

Friday, April 23, 2010

For Immediate Release

York Regional Council – April 22, 2010

York Region appoints Human Services Planning Board of York Region

York Regional Council approved the appointment of the Human Services Planning Board of York Region, a committee of leaders and community members from various sectors who will collaborate on strategies for improving human services in York Region.

The board will be led by co-chairs Joyce Frustaglio, City of Vaughan Regional Councillor, and Susan LaRosa, Director of Education for the York Catholic District School Board.

The board has 24 members that include leaders and decision-makers from the Region's hospitals, school boards and police department, as well as a cross-section of individuals from other human service organizations and networks, community leaders and senior levels of government. The inaugural board members will retain their appointment until November 2014, coinciding with the next term of York Regional Council.

The demand for existing and new human services in York Region continues to grow at unprecedented rates. Factors include continued population growth, increasing ethno-cultural and socio-economic diversity and demographic shifts such as a rapidly expanding senior's population.

For more information, please see member bios posted on the Newsroom page of the York Region website, www.york.ca

York Region Emergency Medical Services facility is Best in Class

The Regional Municipality of York has received a *Best in Class* award from the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) for excellence in the Municipal Energy Performance Benchmarking Project - Emergency Medical Services (EMS) facility category.

The award was presented by Local Authority Services (LAS) Ltd., a subsidiary company of AMO, and recognizes the integrated energy management initiatives at the York Region EMS Mount Albert Station in the Town of East Gwillimbury.

For more information on Local Authority Services Ltd. and the Municipal Energy Performance Benchmarking Project, visit www.las.on.ca

York Region Infrastructure Update

York Regional Council received an update on the status of the Region's more than \$2 billion worth of water, wastewater and waste management infrastructure.

The infrastructure is graded against three key elements: overall reliability and quality of service; capacity to meet current and future demands and physical condition of the infrastructure. Each service within the Environmental Services department scored well and any identified shortfalls are being addressed through both current and future initiatives.

York Regional Council requests consideration in the governance review for Rouge Park

York Regional Council gave its support of the Rouge Park Alliance submission to the Government of Canada, seeking Federal Park status - subject to a commitment which protects Regional interests.

Regional Council will notify the Federal government that the Regional interests relating to growth management, infrastructure and agriculture be protected in any designation of Rouge Park as a federal park.

York Region Immigration Portal promoted to newcomers

York Regional Council received an update on the progress of the York Region Immigration Portal project since its official launch in July 2008, including the development and implementation of a marketing strategy from April to September.

The tagline, *Information for Newcomers*, will encourage recently-arrived and prospective immigrants to use the portal that provides trusted, reliable and useful information for settling into the community. The portal is one of several methods the Region and the community are using to attract, retain and seamlessly integrate newcomers.

York Region commits \$52.7 million from provincial funds towards social housing and homelessness

York Regional Council has committed \$52.7 million in funding received from the Province of Ontario's *Investing in Ontario Act* to help meet York Region's growing social housing and homelessness needs. Council has allocated \$5 million of the funds for the construction of a women's homeless shelter in the Town of Newmarket and \$12.4 million towards construction of a 140-unit apartment building in the Town of Richmond Hill. The remaining \$35.3 million will be allocated for future housing initiatives.

The decision follows discussions at a Council Workshop held in January.

York Region establishes co-ordination of the Richmond Hill/Langstaff Gateway development

York Regional Council approved a summary of the process, recommendations and next steps developed to co-ordinate the Region-led planning of the Richmond Hill/Langstaff Gateway Regional Centre and Provincial Urban Growth Centre.

The project co-ordinates several parties, including the Towns of Markham and Richmond Hill, the City of Vaughan, the provincial ministries of Municipal Affairs and Housing, Energy and Infrastructure and the Office of the Provincial Development Facilitator.

York Region to proceed with Richmond Hill Centre/Langstaff Urban Growth Centre Transportation Study

York Regional Council has approved \$200,000 to proceed with the Richmond Hill Centre/Langstaff Urban Growth Centre Transportation Study. The study will consolidate recently completed local transportation plans and studies to ensure there is an alignment with the broader transportation vision for the area.

The Richmond Hill Centre/Langstaff Urban Growth Centre is strategically located at the intersection of three bus rapid transit lines, a commuter rail line and proposed subway extension. Fully developed, the area will have a population of approximately 48,000 residents and 31,000 employees.

The study is part of the Region's effort, in partnership with the Town of Richmond Hill, Town of Markham and the City of Vaughan, to create an inter-modal transit hub to help manage planned growth for the area.

Job Hiring Index provides forward look at local economy

York Regional Council received a report on the 2009 Job Hiring Index, a study analyzing hiring trends in the Region.

Comparison between the hiring trends in 2007, 2008 and 2009 show declines caused by the global economic crisis have slowed and growth should be evident by the third quarter of this year.

The southern three municipalities of the Towns of Markham and Richmond Hill and the City of Vaughan have the most job postings. The Town of Markham had the majority of jobs posted in 2009 at 39 per cent of the total, however, the number of jobs posted decreased by 23 per cent in 2009 versus 2008.

All nine municipalities showed significant percentage decreases in job postings, with the Town of Georgina experiencing the least decline at two per cent.

