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# Strategic Directions and Objectives

## 5. Strategic Directions and Objectives

It is the goal of the Economic Strategy to guide the efforts of the Region, together with its economic stakeholders, to realize the Vibrant Economy goal as stated in *Vision 2026* and the Regional Official Plan. As such it sets out a series of major strategic directions which provide the basis for a multi-year program to address the foundations of economic prosperity: people, skills, and technology.

The Region will have to build strategic alliances, rely on the support of all its municipal partners, and work together with the private sector, not-for-profit associations, public sector institutions such as universities and colleges, and senior levels of government.

Consultations with the community during the preparation of the Strategy identified five Strategic Directions which were further validated during the Economic Strategy Forum in May of 2004. These Strategic Directions are:

- Create an Environment to Share Information and Ideas
- Sustain a High Quality Workforce
- Strengthen Entrepreneurship and Industry Clusters
- Enhance the Quality of Place
- Encourage the Efficient Movement of Goods and People

These Strategic Directions give rise to 90 Actions which are documented in the following pages. Some of these Actions are already part of the ongoing functions of Regional departments, and they have been identified during the consultation process as initiatives that should be continued in order to enhance the business climate in the Region.

Since the Region by itself cannot undertake all of the actions needed to address the range of issues that affect the competitiveness of the economy, the Objectives within the Economic Strategy have identified a range of actions and partnering approaches that can be undertaken with other levels of government and other economic stakeholders, to sustain the long term economic vitality of the Region.

*“The most innovative and thriving economies emerge in places where there is a rich diversity of people, skills and knowledge and a high quality of life”*

*Places to Grow*

### 5.1 Strategic Direction: Create an Environment to Share Information and Ideas

In a knowledge-based economy, information has become the single most important raw material, and the ability to access and use information to drive innovation is the basis for sustained economic competitiveness. In virtually all of the studies and research of regional and community economic development, reference is made to the importance of building networks and partnerships to share information and ideas.

A recent paper by the Canadian Policy Research Networks on “Cities that Work: Innovative Practices, Enabling Policies” states that “the very process of convening multi-stakeholder networks at the municipal level where different players have the opportunity to learn from one another generates its own economic synergies and momentum...”

The lessons from other successful economic regions are well documented. In places like Silicon Valley or Austin or the Research Triangle in the Carolina’s, economic success can be traced to a dense flexible network of tight relationships amongst entrepreneurs, investors, researchers, legal and accounting firms, suppliers, schools and government which can quickly translate new ideas into products or services. These networks continually connect people with ideas and provide an opportunity to test the market for what works.

The transformation of ideas into new goods and services that lead to job creation and prosperity is the foundation of the Region’s future growth. During the consultations on this Strategy, it was heard that the Region has a role to play in actively nurturing collaboration between stakeholder groups and to help build bridges between the knowledge institutions like universities, colleges, hospitals and schools, to help develop a critical mass of shared knowledge. New linkages and networks must also be formed with the business community to foster the conditions where innovation and new product development can take place.

It will be critical for the Region to understand the economy and to monitor how it is changing to be able to attract and support the industries of the future. The Regional Municipality of York already enjoys a reputation and has expertise in the collection and analysis of economic and geo-spatial data, and that role will be increasingly important in the future.

The Region’s role should be to help create an environment for sharing and collaboration. Part of this effort should involve the Region championing efforts to promote Region-wide access to broadband telecommunications. This should also include the development of new broadband applications and on-line services to demonstrate that the Region can attract and support new knowledge-based workers and companies. It was also stated during the consultations that the Region could spearhead the development of new and more efficient ways of creating access to business and economic information through a new virtual information portal.

### **Objective**

#### ***Better understand the growth and change in the Region's economy***

##### **Actions:**

- Produce an annual comprehensive economic profile to monitor key indicators and establish benchmarks on the state of York Region's economy.
- Develop a virtual information portal in collaboration with the *YorkInfo Partnership* to provide Regional companies access to information, business and competitive intelligence, business services, and to monitor key indicators of the Region's economic performance.

### **Objective**

#### ***Foster ongoing opportunities for sharing information and ideas***

##### **Actions:**

- Convene an annual Region-wide business wisdom exchange and economic summit to engage business, share information and identify future opportunities.
- Establish a Regional Business Roundtable of executives and owner-managers from leading public and private sector enterprises under the leadership of the Regional Chair to provide Regional Council and staff with regular feedback on economic issues affecting business.
- Identify and encourage the involvement of voluntary and non-profit organizations to participate in new partnerships with business.
- Maintain the Region's membership and involvement with the Chambers of Commerce and Boards of Trade throughout the Region.
- Re-initiate the York North Economic Development Partnership to provide an opportunity for rural municipalities to discuss and find solutions to address their common challenges and concerns.

