it is less of an immigrant reception area than neighbouring Toronto or Peel.

Immigrant Population in Vaughan and the GTA, 2006					
	Census Population	All Immigrants	Immigrant Share of Population	Recent 2001–2006	Immigrant Share of Population
Vaughan	238,900	107,900	44.8%	11,100	10.3%
Region of York	892,700	380,500	42.6%	46,500	12.2%
City of Toronto	2,503,300	1,237,700	49.4%	267,900	21.6%
Region of Peel	1,159,400	561,200	48.4%	118,200	21.1%
Region of Halton	439,300	107,900	24.6%	13,100	12.1%
Region of Durham	561,300	113,400	20.2%	9,900	8.7%
City of Hamilton	504,600	126,500	25.1%	20,800	16.4%
GTA	6,060,500	2,527,300	41.7%	476,300	18.8%

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Canada

Notes: All figures are Census population and do not include Census undercoverage. Totals may not add due to rounding.

Out of a total immigrant population in Vaughan of 107,900 in 2006, approximately 11,100 (10.3%) immigrated between 2001 to 2006. This proportion is lower than most other parts of the GTA. As such, the majority of Vaughan's immigrant population is well settled in the City, and have been there for several years. In fact, many of these people have had children and grandchildren, and as such there is a growing second and third generation Canadian population in the City.

Additionally, as a result of decades of immigration, Vaughan's multicultural diversity is significant. Table 4 shows the diversity of the population by ethnic origin. The table shows the ethnic background of the entire population, including both immigrants and the Canadian-born. These data are not available for 2006; nonetheless, the 2001 data provide an indication of Vaughan's diversity.

Table 4		
Ethnic Origin In Vaughan, 2001		
Origin	Number of People	Percent of Total
Italian	70,300	38.7%
Jewish	20,700	11.4%
East Indian	7,300	4.0%
Canadian	6,900	3.8%
Chinese	6,300	3.5%
Portuguese	3,100	1.7%
English	2,400	1.3%
Filipino	2,300	1.3%
Other	27,100	14.9%
Multiple Origins	35,300	19.4%
Total Population, 2001	181,600	100.0%

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Canada

Note: This table relies on 2001 data as the 2006 Census data will not be released in April 2008. Given Vaughan's population growth, some shifts in ethnic characteristics are expected in the 2006 data, though dramatic changes to the patterns are unlikely in a short 5 year period.

Vaughan has a very large Italian population concentrated in Woodbridge and Maple and a large Jewish population concentrated in Thornhill. In addition, Vaughan has a growing number of visible minorities. As shown in Table 5 below, the percentage of visible minorities in the City of Vaughan is 26.6% (2006). It indicates that Vaughan has a greater proportion than the Region of Halton, the Region of Durham and the City of Hamilton, even if Vaughan has a smaller proportion of visible minorities than the GTA average (38.1%).

Table 5		
Number of Visible Minorities, GTAH, 2006		
Origin	Visible Minorities	Percent of Total Population, 2006
Vaughan	63,200	26.6%
York Region	330,000	37.2%
Region of Peel	576,700	50.0%
City of Toronto	1,162,700	46.9%
Region of Halton	57,400	13.2%
Region of Durham	93,400	16.8%
City of Hamilton	67,800	13.6%
GTAH	2,287,900	38.1%

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Canada

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

5. Vaughan Is Among the Wealthiest Communities in the GTAH

Vaughan, on average, has a relatively wealthy population (see Table 6, below). The average household income in Vaughan is higher than most other municipalities in York and higher than the Regional average. It is also near the higher end of the range among GTAH municipalities outside of York. The 2005 income data from the 2006 Census is not yet available. There is little expectation that the relative positions of these communities will have changed significantly.

Table 6	
2000 Average Household Incomes GTA	
	Average Household Income
Region of York	\$91,900
Vaughan	\$95,500
Markham	\$94,700
Richmond Hill	\$87,700
Newmarket	\$84,100
Aurora	\$105,200
Georgina	\$61,600
Whitchurch-Stouffville	\$95,900
King	\$123,900
East Gwillimbury	\$92,800
Region of Peel	\$80,600
City of Toronto	\$69,100
Region of Halton	\$92,500
Region of Durham	\$75,100
City of Hamilton	\$57,700

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Canada

Notes: 2006 Census data on income will be released in May 2008

6. Vaughan Has a Low-Income Population to Consider

While Vaughan is a wealthy community, it is important to note that there is a low-income population in the City that needs to be considered in the OP process. Based on 2001 data, Table 7 indicates that Vaughan has a sizable portion (8.2%) of low-income households. Vaughan's incidence of low-income population is roughly half of the GTA average; nonetheless, this is an important constituency.