York Region implements Emergency Detour Routes for Highway 400

Working with the Ministry of Transportation Ontario, The Regional Municipality of York has designated detour routes along Highway 400 to be used in the event that an emergency closes all or part of the highway. The Region has installed detour signs along Jane Street and Weston Road to mark the detour routes for motorists.

The signs, funded by the Ministry of Transportation were installed by York Region at a cost of \$2,800.

York Region purchases \$5 million in social services from community-based agencies

The Regional Municipality of York successfully purchased \$5 million in services for York Region's vulnerable residents through 89 projects in 2009. These projects were delivered by social service agencies across the Region and funded by the Community Development Investment Fund (CDIF).

Of the 89 projects, 78 received one-year funding totalling \$3.6 million and 11 projects received renewable funding totalling \$1.4 million. Through the renewable funding allocation, agencies continuing to meet established criteria may be eligible to receive funding for up to three consecutive years.

Vector-borne disease program 2009/2010 activity update

York Regional Council received a report on the Region's Community and Health Services Department, Public Health branch Vector-Borne Disease Program activities for 2009 and 2010.

Monitoring and surveillance activities for 2009 showed that West Nile virus (WNV) cases in Canada have decreased from 28 in 2008 to eight in 2009. No cases were reported in York Region. One WNV-positive pool was detected in York Region in 2009.

York Region's larviciding efforts to control WNV continue in 2010 along with a public awareness campaigns. Surveillance of WNV, Lyme disease and Eastern Equine Encephalitis continue in 2010.

Program costs for the 2009 Vector-borne disease program totalled \$528,474, with 75 per cent of the cost paid through a provincial subsidy of \$396,348.

Changes to HOV lanes along Dufferin Street

Recently installed High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes on Dufferin Street north of Steeles Avenue will now be open to all traffic during off-peak travel times.

The HOV lanes will still be reserved for motor vehicles with two or more people during the morning and evening rush hours, 7 a.m. to 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. to 7 p.m., respectively.

The Regional Municipality of York recognizing seven separate events

National Organ and Tissue Donation Awareness Week: April 18th to 25th

York Regional Council recognized National Organ and Tissue Donation Awareness Week, which takes place this week from April 18th to 25th.

National Organ and Tissue Donation Awareness Week encourages Ontarians to register as organ and tissue donors to assist the 1,600 people currently awaiting life-saving transplants

Girl's Rights Week: May 3rd to 7th

York Regional Council will recognize Girl's Rights Week, May 3rd to 7th.

Girl's Rights Week is under the auspices of Girls Incorporated of York Region, a non-profit organization dedicated to empowering girls and young women to seek the highest quality of life possible.

National Public Works Week: May 16th to 22nd

The Regional Municipality of York will celebrate National Public Works Week from May 16th to 22nd, with a series of events and activities, recognizing the contributions of the Region's Transportation Services and Environmental Services departments to the health, safety, comfort and quality of life that York Region residents enjoy.

The National Public Works Week celebration will begin with a free Family Fun Day Open House on Saturday, May 15th at the Bales Drive Operations Centre in the Town of East Gwillimbury. The Open House will feature a charity barbecue, educational displays, activities for children and a fleet of trucks for visitors to explore.

The celebrations will include:

- A Paint-a-Plow contest
- School tours of Waste Management, Water and Wastewater and Transit facilities
- The Miller Cup municipal public works challenge between municipal staff and politicians

National Public Works Week is recognized every May in Canada by the Canadian and Ontario Public Works Associations.

National Emergency Medical Services Week: May 16th to 22nd

York Region will recognize the life-saving dedication of Emergency Medical Services (EMS) staff through National Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Week from May 16th to 22nd.

This year's theme "EMS: Anytime. Anywhere. We'll be there" will be carried through a series of awareness-raising public events and activities, including the "Mission of health" bike ride across York Region, a kickoff event at the York Region Administrative Centre, EMS Family Day at the Magna Centre in the Town of Newmarket and a Children's Wish Foundation "Paramedic for a Day" event.

Further EMS Week information will be available in local newspapers and at www.york.ca in the coming weeks.

National Hunger Awareness Day: June 1st

York Region will recognize June 1st as National Hunger Awareness Day.

The goal of the Hunger Awareness Day movement is to raise the profile of this solvable problem and ask Canadians to help reduce the need for food banks in our country. In 2009, York Region food banks realized a 27 per cent increase in usage over 2008 numbers; 41 per cent of those helped are children.

National Access Awareness Week: June 6th to 12th

York Region will recognize National Access Awareness Week from June 6th to 12th.

National Access Awareness Week was established in 1988 with the aim of facilitating changes to allow for full participation of those with disabilities in all aspects of Canadian life.

Pride Week: June 6th to 13th

York Region will recognize June 6th to 13th as Pride Week.

This year marks the 10th anniversary that Pride Week is been celebrated in York Region. York PRIDEFEST, under the umbrella of the Trillium Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Project, is funded by Family Services York Region.

Next meeting of York Regional Council

York Regional Council will meet on Thursday, May 20th at 9:30 a.m. at the York Region Administrative Centre Council Chambers, located at 17250 Yonge Street, Newmarket.

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Council Highlights compiled by:

Barbara Moss, Corporate Communications, York Region
Phone: 905 830-4444, ext. 1237 or Cell 905 505-5775
Email: barbara.moss@york.ca