- Support and celebrate new partnership initiatives by individuals and/or groups within the Region by creating a new Award to recognize their achievements.

### **Objective**

#### ***Expand broadband telecommunications***

##### **Actions:**

- Collaborate with non-profit, public and private sector enterprises to identify gaps and encourage access to high quality, equitable broadband telecommunications from all areas of the Region.
- Facilitate business participation and involvement with the E-Government Committee.

### **Objective**

#### ***Improve co-ordination with other levels of government***

##### **Actions:**

- Host regular meetings with area municipal Economic Development staff and provincial and federal government ministries and departments involved in economic development.
- Identify available funding and other resources from senior level governments that could support economic development initiatives within the Region.
- Undertake a review of the optimal service delivery model and organization of the Region's economic development services in light of new provincial and federal government initiatives and policies.

### 5.2 Strategic Direction: Sustain a High Quality Workforce

*Vision 2026* identifies the embrace of continual learning as a key element in realizing the Region's future economic vision.

In today's economy, economic growth is driven by knowledge, skills, innovation and entrepreneurship. All of these characteristics derive from the quality of the labour force which a region possesses. Ensuring that there is a proper balance of labour force skills to enable local firms to meet the challenges of global competition is an essential element for sustained economic vitality.

In an earlier study, *A Competitive Analysis of York Region*, the findings confirm that industry felt that new Regional initiatives to address skills shortages and encourage apprenticeships were needed. Again, during the consultations for this Strategy, it was repeatedly stressed that there were critical skills gaps that were affecting the ability of Regional companies to grow.

Notwithstanding the robust population growth and job creation over the last several years within the Region, the future supply and the quality of the labour force should not be taken for granted. Recent work by Regional staff confirms an imbalance between the skills of the resident labour force, and the jobs which are being created within the Region.

Participants in the consultations stressed the need to align workforce development efforts with the needs of existing and new business clusters, and that the Region has a role to facilitate that objective.

At the same time, the Region is becoming home to an increasing number of immigrants who bring skills and experience that are valued by local companies. Further, Statistics Canada has projected that by 2016, the bulk of York Region's growth will be driven by the influx of new immigrants. It stands to reason that the Region should capitalize on the knowledge and skills of immigrants to a greater degree than presently.

Recent research by the Conference Board of Canada and the Canadian Centre for the Study of Living Standards point to the critical need to link economic development strategies with broader human resource and social policies to include and assimilate immigrants. This view was echoed in a recent study commissioned by Human Resources and Skills Development Canada on accreditation and employment issues relating to internationally trained professions and trades in York Region.

York Region recognizes the talents that foreign trained professionals bring to York Region. Initiatives like the Toronto Region Immigrant Employment Council (TRIEC) need to be more broadly promoted and supported by local businesses. Opportunities for continuous learning must be created for individuals at all points along the skills continuum, and need to be tailored to encourage more inclusivity within the broader community. The Region's recently launched Inclusivity Action Plan represents a major step in this direction.

There was also much concern voiced about the degree of engagement of the Region's youth in workforce development initiatives and the need to ensure that young people stay in school to secure post secondary education.

Attracting new institutions of advanced learning, research and training was also identified as a key priority that needed to be included in the Region's Economic Strategy. One of the key recommendations of the Ontario Competitive City Regions Symposium hosted in 2002 by York Region was that the development and construction of a Management of Technology Institute should be pursued by the Region in partnership with industry, education and senior levels of government. This recommendation was reinforced during the recent consultations on the Economic Strategy.

Given the evolving needs of business and industry and the rapidly increasing diversity of the workforce within the Region, workforce development is not a role that can be solely addressed by one level of government or the education sector. The previous Strategic Direction speaks to forming new partnerships and linkages to share information. Similarly, governments at all levels, business, labour, education and the training community must form stronger partnerships to affect a learning climate and a training culture within the Region.

During the consultations on the Strategy, it was learned that the intentions of new business to invest in York Region are closely related to labour force availability which in turn hinges upon housing supply and ease of getting employees to the workplace. Numerous employers have indicated during the *Employers Opinion Survey 2004* that one of the Region's strengths is its wealth of talented residents who commute south to jobs but are eager for job opportunities closer to home. It was suggested that the Region should promote York as a place where businesses can reduce the commuting time of employees and business owners.