Table 7		
Incidence of Low-Income Among the Population in Households, GTAH, 2001		
	Low-Income Population	Incidence of Low- Income Population
Region of York	72,600	10.0%
Vaughan	14,900	8.2%
Markham	26,200	12.6%
Richmond Hill	16,600	12.6%
Newmarket	5,600	4.9%
Aurora	2,400	6.1%
Georgina	4,000	4.9%
Whitchurch-Stouffville	800	3.4%
King	900	6.1%
East Gwillimbury	1,200	8.6%
Region of Peel	114,500	11.6%
City of Toronto	552,500	22.6%
Region of Halton	26,500	7.1%
Region of Durham	42,500	8.5%
City of Hamilton	95,600	19.8%
Total GTAH	904,200	16.4%

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Canada

Notes: 2006 Census data on income will be released in May 2008.
 'Low Income' in the 2001 Census is defined by Statistics Canada as an income level at which individuals and families spend more than 20% of their income on food, shelter, and clothing.

B. CHARACTERISTICS OF VAUGHAN'S HOUSEHOLDS AND HOUSING HAVE CHANGED SIGNIFICANTLY IN THE PAST 20 YEARS

This section provides an overview of household and housing characteristics in Vaughan in recent decades. As Vaughan's population has grown and changed in character, so too have its households.

1. Number of Non-Family Households Is Increasing

Table 8					
Family and Non-Family Households, City of Vaughan (1986-2006)					
	1986	1991	1996	2001	2006
Total Number of Private Households	17,600	29,900	38,900	53,000	69,500
Total Number of Family Households	16,600	27,800	34,900	47,900	62,400
Total Number of Non-Family Households	1,000	2,100	4,000	5,000	7,200
Percentage of Family Households	94.5%	93.0%	89.7%	90.4%	89.1%

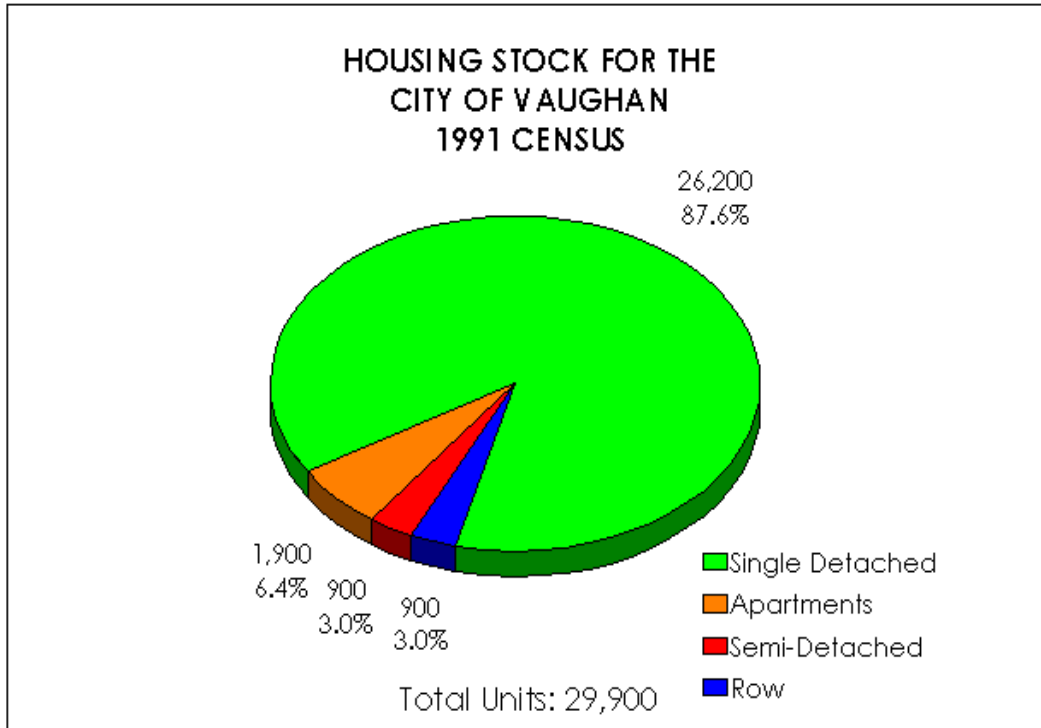
Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Canada

Overall, Vaughan's housing stock is oriented toward families. Since 1986, as shown in Table 8, there has been a slight decrease in the proportion of family households and a slight increase in the proportion of non-family households (as of 2006, 10.3% of households in Vaughan are non-family households); however, overall Vaughan has a family-oriented housing stock.

