



Thursday, October 20, 2011

For Immediate Release

York Regional Council express condolences on the passing of former Chairman Eldred King

Chairman Bill Fisch today spoke to the work, compassion and dedication of former York Region Chairman Eldred King, who passed away last weekend.

Mr. King dedicated three decades to public service, beginning his political career as a local school trustee and concluding with five terms of office as Regional Chairman. He was remembered as a man of vision, leading York Region through a period of great change. During his tenure as Regional Chairman, he oversaw a number of significant initiatives including:

- Adoption of the first York Region Official Plan
- Establishment of the York Region Non-Profit Housing Corporation
- Extension of the Blue Box recycling program
- A Standard & Poor's Triple-A credit rating for York Region

Mr. King was Chairman throughout a period of service downloading from the Province, including forest tracts, Highway 7 and Highway 11 (Yonge Street), plus YDSS-related water and wastewater assets.

Mr. King was remembered today as a man who loved his family, serving his community and upon retiring from municipal politics, returning to his original career as a farmer in the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville.

The Regional Municipality of York approves 2011 to 2015 Strategic Plan

York Regional Council has approved the *2011 to 2015 Strategic Plan*, a detailed guide to help implement the long-term planning of the *York Region Official Plan*, *Vision 2026* and *Vision 2051*.

The plan identifies the economy, low-income groups, housing affordability and increasing costs for infrastructure as critical areas to address over the course of the current York Regional Council term and provides the following seven key areas of focus:

- Continue to deliver and sustain critical infrastructure
- Improve social and health supports
- Increase the economic vitality of the Region
- Focus growth along Regional centres and corridors
- Manage the Region's finances prudently
- Make Regional services more user-friendly
- Strengthen organizational capacity

For more information on the 2011 to 2015 Strategic Plan, please view the [report to York Regional Council](#).

York Regional Council approves synopsis of York Region Official Plan

York Regional Council today approved a 16-page summary of the York Region Official Plan along with a poster, Towards a Sustainable Region, which will be used as supporting material to communicate a greater understanding of the plan over the coming years.

This represents the final outcome of the Planning for Tomorrow initiative, a growth management planning exercise involving extensive public and stakeholder engagement. Planning Department staff will circulate the summary and poster to local municipalities, the development community, Regional partners and stakeholders, schools and public libraries.

The summary and the poster are available online at www.york.ca/officialplan while copies are available by calling toll-free 1-877-464-9675, ext. 1591.

York Regional Council endorses framework to reduce travel demands on our roads

York Regional Council has approved the creation of a comprehensive Transportation Demand Management Program and Implementation Strategy for York Region to reduce single-occupant vehicle trips and promote sustainable transportation.

The program may include increased use of transit, carpooling, walking and cycling, as well as trip elimination through initiatives such as telecommuting. The work plan includes research on existing programs in York Region, an examination of best practices and recommendations of the most appropriate policies and programs for York Region. Local municipalities and regional departments will be consulted extensively.

A Request for Proposals will be issued for a study to be completed in fall 2012. Once completed, the program and implementation strategy will be brought to Council for review and endorsement.

York Regional Council approves three municipal pedestrian and cycling projects in 2012

Three local municipal walking and cycling infrastructure development projects supporting a Regional scale network will receive funding in 2012 under The Regional Municipality of York's Pedestrian and Cycling Municipal Partnership Program.

York Regional Council today approved projects proposed by the Town of East Gwillimbury, the Town of Markham and the City of Vaughan, subject to 2012 budget approval. The program is funded through York Region's 10-year roads capital program.

Since the program was launched in 2007, 13 projects have been approved and approximately \$2.3 million has been allocated to local municipalities.

Multi-patient ambulance supply contract award

York Regional Council has approved the purchase of York Region's first multi-patient ambulance. A supply contract has been awarded to Crestline Coach Limited at a cost of \$801,146.

A multi-patient ambulance will help reduce the number of ambulances deployed to larger emergency events and keep more paramedics and vehicles available to serve York Region. A multi-patient vehicle can accommodate up to 20 patients simultaneously.

From January to August 2011, there were 75 emergency incidents in York Region where three or more ambulances attended.