Participants have called for an integration of labour force development policies with long range transportation, transit, land use, and housing initiatives to support decreased commuting and time lost in a long journey to work. There were also strongly voiced opinions that the Region could provide more opportunities for business to participate in the development of policies that encourage a range of housing options, and land use planning that encourages compact communities and close live-work relationships supported by a quality urban transit system.

### **Objective**

***Align workforce development efforts with the needs of industry clusters in York Region***

#### **Actions**

- Facilitate the evolution of a Regional Industry Education Council to provide an opportunity for business, education, government, sectoral councils, unions and other stakeholders to leverage resources, knowledge and motivation to address common workforce development issues.
- Facilitate better forecasting of industry requirements, skills shortages and deficiencies within the Region.
- Advocate for more apprenticeship and skilled trades training and education.
- Identify opportunities to attract and support new institutions of higher learning, research, management development and training.
- Compile a comprehensive resource guide of employment, education and training resources for employers in the Region in collaboration with public and private sector education, training, and workforce service providers.
- Improve efforts to maintain effective and adequate human service infrastructure to meet the needs of the labour force.

### **Objective**

***Support immigrant mentoring and integration***

#### **Actions**

- Assist in the compilation of a directory of immigrant support and training resources within the Region.
- Foster the awareness and support of the employer community for the development and delivery of programs that accelerate professional recognition and skills upgrading of internationally trained workers.

- Advocate for training and immigration policies that are attuned to the needs of the employer community and provide resources needed to support a new immigrant labour force.

### **Objective**

***Involve the Region's youth in workforce development planning***

#### **Actions**

- Examine options to better engage the Region's youth in workforce development initiatives.
- In partnership with other agencies and industry, support a broader program of internships, plant visits, job shadowing and co-op work terms for high school students in the Region.
- Promote and support *Summer Company* and *My Company* programs offered by the Small Business Enterprise Centres within the Region.

### **Objective**

***Integrate land use, transit and housing policies to encourage closer live-work opportunities and improved accessibility by employers and employees***

#### **Actions**

- Promote the awareness of the Region's Centres and Corridors strategy.
- Undertake a marketing and communications program to promote the economic and environmental benefits of intensification within existing urban areas.
- Facilitate meetings with the ICI realtor/developer community to identify how future employment areas can be designed to encourage closer live-work opportunities.
- Facilitate meetings between developers/homebuilders and the York Region employer community to discuss ways to promote and create closer live-work opportunities.

### 5.3 Strategic Direction: Strengthen Entrepreneurship and Industry Clusters

Supporting the emergence and growth of business enterprise is a cornerstone of the Region's Economic Strategy.

The growth and diversity of business enterprise in York Region is a testament to the positive business climate and the favourable policies of the Region and its area municipalities to support new business investment.

The Region already works in partnership with the area municipalities and senior level governments to deliver support services for entrepreneurs. As the Region grows and changes, new ways of delivering these services will be needed. Future enterprise growth and job creation depends on a strong entrepreneurial culture. Promoting and expanding the reach of entrepreneurial training programs, developing ways to identify future entrepreneurs, and recognizing success will be essential.

Peter Drucker, the well-known business author maintains that innovation and entrepreneurship go together. Entrepreneurs innovate, and innovation is the process by which ideas get transformed into new products and services. The Region has a role to play in fostering the conditions for innovation that build upon its efforts to support entrepreneurship. The Region's membership as a founding partner of the York Regional Biotechnology Cluster Consortium can be used as a model for the Region's role in future cluster building and technology transfer initiatives. The recently announced Commercialization Strategy and the investment of \$63 million by the Province of Ontario will link research institutes with companies that can move research to the markets and make promising research more "investor-ready". The Region can help to champion this Provincial objective as part of its Economic Strategy.

As global demand for the range of goods and services expands, an appropriate role for the Regional Municipality of York is to create a business environment to help firms expand, adapt and diversify. The future performance of the Region's economy will be driven in part by how successful Regional companies perform in the export market. The Export Development Initiative has been well-received by local companies and has been responsible for documented sales increases and employment creation. However, as global conditions become more complex, new ways to deliver the service and provide more value-added are required.

The Region can also take a role in the identification and evolution of industry specific cluster groups to help link the outputs and demands of these clusters to the inputs or supply side factors like infrastructure and skills provided by the community. Industry cluster development initiatives are also identified as part of the Province's growth management strategy, and are a key focus of the Region's Economic Strategy.