2. The Housing Stock Has Diversified

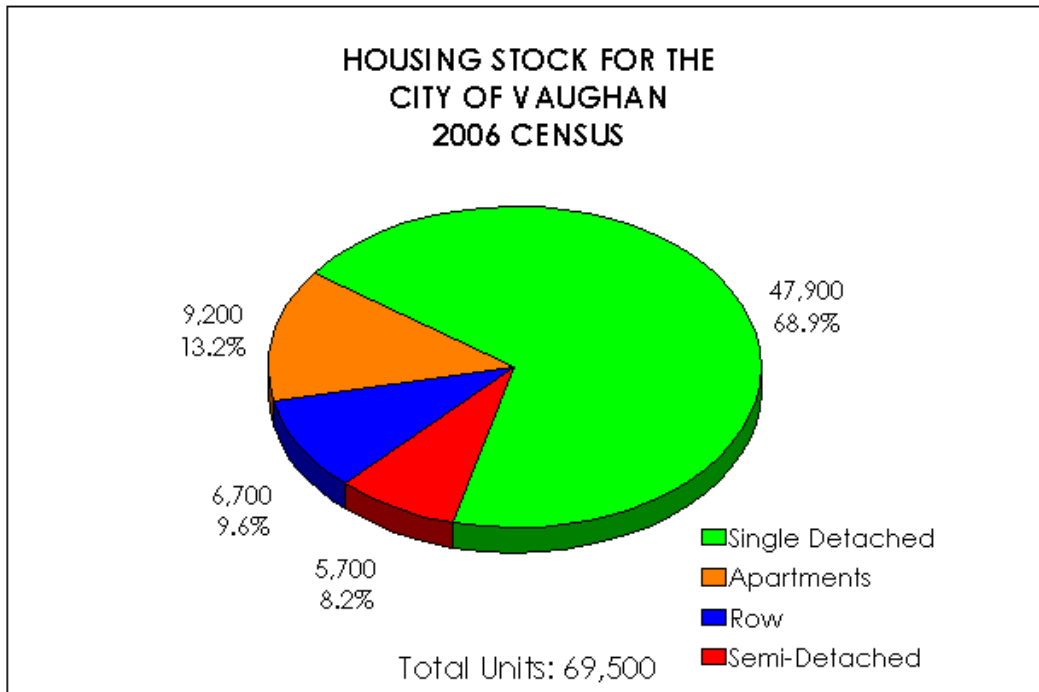
In the early period of its urban development, Vaughan was almost exclusively dominated by single-detached housing stock. In 1991, nearly 90% of units were of this type (see Figure 3). As Vaughan developed into a more mature community, a more diverse housing stock has been established. By 2006, single-detached units were below 70% of the total and medium and higher-density housing were becoming a more important part of the community. Because the community is still growing as a result of new families moving into the community, ground-related housing still dominates: 87% of units remain in ground-related forms of singles, semis, and rows (see Figure 4).

Figure 3



Source: Hemson Consulting Ltd. based on Statistics Canada Census Data

Figure 4



Source: Hemson Consulting Ltd. based on Statistics Canada Census Data

Another indicator of the diversification of the housing market is the number of housing completions. Table 9 and Table 10 below show a significantly more diversified housing stock in 2001–2006 period than in the 1986–1991 period. By 2006, there were significantly greater proportions of semis, rows, and apartments combined than completed than in the 1980s. It should also be noted that much of the apartment construction in the late 1980s and early 1990s was owing to the large number of assisted and affordable housing projects funded at the time. The recent revival in the apartment market is almost entirely generated by private market demand.

