

# York Regional Council Highlights

June 24, 2004

## 2003 Annual Report

The Regional Municipality of York released its 2003 Annual Report, entitled “Achieving Results Together”.

The Annual Report highlights information on Regional Council, Committee and staff accomplishments, audited financial statements, plus a five-year review.

The Annual Report is available for pick up at the York Region Administrative Centre information kiosk. A web friendly version of the report is also being created and will be available via York Region’s Web site at the end of July.

## Council endorses York Region Centres and Corridors Strategy

Regional Council endorsed the York Region Centres and Corridors Strategy, *Making it Happen!* The purpose of the Strategy is to promote the development of a planned urban structure of centres and corridors and strengthen the relationship between land use, transportation and transit.

Regional centres are vibrant, higher density, mixed use precincts that serve as the Region’s “downtown”. York Region has designated and prepared detailed plans for four Regional centres. They include Markham Centre, Newmarket Centre, Bayview Glen in Richmond Hill and the Vaughan Corporate Centre. Regional centres are linked by the Regional corridors of Yonge Street and Highway 7, which have the greatest opportunity to add new housing units, employment and services in a mixed-use form that is supportive of higher order transit services.

A draft Centres and Corridors Strategy was first presented to Regional Council in May 2003 and was circulated broadly to private and public agencies throughout the Province. The draft Strategy was also displayed at seven public consultations as part of preliminary public consultations for the proposed Regional Official Plan Amendment 43 during the summer of 2003, and seven presentations were made to local municipal councils and committees earlier this year. Six public consultations/open houses were also held in five local municipalities.

A detailed action plan matrix has been prepared that outlines key implementation steps that will require coordination of efforts between Regional and local municipal staff, and will monitor progress of Centres and Corridors Strategy. Staff will report back to the Region’s Planning and Economic Development Committee and Regional Council on a regular basis on the Strategy’s action plan.

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## **Region to ask Hydro One to reassess its options for expanded power capacity**

Regional Council passed recommendations requesting Hydro One to reassess its plans and options for expanded power capacity in York Region, and to give greater consideration to environmental, social and economic impacts on residential areas.

Two options to replace existing transmission lines currently being considered by Hydro One are being met with opposition by affected municipalities and residents, as well as the York Region Catholic School Board.

A meeting will be arranged with the impacted municipalities and the Region to discuss a common response to the Hydro One proposal that will be recommended in the fall.

## **Feedback to draft ROPA 43 to be received through to September 2004**

Regional Council passed a recommendation that staff continue to refine Draft Regional Official Plan Amendment (ROPA) 43 over the summer months, and receive comments from the area municipalities and the public through to September 2004.

Any materials and/or information arising from the June 24, 2004 Statutory Public Meeting will be circulated by the Regional Clerk to the area municipalities as appropriate.

The idea of concentrating development in a network of centres and corridors to focus growth and infrastructure investment has been a key objective of the Regional Official Plan for the past 10 years. Enhancements proposed under ROPA 43 support this goal through good planning.

A key objective of the ROPA 43 process has been to provide clear and supportive policy direction to bolster city-building efforts at the local level, which occurs through local Official Plans, zoning by-laws, site plan control and programs.

Staff will report back on a final version of Draft ROPA 43 to the Region's Planning and Economic Development Committee in the fall of 2004.

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## York Region makes recommendations to Greenbelt Task Force

Council has endorsed issues and recommendations outlined in a Planning and Economic Development Committee report be submitted to the Greenbelt Task Force on Bill 27 – *The Greenbelt Protection Act*.

The Greenbelt Task Force has suggested a number of approaches for achievement of a Greenbelt in the Golden Horseshoe that can be supported. York Region's submission will convey that the Greenbelt planning process should incorporate:

- A longer term vision
- Provisions for transportation and infrastructure in all areas similar to those used in the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan
- Protection strategies for wetlands (other than Provincially Significant wetlands), tableland woodlots and middle reaches of streams
- Review of Regional and Local Official Plans and initiatives to obtain models and strategies for Greenbelt planning elements
- Adequate long-term funding, not only for stewardship and securement, but for those hard and human services to support and urban population

Regional staff will continue to be involved in the process towards a Greenbelt Plan and will report back to Committee and Council as appropriate.

## York Region wins award for combating Asian Long-horned Beetle

York Region received the *2004 Ontario Federal Council Leadership Through Collaboration Award* from the Government of Canada at a presentation at Regional Council today, for its efforts in combating the Asian Long-horned Beetle (ALHB) infestation in the City of Vaughan. York Region received the award jointly with a number of agencies and jurisdictions who worked together to stop the spread of the ALHB and Emerald Ash Borer infestation in Windsor, Ontario.

The Government of Canada committed funds in November 2003 to survey and eradicate the ALHB. In May 2004 it announced compensation for tree owners who had trees removed to stop the ALHB spread. Details of the fund distribution will be determined over the next few months.

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## **York Region to request tree compensation from Government of Canada over Asian Long-horned Beetle**

Over the next few months, York Regional Council will work with the Government of Canada for financial compensation for Regional trees cut to prevent the spread of the Asian Long-horned Beetle (ALHB). The Federal Government announced a tree compensation plan as part of the Federal Government's *Introduced Forest Pest Compensation Regulations* on May 12<sup>th</sup>.

## **Mobility Foundation of York Region donates \$10,000 to York Region Mobility Plus Transit**

York Region Mobility Plus Transit today received a \$10,000 donation from the Mobility Foundation of York Region (MFYR) at a meeting of Regional Council, calling Mobility Plus "an essential component to community accessibility".

The MFYR donated the funds to increasing Mobility Plus capacity in the Aurora/York Region North area.

## **York Region provides assistance to Town of Newmarket to purchase and protect Newmarket Woodlot property**

York Region Council has approved up to \$200,000 to assist with the purchase of a 4.57 hectare (11.3 acre) woodlot property in the northwest section of the Town of Newmarket. The Region has agreed to partially fund Newmarket's purchase of the property under the auspices of the Regional Securement Strategy.

The purchase will protect the property from commercial development.

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## York Region adopts Traffic Calming policy for transit routes

York Regional Council today adopted a York Region Transit policy entitled “Policy for Traffic Calming on Public Transit Routes”, and recommended working with area municipalities to enable the policy.

It includes:

- Investing in public education to change perceptions, behaviours and attitudes that lead to collisions
- Providing visible police enforcement where resources permit
- Addressing specific traffic problems with intelligent, cost-effective solutions that will not compromise safety or penalize law-abiding citizens
- Educating the community that instead of turning streets into playgrounds, there is a need to develop recreational grounds and facilities where children can play safely away from traffic

The policy discourages building obstacles to impede traffic – measures that can damage vehicles and divert traffic to other roads.

## York Region purchases site in City of Vaughan for Household Hazardous Waste Depot

York Regional Council today approved the purchase of a 7.8 acre property in the City of Vaughan for the establishment of a new Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) Depot. The site is situated next to the Region’s Transportation and Works Southwest Patrol Yard on Rutherford Road near Jane Street.

The purchase is contingent upon receipt of a Certificate of Approval from the Ministry of the Environment (MOE), granting permission to establish the depot, and approvals from the City of Vaughan.

Residents in the southwest of the Region have been without a convenient place to send their hazardous materials, since the closing of the HHW Depot at the Keele Valley Landfill site at the end of 2002. During this time, residents were forced to travel to Markham.

The site was selected after a comprehensive search by York Region staff, and staff from the City of Vaughan.

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The contents of this summary are intended to be 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.region.york.on.ca](http://www.region.york.on.ca) under Regional Council.