



Thursday, February 19, 2009

For Immediate Release

York Regional Council – February 19, 2009

York Regional Council approves 2009 Operating Budget

York Regional Council today approved a \$1.35 billion Operating Budget as part of The Regional Municipality of York's overall 2009 Business Plan. The Budget responds to increased demand for Regional services while renewing a commitment to financing hospital capital funding.

To meet York Region's growth needs for more than one million residents, the Operating Budget will increase services across all Regional departments.

The Operating Budget includes a 2.2 per cent tax levy increase, which will have an impact of approximately \$42 for the year for a York Region residential property assessed at \$400,000.

The Budget increases York Region's annual contribution to Hospital Capital Funding for the Region's three existing hospitals and the planned hospital in the City of Vaughan to \$12 million.

The Budget has been reviewed by Regional committees and staff. It features \$21.5 million in growth and enhancements, including:

\$4.7 million for Hospital capital funding

- Topping up York Region's 2009 contribution to \$12 million

\$3.6 million for Community & Health Services

- New contact centre for Health Connection and front-line staffing
- New rent supplement program
- Increased staff for long term care day programs and child and family health programs
- Contribution to reserves for non profit housing provider capital repairs

\$3.5 million for contributions for Capital Asset Replacement

- Replaces aging infrastructure including transit vehicles and supports the Region's AAA credit rating

\$2.3 million for York Regional Police

- 38 additional police officers and 14 civilians

\$2 million for Transit (YRT/Viva)

- 24,660 additional service hours

\$1.6 million for Solid Waste Management

- Accommodate increase tonnage for blue box recycling, green bin organics and residual waste
- Blue box bylaw enforcement, waste reduction advocacy and green bin promotion and education

\$1.4 million for Emergency Medical Services (EMS)

- 12 paramedics and 168 additional ambulance hours

\$1.1 million for Social Services and Social Housing reserves

- Social services long-term planning

\$900,000 for Regional Roads

- Road maintenance for additional lane kilometres

March 2009 is Red Cross Month

York Regional Council has endorsed a request by the York Region branch of the Canadian Red Cross to recognize March 2009 as Red Cross Month.

The Red Cross is an international volunteer organization that provides relief to victims of disasters and helps people prevent, prepare for and respond to emergencies.

Bicycle lanes confirmed for Highway 7

York Regional Council confirmed that bicycle lanes will be incorporated into Highway 7 from Highway 50 to Don Cousens Parkway, as outlined in the York Region Pedestrian and Cycling Master Plan.

The York Region Pedestrian and Cycling Master Plan recommends on-street bike lanes (lanes integrated with the road) along Highway 7, where dedicated rapid transit lanes will be established. In areas where transit will operate in mixed traffic, the master plan recommends boulevard paths (separate from the road).

Light Rail Transit study planned for Don Mills Road and Leslie Street

York Regional Council has authorized staff to proceed with the planning and design of Light Rail Transit (LRT) on Don Mills Road and Leslie Street from Steeles Avenue to Highway 7, as identified in the Metrolinx Regional Transportation Plan. The work will be conducted in conjunction with an Environmental Assessment.

York Region expands child dental program for low income families in need

York Regional Council today approved the expansion of the Children in Need of Treatment (CINOT) program for 2009. The program expansion is a result of a \$1.38-million funding allocation from the Ministry of Health Promotion.

For more than 20 years, the CINOT program has been providing financial assistance to eligible children (up to age 14) who require preventative, urgent and essential dental treatment. Expansion of the program will increase access to dental services for eligible youth between the ages of 14 to 17 years old.

Beginning in 2010, the expanded CINOT program costs will move to the current 75/25 per cent cost-sharing formula between the province and York Region. Using 2008 data, this would cost the Region an extra \$350,000 per year.

In 2008, more than 2,000 children under the age of 14 living in York Region benefited from the CINOT program. For more information, please [view the report](#).

York Region appoints representative to Source Protection Committee

York Regional Council approved the appointment of Laura McDowell, Director, Environmental Promotion and Protection, as the municipal representative for York Region and our nine municipalities to the Credit Valley, Toronto Region and Central Lake Ontario Region Source Protection Committee.

The appointment of Laura McDowell to the committee ensures York Region continues to meet our legislative obligations under the *Clean Water Act*.