Table 9					
Housing Completions by Type, City of Vaughan, 1986-2006					
	1986-91	1991-96	1996-01	2001-06	Total
Singles	10,500	3,800	10,700	10,100	35,100
Semis	0	100	2,600	2,000	4,600
Rows	200	1,100	2,700	2,300	6,300
Apts	1,400	1,700	600	1,400	5,100
Total	12,100	6,700	16,500	15,800	51,200

Source: Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

Table 10					
Housing Completion by Percentage of Housing Stock, City of Vaughan, 1986–2006					
	1986-91	1991-96	1996-01	2001-06	Total 1986-2006
Singles	86.8%	57.3%	64.9%	63.6%	68.7%
Semis	0.0%	1.3%	15.4%	12.7%	9.0 %
Rows	1.7%	16.0%	16.1%	14.6%	12.3%
Apts	11.6%	25.5%	3.7%	9.1%	10.0%
Total	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %

Source: Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation

This chapter has examined the characteristics of Vaughan's population growth in the last 25 years, and the evolving character of the City's housing stock. There is a number of important demographic and housing trends in place in Vaughan, such as relatively high population growth driven largely by migration and the tendency to live in ground-related housing. These factors have had significant implications for Vaughan in recent decades, and they have significant implications for the future.

III FACTORS INFLUENCING FUTURE GROWTH

This chapter provides an overview of population and housing projections for Vaughan. It shows that rapid development in Vaughan will continue. Based on the requirements of the *Growth Plan*, the pattern of development will be intended to be different than the predominant growth patterns outlined in the previous chapter. The projections included in this report are derived from the projections of population provided in the *Growth Outlook for the Greater Golden Horseshoe* (2005), which formed the basis of population projections in the *Growth Plan*. There are numerous demographic and housing-related factors that will affect planning, and these are also discussed in this chapter.

A. VAUGHAN WILL CONTINUE TO ACCOMMODATE SIGNIFICANT POPULATION GROWTH IN THE COMING DECADES

Current planning in Vaughan calls for planned population of 330,000 in 2026, up from a level of about 250,000 today¹. These Vaughan growth targets are in the context of the Region of York growing from about 930,000 today to 1,280,000 by 2026.

However, just as the City of Vaughan is reviewing its OP, including planned population targets, so is the Region of York; both being required to update them to conform to the Province's *Growth Plan*. The *Growth Plan* contains population targets for the Region of York for 2031, five years farther out than the current *York Region Official Plan*. The new target for the Region of York is now to be 1,500,000 people in 2031; adjusting for the new end date, this is about 10% higher than the current plan.

Based on the *Growth Plan* population projection, York Region has prepared draft population allocations for all of the municipalities in the Region. The mid-range target for Vaughan in these draft forecasts is 422,000 in 2031. This is a much higher figure for Vaughan than previous planning which reflects:

- a higher “starting” population of nearly 250,000 in 2006, compared to 221,000 in the current plans;
- higher overall population growth in the Region; and

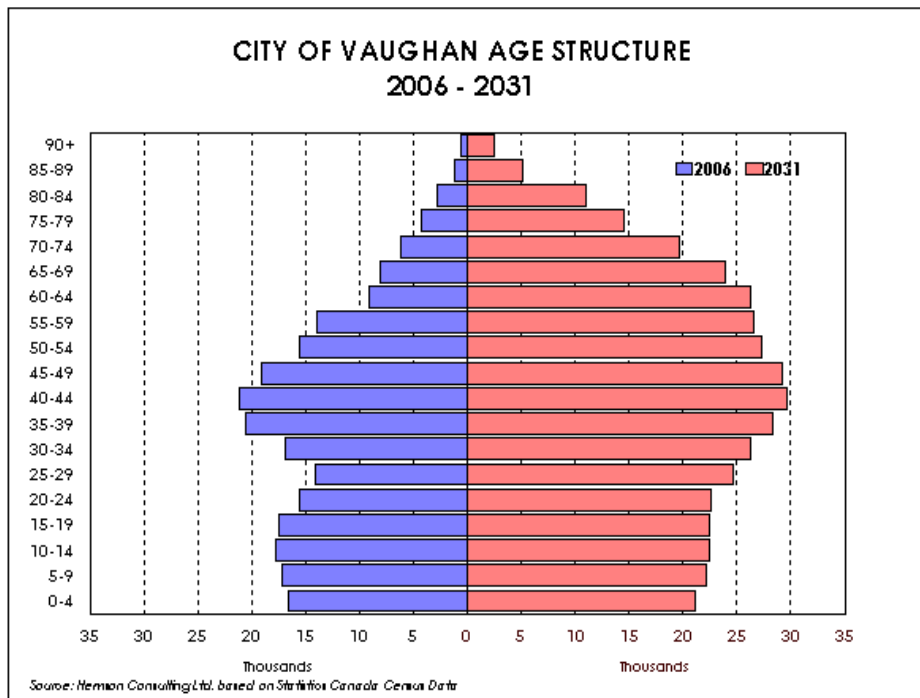
¹ The population figures provided in the previous chapter were Census-based, i.e. they do not include the approximately 4% Census undercoverage. These figures are therefore consistent with the other Census data provided in that chapter. In long-term planning in York Region and at the Province, the population figures do include the Census undercoverage. The 2006 population of 238,000 in Vaughan, with an estimated undercoverage, is about 249,000 or “approximately 250,000” as stated.

