



November 2005

York Regional Council Highlights



The Regional Municipality of York



York Region to recycle school waste

York Region has agreed to a request by the York Region District School Board and the York Catholic District School Board to accept recyclable materials at its waste management centre in East Gwillimbury.

The move will be beneficial to students as an educational tool, in that the school recycling program will now mirror that of residential service. The move also has benefits to York Region, as it will contribute to the increase in its waste diversion rate.

It is estimated that the school boards generate 150 tonnes of recyclables annually. Costs for processing will amount to approximately \$1,440 annually. Processing is anticipated to take place in 2006.

September YRT ridership remains strong

York Region Transit (YRT) continued to post excellent ridership numbers, with 1.43 million passengers in September. Overall, passenger numbers for 2005 increased by 11.7 per cent over the same time period in 2004.

YRT ridership for 2005 was just over 11.2 million passengers in September. Over the same time period in 2004, ridership was just over 10 million passengers.

YRT has posted 10 per cent or greater ridership increases every year since the service was amalgamated in 2001.

For more information about York Region Transit, including fares, schedules and service, please call toll-free 1-866-MOVE YRT (668-3978), locally at (905) 881-5167 or TTY line at 1-866-276-7478 or visit www.yrt.ca

For information on Viva Rapid Transit, please visit www.vivayork.ca

For more information on The Regional Municipality of York, the services we offer and links to our nine area municipalities, please visit our Web site at: www.york.ca

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York Region coordinates and funds Swim to Survive program

The Community Services and Housing Committee reported that York Region will participate in Swim to Survive, a program developed by The Life Saving Society, offering students in Grade 3 the basic skills required to survive an unexpected fall into water.

Between November 2005 and March 2006, 2,531 Grade 3 students, in 55 schools across York Region, will participate in the program.

Swim to Survive will be delivered by the nine local municipal recreation departments who will provide pool space in-kind and schedule the required aquatic instructor/lifeguards. Direct instructional costs will be funded by York Region.

The school boards will facilitate transportation and student/parent information. The Life Saving Society will provide classroom teacher resources, student handbooks, parent information on water safety and any aquatic instructor training required.

York Region plays a co-ordinating role and will provide the required funding for instructor and bussing costs. Swim to Survive is anticipated to cost \$47,000 in its entirety.

While Swim to Survive would be of benefit to most children in York Region, this pilot initiative will be targeted to Grade 3 students in the schools identified by the public and Catholic school boards.

Regional Council sends resolution to Province on long-term care funding

Council approved the Long Term Care Funding Resolution, stating that Council "urges the Province of Ontario to increase the per diem to residents of long term care homes in the fiscal year 2006-07 by \$4,083.75 per resident, thereby fulfilling and enabling the significant investments necessary to meet the immediate needs of residents."

Council also authorized the Regional Chair to correspond with the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care and local MPPs, requesting that they support and adopt the recommendations in the resolution.

The report from Committee noted that Provincial funding for inmates in provincial jails is greater than that provided for long-term care residents; however, York Region contributes funding to the Region's long-term care facilities, which results in long-term care residents receiving more than inmates in provincial jails.

For more information, please refer to the [report from Committee](#).

Regional Council approves work on model watershed-groundwater planning policies

Regional Council authorized staff to work with area municipalities to assess the effectiveness of model planning policies outlined in *Watershed Planning from Recommendations to Municipal Policies: A Guidance Document, Interim Report April 2005* and provide feedback to the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority by mid 2006.

The report and model policies were prepared on behalf of the York Peel Durham Toronto (YPDT) Groundwater Study. It will assist municipalities and conservation authorities in developing official plan policies to implement watershed plans prepared under the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan (ORMCP).

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Regional Council approves York Region Business Directory promotion

Regional Council approved a staff plan to promote the York Region Business Directory to both local businesses and the general public.

The promotion will showcase the expanded search capability of the site, in addition to highlighting the newly developed interactive tools.

It will encourage York Region businesses to update their information online, which will improve data quality and reduce the need for door-to-door surveying activities. It also will increase the visibility of the directory and inform the public of the features and functions of the website.

For businesses, the directory promises to be an effective business tool for attracting new business. For residents, it will be a convenient tool for locating York Region businesses.

The York Region Business Directory also offers for sale, on a cost-recovery basis, related database products, including electronic directories, printed directories and custom queries. The York Region Business Directory 2005 is priced at \$175 for the CD-ROM version and \$50 for the print version.

YorkInfo Partnership supports data infrastructure

York Regional Council today received a report outlining the progress of the YorkInfo Partnership, an association of local governments and organizations initiated by York Region in 1996 to create and operate a co-ordinated geospatial information framework or infrastructure.

The YorkInfo Partnership includes all nine area municipalities of York Region, the Lake Simcoe Conservation Authority and the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority.

YorkInfo Partnership's accomplishments in 2005 include:

- Development of tools, licensing and data sharing agreements
- Establishment of geospatial information standards related to roads and parcel databases to facilitate sharing of geospatial data between municipalities
- Acquisition of 2005 orthophotography
- Creation, maintenance, enhancement and sharing of geospatial information

The Partnership members avoid duplication and costs related to data collection, information management and technology while developing an efficient information infrastructure that is requisite to manage the challenges of rapidly growing urban areas alongside agricultural lands and environmentally sensitive sites.

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Geomatics tools on York Region's Web site garners kudos

York Region's Geomatics Branch in the Planning and Development Services Department received an Award of Excellence for YorkExplorer, the suite of geomatics tools on the Region's corporate web site.