If enterprise formation is the economic engine of the Region, then financial capital can be seen as the primary fuel for that engine. During the consultations, there was clear expression of demand for additional actions to address the availability and access to capital for business expansion.

It was also clear that the continued viability and attractiveness of the Region's employment areas and enterprise "incubator areas" need to be strengthened. Improved goods movement, transit service and other incentives and opportunities to encourage more diverse employment uses and live-work opportunities could be explored. Efforts to revitalize and promote new employment opportunities in transit-serviced urban centres, in collaboration with the area municipalities of the Region, are also a priority.

During the consultations, many business participants revealed a desire to try new ways of doing business but bridled at what they consider to be "bureaucratic" barriers to competitiveness. The Region was encouraged to work with the local municipalities to broker common solutions across the Region to deal with regulations affecting things like signage and home-based business.

Efforts should also be focussed on improving energy efficiency and decreasing waste generation within the business community. More promotion of existing and new energy and waste-reduction programs should be undertaken.

### **Objective**

***Support the growth and creation of business enterprise***

#### **Actions:**

- Improve the visibility and services of the York Region Small Business Enterprise Centre.
- Increase the range of co-operative programs and services between the Small Business Enterprise Centres and other business support agencies within the Region.
- Work with local municipalities to harmonize home-based business policies.
- Develop a business recovery contingency plan to deal with economic crises and emergencies.

### **Objective**

***Encourage technological innovation and commercialization***

#### **Actions:**

- Convene regular briefings with the Industrial Technology Advisors of the National Research Council providing services within York Region.
- Partner with the Innovation Synergy Centre in Markham to identify, encourage, and support technology-based business within the Region.
- Facilitate the establishment of a York Region Advanced Manufacturing Consortium to encourage cross-pollination of research and development expertise and opportunities for joint product and market development.
- Explore opportunities to improve linkages with York University and Seneca College to promote research, commercialization and technology transfer to York Region businesses.
- Continue to support the evolution of the York Regional Biotechnology Cluster Consortium and other agencies to develop a regional innovation network.
- Identify areas that could be developed as science and innovation parks in collaboration with owners of employment lands.
- Work with the Province of Ontario to help implement the Commercialization Strategy.

### **Objective**

#### ***Enhance the export capabilities of Regional companies***

##### **Actions:**

- Undertake a review of the business model of the York Region Export Development Initiative.
- Expand the Region's global contact network in partnership with local municipalities and senior levels of government through participation in trade missions and working collaboratively with other agencies to host incoming trade delegations.
- Undertake a feasibility study to establish a free trade, duty free zone within the Region.
- Identify opportunities to provide support to York Region-based companies engaged in export activity such as establishing a "Trading House" and other collaborative export financing initiatives.

### **Objective**

#### ***Strengthen the Region's industry clusters***

##### **Actions:**

- Undertake a detailed economic structural analysis of the Region's high performance clusters (i.e. automotive, biotechnology, materials, furniture, information technology and business services).
- Initiate a Region-led multi-year business cluster building initiative for each of the Region's major manufacturing and service industry clusters by establishing working groups that include lead firms, suppliers, education and training providers, local and senior level government representatives, capital providers and others as appropriate.
- Participate in broader GTA industry sector research and support initiatives undertaken by the Greater Toronto Marketing Alliance and other economic development and senior government agencies.
- Partner with the agricultural industry to promote and develop the agri-food industry sector.
- Promote agri-business and support the implementation of the GTA Agriculture Action Plan.
- Collaborate with area municipalities and senior governments to explore options to reduce the operating cost environment for businesses in the Region.

**Objective**

***Facilitate access to capital***

**Actions:**

- Improve access to financial capital for small and early stage growth firms in York Region by enhancing networks to link angel investors, venture capitalists and other sources of financing to new entrepreneurs and small businesses.
- Examine the opportunity for the creation of additional small business investment fund corporations and the expansion of the geographic service areas of existing Community Futures Corporations in the Region.
- Provide opportunities to host meetings of groups like the Toronto Venture Group in York Region.
- Encourage banks and other financial institutions to sponsor and participate in a “Capital for Business” event in York Region.