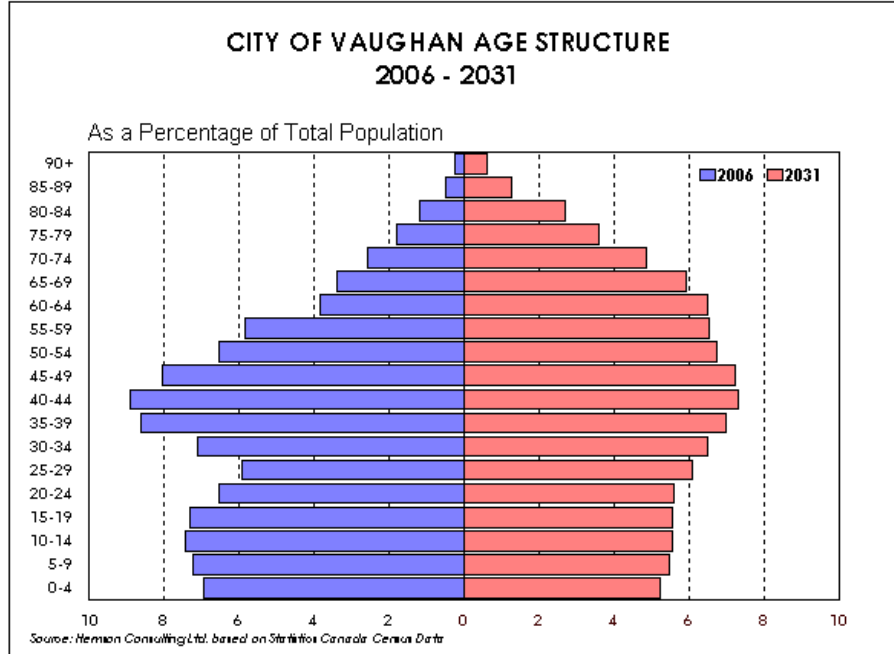
- new planning policies seeking more growth through intensification, which means more population growth concentrated in the large urban communities of southern York Region.

Associated with these forecasts prepared by York Region is a population age structure. The two age structure graphs below show the City of Vaughan’s population by age and the proportion of population by age, both comparing 2006 to 2031. In absolute numbers there is growth occurring in every age group because of the large overall population growth of about 70% over the period.

The disproportionately high growth in the older population is due to the simple fact that the largest population age groups today are between 35 and 45 — these same people will have aged to be between 60 and 70 by 2031. The population may be growing by 70% in this period, but the population aged 55 and over will more than double. While the increase in older population will be a significant change in the current character of Vaughan, it is equally notable that the continued migration of largely family households seeking new housing in Vaughan will maintain those in their 30s and 40s as the largest age groups in the population.

Figure 5





In addition to the overall population growth, the age structure of the population is probably the most influential demographic attribute affecting future growth in Vaughan. Age is a primary determinant of household types, housing unit choices and labour force activity, all of which will be important to long-term planning in Vaughan and the preparation of a new Vaughan Official Plan.

B. AGE STRUCTURE AND HOUSEHOLD TYPE REMAIN PRIMARY DETERMINANTS OF HOUSING CHOICES AND DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS

The future character of growth and residential development in Vaughan, particularly choices about housing unit types, is central both to the *Growth Plan* and the Vaughan OP process. While other factors do influence choices, age remains a key determinant of housing preferences and household types.