York Region economy continues to make gains

The Regional Municipality of York today released *Economic and Development Review – Mid-Year 2011*, which provides information on Regional development activity as well as economic and demographic trends. Highlights include:

- York Region was home to 1,073,200 people in June 2011, an increase of 11,200 in the first half of 2011
- New residential building permits were up four per cent compared to the first half of 2010
- With 3,574 permits, York Region ranked fifth in Canada for the number of residential permits issued in the first half of 2011
- Total construction was \$1.6 billion by mid-year 2011, an increase of 11 per cent from mid-year 2010
- Industrial, commercial and institutional construction accounted for \$595 million by mid-year 2011, an increase of 1.4 per cent from mid-year 2010
- By mid-year 2011, York Region had 3,962 housing starts, an increase of 27.2 per cent from mid-year 2010, and 3,605 housing completions, an increase of 6.8 per cent
- Average resale price of a single detached home increased by 11.1 per cent from \$574,598 to \$638,158
- Unemployment in York Region fell from 8.5 per cent this time last year to 7.6 per cent
- York Region's unemployment rate was lower than the Provincial average of 7.9 per cent and the GTA average of 8.6 per cent

Copies of the review will be circulated to the Region's nine area municipalities, Chambers of Commerce, Boards of Trade and other interested parties. To obtain copies of the *Economic and Development Review – Mid-Year 2011*, please call York Region's Planning and Development Services Department toll-free at 1-877-464-9675, ext. 1563, or email strategicplanning@york.ca

The Regional Municipality of York supports the Town of East Gwillimbury Official Plan

The new Official Plan of the Town of East Gwillimbury is a comprehensive public policy document that presents a vision of one new town comprised of a series of connected urban areas with vibrant centres, an appropriate mix of land uses and transit-oriented development.

The East Gwillimbury Official Plan incorporates the spirit and intent of provincial and Regional policy directions. It provides a well-integrated and articulated vision for the Town of East Gwillimbury that is consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement and conforms to the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan, the Green Belt Plan and the Lake Simcoe Protection Plan.

The plan is responsive to the future needs of the East Gwillimbury community, conforms to the York Region Official Plan, has progressed through a full and comprehensive public consultation process and represents good planning.

York Regional Council will advise the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB) that it supports OMB approval of the Town of East Gwillimbury Official Plan, subject to a number of modifications.

York Region recognizes October as Toastmasters Month

York Regional Council today recognized October as Toastmasters Month. For more than 85 years, Toastmasters has taught communication and leadership skills to people around the world. There are currently more than 250,000 members in 12,500 clubs in 106 countries.

Innovation in Manufacturing Project extended to end of March

York Regional Council received an update on the Innovation in Manufacturing Project, which was extended to March 31, 2012. The project is preparing York Region manufacturers to compete globally in manufacturing, increase productivity and profit.

Key project deliverables include:

- Undertaking research in manufacturing innovation
- Producing a self-guided online resource tool and guide for manufacturers to assess their capacity to develop a roadmap leading to research and innovation
- Hosting a Life Sciences symposium (MedEdge Summit 2011) held on June 16, 2011
- Hosting a manufacturer's conference in December 2011
- Taking a leadership role in the development of a 50-member manufacturer consortium to build connections within the manufacturing sector

The \$247,000 project cost is fully funded from the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities.

Internationally educated professionals conference coming to York Region

York Regional Council today approved the development of a York Region Internationally Educated Professional (IEP) conference to provide a new employment networking and learning experience for York Region newcomers and newcomer entrepreneurs.

More than 50 per cent of newcomers to York Region hold a University education or higher, however 60 per cent are working in jobs below their skill level. The York Region IEP, identified as a priority within York Region's recently approved Local Immigration Settlement Strategy, will support newcomers with successful integration into employment and the community.

York Region will seek funding for the event from the provincial and federal governments as well as commercial agencies to move forward with the event. If funding is secured, the conference will be held in spring 2012 at a projected cost of \$200,000.

No Parking Anytime zone on Yonge Street in Town of Richmond Hill

The Regional Municipality of York has enacted a "No Parking Anytime" zone on both sides of Yonge Street from 150 metres north of Silver Maple Road to Estate Garden Drive/Old Colony Road in the Town of Richmond Hill.