York Regional Council activates provincial funding initiative

York Regional Council continued its environmental leadership role by endorsing the Wellhead Protection Areas for York Region and Intake Protection Zones for Lake Simcoe. This endorsement allows homeowners and municipalities to pursue funding opportunities through the Ontario Drinking Water Stewardship Program.

This program is designed to protect our drinking water sources by providing funds for upgrading wells and septic systems to residents living in areas designated as being close to municipal wells or water intakes.

York Region monitors trends in labour force demand in 2008 versus 2007

York Regional Council received an update on the 2008 Job Hiring Index results which identify and analyze hiring trends in York Region in between 2007 and 2008.

Workforce development was identified as a strategic initiative in York Region's 2005 Economic Strategy. One of the actions proposed for the Region was to facilitate better forecasting of industry requirements, skills shortages and deficiencies within the Region.

This report presents the job hiring data for the first two years of data collection in 2007 and 2008 and provides the first year-over-year comparisons.

- In 2008, there were 49,361 job postings across York Region, representing a six per cent decline versus the 52,491 jobs posted in 2007.
- During the first and second quarters of 2008, job postings increased by five per cent and 20 per cent, respectively. However, declines in job postings in the third quarter of 13 per cent and 32 per cent in the fourth quarter reflect the impact of the global economic situation on the hiring plans of employers in York Region.

York Region builds geospatial information

York Regional Council received five staff information reports outlining the activities and accomplishments of York Region's Planning and Development Department in the area of geomatics information management over the past year.

The creation and maintenance of current and accurate geospatial information adds analytical capacity and quality that support a range of Regional responsibilities and decision-making processes. It is used by York Region and our partners and stakeholders in day-to-day operations, including:

- Police - custom tools and training to help fight crime
- Emergency response - current critical infrastructure essential to emergency management
- Fire services - run time analysis facilitates optimum station locations
- Health services - infectious disease analysis aids early detection and prevention
- Environmental monitoring - Lake Simcoe freshet flood mapping enabled proactive response
- Sustainable development - understanding complex growth management challenges such as the Yonge Street subway expansion business case
- Enriched communities through coordinated geospatial infrastructure - 3D models visualize current and future scenarios

York Regional Council endorses work plan to update the Regional Official Plan

Regional Council approved a work plan for updating the *Regional Official Plan*. Based on growth management consultation and analysis undertaken over the past two years, York Region will release a draft Regional Official Plan Update for public input and review in June 2009.

The goal is to submit the update for approval by Regional Council in late 2009, which would meet the Provincial requirements in the *Places to Grow Plan* and other initiatives.

Regional Council agreed to hold a Special Meeting of Council pursuant to Subsection 26 (4) of the *Planning Act*, on April 8th at 1:30 p.m. during the Planning and Economic Development Committee meeting to hear submissions in regard to revisions that may be required to the *Regional Official Plan*.

York Regional Council adopts a Regional intensification strategy

York Regional Council has adopted the York Region 2031 Intensification Strategy, a plan for the Region to meet the requirements of Ontario's *Places to Grow Plan*.

The Growth Plan stipulates that by 2015 and for each year thereafter, a minimum of 40 per cent of all residential development occurring annually within each upper and single-tier municipality will be within the built-up area.

In York Region, an estimated 90,700 new units are required to achieve the 40 per cent intensification target for residential development by 2031. It is expected that the Region will meet or exceed the 40 per cent target. The following table illustrates the breakdown of this figure by local municipality.

**Required intensification units (2006-31)
to meet 40 per cent residential intensification**

	Intensification Units
Aurora	3,200
East Gwillimbury	1,000
Georgina	2,700
King	920
Markham	31,500
Newmarket	5,300
Richmond Hill	14,700
Vaughan	29,300
Whitchurch Stouffville	2,100
Total for York Region	90,700

This includes row houses, mid and high-rise units, duplexes and secondary suites.

The strategy contains a list of nine elements that will be included in the Regional Official Plan Policy as well as a list of 10 York Region Principles of Intensification. For more information, please see the [staff report](#) and the [York Region 2031 Intensification Strategy](#).

Next meeting of York Regional Council

York Regional Council will meet on Thursday, March 26th at 9:30 a.m. at the York Region Administrative Centre Council Chambers, located at 17250 Yonge Street in the Town of Newmarket.

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