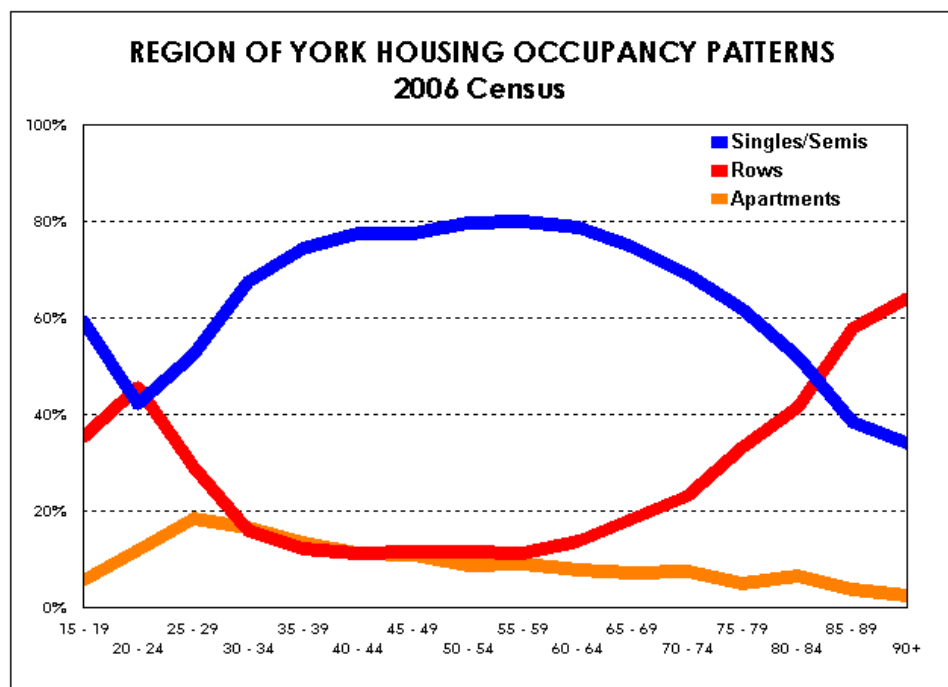
1. Vaughan Will Continue to Be Dominated by the Age Groups Preferring Ground-Related Housing

The following graph shows the housing occupancy patterns in York Region by age of household head. What it indicates very clearly is how housing preference is closely linked to age of household head. Most newly formed households, headed by those in their 20s, choose to occupy apartments — typically, the first household after moving away from parents is a rental apartment. As people move into family formation years, typically becoming partnered and then having one or more children in their late 20s and through their 30s, the preference for apartments declines dramatically while the

preference for ground-related housing increases significantly. This is a reflection of two key factors: increased income in these age groups allowing home ownership and a very strong cultural preference for families to occupy ground-related housing.

Based on Census data, single-detached occupancy peaks and apartment occupancy is at its low point while the household head is in his or her 50s. The preferences begin to converge again as households age. Divorcees and “empty-nesters” choosing apartment living begins the shift in preferences. Apartments, however, do not become the predominant preference until people are in their late 80s.

Figure 7



Source: Hemson Consulting Ltd. based on Statistics Canada Census Data

Relative to the issue of how housing type preferences may change in response to demographic change in the GTA, York Region or Vaughan, two key observations can be made:

- The largest population age groups today are those in their late 30s and through their 40s, age groups primarily occupying ground-related housing. By 2031, the peak of the baby boom population will still be within the age groups with a very high preference for singles and semis. Those who see the retirement of the baby boom as generating shifting housing demand patterns in the GTA are correct; however, it will not have a large effect until the 2030s and 2040s.
- Rising preferences over the past twenty years for singles and semis over apartments are especially marked in the elderly. As older people live longer and remain

