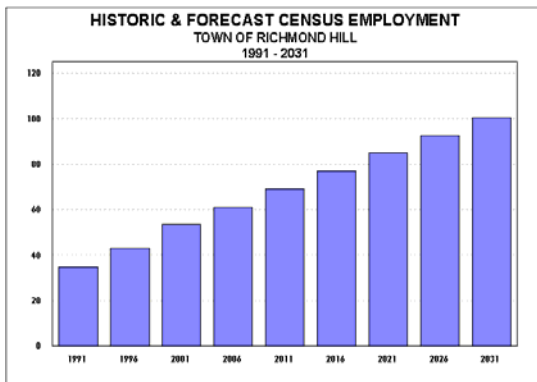


## Discussion Topic Information Sheet Discussion Round 1

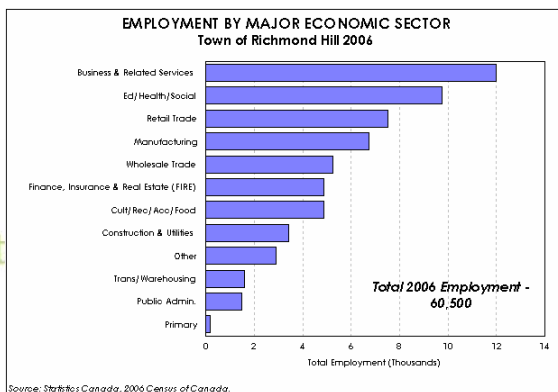
### Economy

The Town of Richmond Hill's economy has been performing very well in recent years. As shown below, employment has more than doubled from about 27,000 jobs in 1986 to over 62,000 jobs in 2008 and is forecast to increase to over 100,000 jobs by 2031.



Source: The Regional Municipality of York: *Planning for Tomorrow Reports*, April 4, 2007 and the Regional Municipality of York: *York Region 2031 Land Budget*, January 7, 2008.  
 Note 1: Employment figures between 2006 & 2031 are evenly pro-rated by Hemson Consulting Ltd.

The Town's employment base shows a strong focus on service-producing industries, in particular business and related services.



Source: Statistics Canada, 2006 Census of Canada.

Richmond Hill has also been successful in attracting a range of knowledge-based and "new economy" sectors, such as high technology and life-science activities.

One of the major reasons for the Town's historically strong economic performance has been a large and highly competitive supply of "employment land", contained in the Town's four designated business parks. The Town is well-positioned to compete in the future for a number of reasons, including:

- One of the best business locations in the broader economic region;
- A strong and established economic base; and
- A well-educated and active labour force;

Although the Town is well-positioned to compete for new investment, the Town would like to further improve its economic performance and change the way it accommodates growth. To this end, the Town is proposing a set of economic objectives that include:

- Improving the balance of jobs to population, or the "live-work" balance in the community;
- Encouraging higher densities and employment intensification;
- Encouraging a shift of economic activity over time to the Regional Centre and Corridors; and
- Planning for new retail and office development as an integrated part of vibrant, mixed use nodes.

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Within the context of these policy directions, The Town of Richmond Hill has developed a future land use vision in which the community will build upon past economic success and also look forward towards a more mixed use and intensified economic environment.

The vision is for continued strong economic performance on employment land, but with an increased emphasis on the identified Centres, Corridors and Key Development Areas (KDA) as a focus for economic activity. The Town is particularly interested in accommodating future retail development through a more intensive use and reuse of existing commercial areas and strips, including “greyfields”, instead of large stand-alone retail developments.

The Town of Richmond Hill has many other opportunities to accommodate economic activity in new urban forms, including:

- Strong concentrations of employment in the types of economic activity that tend to locate in office space, such as business services;
- A strong and ethnically diverse retail environment;
- One of the strongest office markets in the Greater Toronto Area and Hamilton (GTAH); and
- A number of key community and economic assets such as the historic downtown and the York-Central Hospital, both of which could be attractive locations for more intensive economic activity.

We are interested in your comments and feedback on some of the key policy areas that will need to be addressed to implement the Town’s vision, in particular:

- Employment Areas: how can the Town protect this key economic resource? What types of uses should be permitted, and how can they be encouraged to intensify?
- Retail: what types of retail uses are appropriate in the community, and where? Where and how should the Town accommodate major retail uses in the community?
- Centres and Corridors: what types of economic activity are appropriate for these locations? What types of retail and office use are appropriate? and
- Key Development Areas: what role should these high profile locations play in the Town’s future economic landscape? Can these areas be used to build upon the strength of the Town’s office sector, growing service economy or a potential life-science cluster around the Hospital?