**Objective**

***Strengthen the economic vitality and business diversity of employment areas and urban centres***

**Actions:**

- Identify specific tax policy and other incentives that would be effective to attract business investment and employment to the region’s urban centres.
- Assess opportunities for special purpose economic development corporations to act as catalysts for supporting intensification and live-work opportunities in the Region’s urban centres.
- Monitor the adequacy of employment land supply and strengthen land use policies to discourage the conversion of lands in employment areas.
- Promote energy conservation and waste reduction initiatives to the employer community.
- Work with the area municipalities to expedite key industrial/commercial developments through the Regional approval process.

## 5.4 Strategic Direction: Enhance the Quality of Place

An essential part of York Region's efforts to sustain a competitive and prosperous economy is increasing its visibility as a unique and desirable location for new business investment and tourism. A key principle of the Region's efforts should be to promote a balance of economic vitality, quality of life and environmental sustainability.

The Economic Goal of *Vision 2026* states that "In 2026 York Region will be renowned..." and it will be, if the Region pursues an aggressive strategy to enhance and promote the quality and advantages of York Region as a place to invest, to work and to live.

Each community within York Region has unique attributes and assets. The Region has some of the most diverse physical as well as cultural landscapes in the Greater Toronto Area. All of these give York Region a competitive advantage in positioning itself as having what noted economist Richard Florida calls "quality of place".

In a global marketplace, the competition for new talent, business investment and discretionary spending by tourists and visitors is ever increasing. York Region needs to advance and promote its record of preserving and enhancing environmental quality and social diversity to help sustain its economic base.

As part of the Greater Toronto Area, York Region can capitalize on the spin-offs and benefits that accrue through the success of the broader city-region. During the consultations, however, it was repeatedly heard that York can and should reposition its own identity in terms of the unique advantages that exists in the communities that make up York Region.

It will be increasingly important for the Region to develop and communicate to its business community what the Region has to offer: an acknowledged quality of life that is rivalled in few other locations, a thriving economy and a welcoming business climate. Companies will relocate and expand in a region that attracts a quality labour force and allows its residents a diverse range of leisure pursuits and opportunities for social and educational upgrading.

The Region needs to reposition itself both in the eyes of its internal market - the residents and businesses already here, and the external market - those whom it wishes to attract, to better promote its strengths. More effort should be made to build the Region's capacity to host major sports and cultural events that can help to build a legacy of improved infrastructure and facilities for future generations. Another way to increase the Region's profile is to more actively encourage on-site film and television production within the area.

*"To compete successfully in the age of talent, regions must make quality-of-place a central element of their economic development efforts"*

*Richard Florida*

### **Objective**

#### *Develop and promote York Region's attributes*

##### **Actions:**

- Promote a balanced approach to economic development that enhances quality of life, environmental sustainability and economic vitality.
- Develop and promote Arts and Culture in York Region.
- Promote the integration of amenities in community planning to encourage recreational and lifestyle activities.
- Embrace diversity in the community.
- Develop a marketing and communications plan to promote York Region and its natural and cultural attributes.
- Produce a high quality lure brochure and accompanying CD/DVD that identifies and promotes the unique attributes of the Region's communities, cultures and environment.
- Enhance and expand the Region's economic development website with graphic and linguistic functionality to more easily search, evaluate and map businesses and tourism opportunities.
- Investigate opportunities to host Canadian trade representatives and consular officials to familiarize them with the cultural and business diversity of York Region.
- Improve York Region's presence in the Ontario Investors Service.

### **Objective**

#### *Attract tourism and special events*

##### **Actions:**

- Develop an updated strategic tourism marketing action plan in collaboration with tourism industry partners to identify tourism "experiences" in York Region, attract new tourism visitation and generate sustainable financial support for tourism promotion initiatives.
- Identify locations to establish new York Tourism information kiosks and virtual information centres.
- Work with Tourism Toronto and other major industry associations and senior government tourism agencies to position York Region in the international tourism marketplace.
- Undertake a major events infrastructure audit to identify capacity to host major cultural and sporting events that could be attracted to York Region.
- Collaborate with the Region's various cultural communities to host large scale ethnic events in partnership with local municipalities.
- Work with the media to promote the Region.
- Encourage new on-location film and television production throughout the Region in collaboration with area municipalities.

## 5.5 Strategic Direction: Encourage the Efficient Movement of Goods and People

Improving the efficiency of the transportation network within and beyond York Region is a key objective of the Region's long-term growth management strategy and the Official Plan. It is also in line with the Province's strategic growth planning policy, and the new deal for cities announced by the Federal Government. The Economic Strategy supports these broader policies.