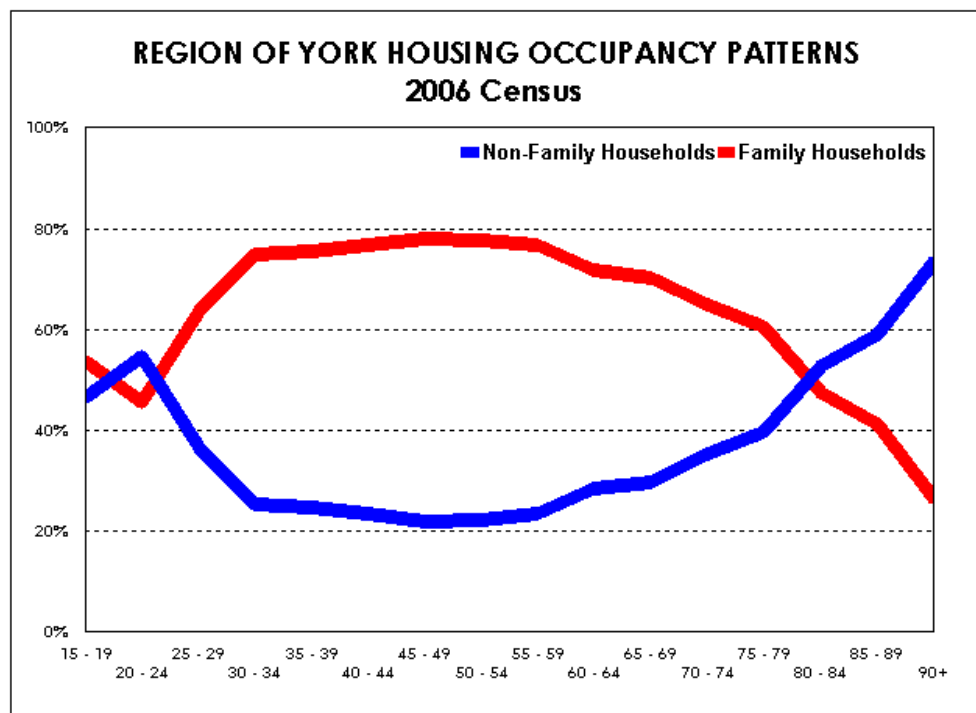
healthier longer, they delay the move from the “family home” to an apartment. There is a consistent trend of older people staying longer and longer in their homes. And, there does not appear to be any particular trend to “downsize” within unit types (i.e. to smaller houses); rather it is primarily an inertia of staying in place. This was described in *the Growth Outlook for the Greater Golden Horseshoe* with the text in the box below, but with the addition of the now-available 2006 Census data in the chart.

Of course, housing choices are not only influenced by age and demographic attributes. Other factors such as affordability will affect current and future patterns. Affordability in turn is affected by many factors related to planning decisions such as the availability of land for development. Future housing choices may also be influenced by changing social norms, transportation choices, environmental interests or other economic factors.

2. Predominance of Family Households Closely Related to Vaughan Age Structure and Housing Types and Results in a High Average Household Size

In a very similar pattern to housing preferences, household type — family and non-family households — is closely related to age. Non-family households are single-person households or multi-person households of unrelated individuals and is primarily three groups of people, young singles before family formation, single or divorced individuals through middle age and then single seniors (primarily widows). Family households are mainly those partnered with or without children at home and single-parents with children at home.

Figure 8



Source: Hemson Consulting Ltd. based on Statistics Canada Census Data

The current dominance of family households in Vaughan is largely expected to continue through the forecast period. With some aging of the existing population, there will be an increased number of non-family households, likely leading to demand for a more diverse housing stock. However, demographically this shift in demand will not be large, as the age structure continues to favour the predominance of family households.

One effect of a large number of family households is the relatively high average household size in Vaughan, shown in see Table 11. The forecast age structure and resulting household and housing demands mean that Vaughan will continue to have a relatively high average households size through the forecast period. There will be some decline in the average household size, a normal and expected demographic result of an aging population, but this effect will be limited in Vaughan during this period.

	Singles/Semis	Rows	Apartments	Total
Vaughan	3.58	3.08	2.45	3.41
York	3.35	2.9	2.34	3.22
Peel	3.51	2.73	2.58	3.21
Durham	3.04	2.73	1.96	2.86
Toronto	3.01	3.13	2.18	2.52
Halton	3.00	2.51	1.74	2.76
Hamilton	2.86	2.67	1.80	2.55
GTAH	3.13	2.78	2.1	2.85

Source: Statistics Canada Special Run Data

3. A More Diverse Population Does Not Substantially Affect Household and Housing Patterns

Immigration will continue to be the main driver of population growth in the GTAH through the period to 2031. While this will create an increasingly diverse population in the GTAH and in Vaughan, it should not be expected that this will substantially affect housing preferences and trends. Research on housing patterns in the GTAH indicates that immigrants have similar housing preferences to the general population. The patterns indicate that recent immigrants (10 years or less) have larger households than the norm for their age group for a variety of economic, social, and cultural reasons, but then after 10 years immigrants appear to take on similar household population attributes as the population at large. Moreover, when recent immigrants live in larger than average-sized households during their first 10 years, they are typically sharing with other adults and extended family as they become settled in Canada, rather than having additional children.