The parking prohibition was enacted following safety concerns from the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority and York Regional Police about motorists parking on the shoulder of Yonge Street to access nearby Bond Lake.

Water and Wastewater delivery in York Region

The Regional Municipality of York will conduct a detailed water and wastewater service delivery analysis to assess the benefits, risks and financial implications of moving to a single-tier service model.

Many water and wastewater delivery systems in Ontario are single-tier, however responsibilities for these services in York Region are shared between local municipalities and the Region.

The Region has an excellent record of service delivery and regulatory compliance with provincial water and wastewater regulations, and works extensively with local partners to maximize efficiencies wherever possible.

Terms of reference for the service delivery analysis will be drafted by January 2012, with the analysis completed by September 2012 for consideration by York Regional Council.

Survey confirms spread of Emerald Ash Borer infestation in York Region

York Regional Council received an update on the presence of the Emerald Ash Borer in York Region following an extensive three-month survey this summer. Earlier this year, an infestation of the invasive insect, which kills all healthy ash trees, was confirmed in the City of Vaughan and Towns of Markham and Richmond Hill.

Following the deployment of 190 green “prism” traps in areas north of confirmed sites, the insect was discovered in the Town of Aurora and southern part of the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville. The survey also discovered further infestations in Markham, Richmond Hill and Vaughan.

The Region will continue to monitor the spread of the insect and conduct another survey in 2012, focusing on the Township of King, Towns of Aurora, Newmarket and Whitchurch-Stouffville, plus other areas north of confirmed sites.

In June, York Regional Council approved an Emerald Ash Borer Management Plan to help slow the spread of the insect, minimize environmental impacts, ease financial impacts and educate the public.

Queen’s York Rangers York Region Regiment share its strong history of service

York Regional Council received a presentation today from the Queen’s York Rangers-York Region Regiment. This reserve unit is comprised of citizen soldiers who serve in the army and also participate in domestic operations with first responders when needed. Chair of Regimental Council, Kirk Corkey and Commanding Officer, Lt. Andrew Zdunich, spoke about the Queen’s York Rangers’ long history of service to the community and invited Council to the upcoming parade on November 6, 2011 in honour of these soldiers.

***The Regional Municipality of York approves two streetscaping projects
in Town of Markham and City of Vaughan***

The Regional Municipality of York has approved \$1.9 million through the Municipal Streetscape Partnership Program for streetscaping initiatives in the Town of Markham and City of Vaughan.

The Town of Markham will receive \$1.2 million for street trees, planters, tree grates, wider sidewalks, a raised median, decorative street lights and paving strips on Highway 7 between Verclaire Gate and Sciberras Road.

The City of Vaughan will receive \$650,000 for street trees, planters, decorative street lighting, a retaining wall and decorative paving strips on Major Mackenzie Drive between Keele Street and Peter Rupert Avenue.

The Municipal Streetscape Partnership provides funding to help local municipalities create vibrant, attractive Regional roads.

York Region pilots new transit subsidy program

York Regional Council today approved a Transit Fare Subsidy Pilot Program designed to help eligible, low-income residents travel to and from work and other important day-to-day activities.

Under the pilot program, eligible Ontario Works (OW) and Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) clients will receive a 50-per cent discount on York Region Transit (YRT)/Viva adult monthly passes. Local community agencies will receive funding to purchase individual ride tickets for low-income residents.

The pilot program, offered in partnership with YRT/Viva, will provide up to 1,400 subsidized passes each month. OW and ODSP clients will work directly with their caseworkers to determine eligibility.

The program also allocates up to \$250,000 for the purchase of individual YRT/Viva tickets. Community and Health Services and United Way of York Region funded agencies will be invited to apply for up to \$2,500 per year to purchase tickets to help low-income residents gain access to employment, housing, education and urgent basic needs.

Implementation of the pilot program is expected to begin in 2012. The \$1.3-million pilot program will be financed through the York Region Social Assistance Reserve Fund. Findings from the 2012 pilot program will be evaluated by York Regional Council in 2013.

Next meeting of York Regional Council

York Regional Council will meet on Thursday, November 17, 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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