The award recognizes the Region's leadership in exploiting the power of the software tools used to provide users with access to the Region's geospatial metadata.

YorkExplorer was also recognized in the August 2005 issue of the international industry magazine, *GeoWorld*, as the Resource of the Month.

Implemented during 2004-05, the "Advancing YorkExplorer Project" brought new functionality to the Region's Internet web mapping views. It added a metadata tool to enable discovery of York Region geographic data and map services that can be used by other mapping agencies.

The services are widely used, with an average of 64 map views accessed every hour, and over 130 map views accessed in peak business hours.

York Region Small Business Enterprise Centre supports entrepreneurship

Regional Council today received a report on the activities of the York Region Small Business Enterprise Centre, located in the Regional Administrative Centre in Newmarket. The Small Business Enterprise Centre serves entrepreneurs and small businesses in the northern parts of the Region and complements the other Small Business Enterprise Centres in Markham, Richmond Hill and Vaughan.

The Centre provides assistance in the creation and development of new and early growth stage businesses. Services to new entrepreneurs and small businesses include guidance on new business registration, business plan preparation, market planning, and financing options. Small business support involves areas of strategic planning, market penetration, expansion planning, and human resource issues.

For the first eight months of this year, the Centre handled 3,452 general inquiries. Staff also conducted 189 consultations and eight seminars, attracting about 280 participants.

Small business is a significant segment of York Region's economy. The 2004 Employment Survey found that 83 per cent of businesses in the Region employ less than 20 employees. The Centre supports the growth of entrepreneurship and works with existing businesses in the Region to strengthen their enterprises.

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York Region Export Development Initiative takes integrated service delivery approach

Regional Council received a report outlining the new service delivery approach for the York Region Export Development Initiative.

Since its inception in 2000, the goal of the Export Development Initiative has been and remains to positively impact the economic growth and prosperity of the Region by assisting small and medium sized companies in developing and expanding their export potentials.

The new approach will evolve the export advisory service to a co-ordinated approach with other government and private sector export service agencies through the creation of the York Export Alliance.

The role of the York Export Alliance will be to provide export-ready companies with more seamless access to the programs and services provided by the other partners such as Ontario Exports Inc., Export Development Canada, International Trade Canada, and Innovation Synergy Centre in Markham.

The Region's Export Development Initiative will continue to focus its efforts on companies that are at the early stage of export development.

With intervention from different partners at various stages, the ultimate goal is to raise the level of export activity and help companies achieve success as experienced exporters.

Additional Court resources

York Regional Council has approved an additional courtroom at the Tannery Mall in Newmarket dedicated to Highway Traffic Act offences in 2006.

Two full-time staff members will be assigned to the new courtroom, and the Region will make a request to the Attorney General of Ontario to appoint Justices of the Peace to provide sufficient judicial resources.

Tax Increment Financing (TIF)—status Update

York Regional Council reaffirmed its support for tax increment financing (TIF), subject to the Province's financial participation, as one of a suite of optional funding tools to assist the Region in meeting its urban structure objectives and vision of city building as per the Region's Official Plan and focus on a system of Centres and Corridors.

TIF, in conjunction with other fiscal options, could provide a valuable tool for creating infrastructure and attracting private sector investment within these Centres and Corridors.

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Court Services Staffing and Workload Update

Regional Council adopted the recommendations contained in the October 11, 2005 report from the Commissioner of Corporate Services that the Courts Services Branch be permitted to convert six of the eleven casual positions to permanent status as approved in the 2005 Budget and that the conversion of five positions to permanent status be withheld pending the completion of the consultants review co-ordinated by the Town of Markham and report to Council.

York Region recognizes Snowmobiling Week

York Region will recognize November 21-27, 2005 as "Get Ready for Snowmobiling Week", following a request from the Ontario Federation of Snowmobile Clubs.

York Durham Sewage System Interceptor update

York Regional Council received a report updating the progress of the York Durham Sewage System (YDSS) Interceptor Sewer project.

The update included an overview of the recently completed peer review, undertaken by several internationally recognized authorities in the fields of terrestrial ecology, fisheries, geotechnical tunneling, hydrogeology and geomorphology. The peer review concurred with the selection of the 19th Avenue and Leslie Street routing for the sewer, and acknowledged the Region's comprehensive assessment in the selection process.

The results of the Peer Review have been submitted to the Minister of the Environment and the Region is awaiting approval to proceed.

York Region invests \$1.1 million in community service projects for vulnerable residents

York Regional Council approved the disbursement of \$1.1 million to community agencies under its Community Development and Investment Funding (CDIF) Strategy for 17 community service projects in 2006.

Projects range from a community kitchen program that will help 150 low income women to a program that will assist homeless youth in making a successful transition from living on the street to permanent housing.

Last year, approximately 30,000 residents received community services from programs that were purchased under the CDIF Strategy.

For a complete list of the community agencies and the 2006 community service projects that Regional Council has approved under the CDIF Strategy, please visit our [Newsroom](#) for the media release, "York Region invests \$1.1 million in community service projects for vulnerable residents," dated November 22, 2005.

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Next meeting of York Regional Council

York Regional Council's next meeting will take place on Thursday, December 15th, at a revised time of 2:00 p.m.

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The contents of this summary are for information purposes only. Actual text of Council resolutions and official copies of reports to Council can be obtained from the York Region Web site at www.york.ca under Regional Government.