A healthy transportation system is a key factor in the attraction and growth of the Region's economy. However, it was heard repeatedly during the consultation, and again in the *Employers Opinion Survey 2004*, that traffic congestion was the single most pressing concern facing businesses in York Region. Easing congestion on the roads will have a positive impact on the cost of doing business, by improving delivery times of goods and services, shortening commuting times, saving on fuel cost from idling and stop-and-start movements of vehicles, and increasing the efficiency of the mobile workforce. Although much improved, the transit system was not perceived as meeting the needs of many employers, including those in industrial areas and smaller settlements. There was strong support for the expansion of transit service within the Region and better integration between York Region Transit, GO Transit, and the TTC.

At the same time, the expansion of transit is not seen as the sole alternative to road improvements for the purpose of resolving the traffic congestion issue. Interviews with companies have confirmed that access to the 400 series highway was a key factor in their decision to locate in York Region. However, there is a strong sense among businesses and employers that large-scale upgrading of the transportation infrastructure is overdue, in order for the Region to retain an attractive business environment and to catch up with the traffic demands of existing developments. The research study on the Region's economy has also confirmed that a well-maintained road network is indispensable to the Region's sustained prosperity, especially given the volume of export trade transported via the road system.

The impact of employee commuting patterns on the overall operation of a company is considered a major issue by many employers and companies consulted. It was heard that the stress of daily commute on congested roads negatively affects a worker's quality of life and the quality of their work. Offering commuting options will make it easier for employers to recruit and retain employees, increase employee morale and productivity, reduce commuting stress and time lost due to illness, reduce parking requirements, improve traffic flow, and lower facility costs.

*“Traffic congestion has had a huge impact on our deliveries. Even though we pay to use the 407, it now takes a half-hour longer to deliver to Vaughan than it did eight years ago. Yonge Street is impossible. Getting truck drivers is our biggest problem, ....”*

*Employers Opinion Survey, 2004*

*“Whether it’s moving people or getting goods to market, transportation is the vital link to prosperity.”*

*Canadian Business*

Transportation Demand Management (TDM) is a comprehensive program of initiatives aimed at providing travel choices while at the same time reducing congestion. As part of the Smart Commute Initiative, the Region is already undertaking TDM measures which are aimed at changing commuters’ behaviour through encouraging them to make fewer and shorter vehicle trips, thereby reducing congestion, energy consumption and air pollution. Typical TDM measures include:

- Carpool/vanpool ride-sharing and preferential parking.
- Promotion of public transit and incentives to use transit.
- Parking supply and parking management.
- Establishment of transportation management associations.
- Construction of a network of commuter parking lots.
- Implementing a network of high-occupant vehicle lanes.
- Cycling and pedestrian programs.

### **Objective**

***Ensure that the transportation system meets the ongoing needs of business for goods movement***

### **Actions:**

- Engage in discussions with major shippers and exporters to understand evolving challenges in the logistics industry.
- Establish a task force involving small shippers, rail carriers and other transportation carriers to look at ways of enhancing the use of inter-modal service by small and less than truckload lot (LTL) shippers.
- Ensure representative participation by the business and employer community in transportation system planning.
- Lobby the Ontario Government for continued expansion of 400 series and other provincial highways in York Region.
- Disseminate the Region’s transportation planning reports widely to the broader business community in the Region.
- Promote the use of the Region’s transportation data among shippers to assist in scheduling shipments to optimize shipping efficiency.
- Engage in discussions with CN Rail regarding the long-term viability of the CN Intermodal site in Vaughan.

## **Objective**

*Encourage Regional businesses to support and promote transit and alternatives to the single occupant vehicle for journey to work*

### **Action:**

- Promote the current efforts of Transportation Management Associations and identify clusters of employers who could benefit from shared transportation services for employees.
- Engage York Region businesses to identify efficiencies and incentives for alternative employee journey to work systems.
- Encourage businesses to promote, support and practise transportation demand management and to provide alternative employee journey to work choices.
- Work with senior levels of government to explore the feasibility of offering tax incentives for employers who practise transportation demand management.
- Develop a working partnership with York Region Transit (YRT) staff to assist in the promotion of public transit and heighten awareness of existing and future services to both existing and prospective businesses.
- Identify and promote new business development opportunities in transit-serviced urban centres and corridors in the Region.
- Encourage business support for public transit investment in terms of seeking out public-private partnership opportunities for joint development, locating new business or relocating existing business to transit corridors, and encouraging general transit supportive business activities.
- Advocate the Provincial and Federal governments for increased public transit funding for capital infrastructure and sustained operating subsidies.