Looking forward through the forecast, we would expect there to be little difference in overall demographic attributes between immigration and Canadian-born populations.

4. Demographics Are a Significant Challenge for Achieving Planning Goals for Growth and Development

The *Growth Plan* requires, after 2015, 40% of all new housing units to be built within the 2006 built boundary, meaning about 40% of all new housing units will need to be provided through intensification. Units provided through intensification are primarily medium- and high-density units. Meeting the 40% requirement will mean a significant shift in the housing mix in the Region and in Vaughan, which, in the context of the demographic analysis in this paper, means a significant change in people's housing choices in favour of higher-density living.

Based on the Region's preliminary analysis undertaken in 2007, the 2006 and 2031 Regional housing mix is shown in Table 12. This mix of housing would allow York Region to achieve the 40% intensification target.

The shift in housing choices at the Regional level is quite large, requiring growth to be 46% singles and semis and multiples at 54%. Within the Region, however, intensification is likely to be more concentrated in the larger older southern municipalities, including Vaughan. As a result the shift in housing required to meet the *Growth Plan* is likely to be something closer to about 60% multiples and 40% singles and semis during the period from 2006 to 2031. This would require a significant change in housing choices and choices amongst those occupying new housing in Vaughan.

Table 12						
Forecast York Region Housing Growth by Type (York Region 40% Intensification Scenario)						
	Singles/Semis		Multiples (Rows, Apartments & Duplexes)		Total Units	
	Units	Share	Units	Share	Units	Share
2006	216,000	78 %	62,000	22 %	278,000	100 %
2031	326,000	63 %	190,000	37 %	516,000	100 %
Growth (2006-2031)	109,000	46 %	128,000	54 %	238,000	100 %

Source: Regional Municipality of York

Overall, like the rest of the GTA and much of Canada as a whole, Vaughan can be expected to face the challenges associated with the retirement of the baby-boomers. On the one hand, given that Vaughan will have a younger age profile than other parts of the GTA in the future, these effects will be less pronounced in Vaughan than elsewhere. However, the competition for employment and the mobility of the labour force is felt quite strongly in urban areas.

There are a number of demographic factors that should be considered as part of Vaughan's OP. The high rate of population growth projected for the City, an ongoing preference for single-family housing, the tendency for seniors to 'age in place', and the tendency for newcomers to the City to have similar housing choices to the existing population are all very relevant issues. These issues raise questions which should be considered as part of the Vaughan OP process.

IV QUESTIONS TO BE ADDRESSED IN THE OFFICIAL PLAN REVIEW

This review of demographic and housing trends in the City of Vaughan raises a number of important questions that need to be considered through the subsequent phases of the Vaughan OP process. These include:

- Achieving the *Growth Plan*'s goals requires an overall shift in housing choices in favour of medium and higher density housing. Family households currently have a very high preference for lower density forms. And, family households are the vast majority of households in Vaughan, now and in the future. To help achieve the *Growth Plan* and City goals respecting housing types, how can medium and higher-density housing alternatives be made more attractive to family households?
- What policy tools are available to the City and what specific policies might be required to facilitate changes in housing choices?
- An objective of the *Growth Plan* is to plan “complete communities”, an element of which is the provision of appropriate housing for all stages of a household’s life cycle. In the context of the City’s demographic and economic characteristics, how can new communities be planned and existing communities intensified to achieve more complete communities?
- One way to address to the housing choice challenges is to encourage “empty-nester” households to move to medium- and higher-density housing, rather than aging in place, in order to “free up” lower-density housing for younger families. Can medium and higher density housing be made more attractive to this group? Are there OP policies that can encourage a shift in empty-nesters’ choices?
- How can the housing needs and choices of households at all income levels in Vaughan be met, while meeting more restrictive density and planning regulations?
- Over the next 25 years, there will be a significant increase in the proportion of Vaughan’s population in older age groups. How will population growth and the aging of the population affect the need for and delivery of community services and infrastructure and the form and design of communities?
- How will the increasingly diverse and multicultural character of Vaughan affect land use planning or the delivery of other municipal services?