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For more information about York Region or to comment on York Works:

Email: yorkworks@york.ca
Visit: www.york.ca
Call: 1-877-464-9675

Celebrating the past ... Looking forward

The year 2011 marks the 40th anniversary of The Regional Municipality of York. To celebrate this milestone, York Region is planning for the next 40 years with a revised blueprint for the future entitled Vision 2051.

Vision 2051 will expand upon the success of the Region's earlier work. Its predecessor, Vision 2026 was approved by York Regional Council in 2001, and Vision 2021 was approved in 1993.

Vision 2051 will encompass five guiding themes:

- Community development
- Environmental protection
- Sustainable growth
- Economic growth
- Responsible government

Prudent planning is always a key priority of York Regional Council, which has overseen tremendous change since inception in 1971. During this time, our Region has grown from a population of 170,000 to more than one million residents, and job growth has increased ten-fold from 50,000 to 500,000.

Consultation with residents is a pivotal part of the Vision 2051 process, including traditional advertising in newspapers as well as web and social media to gather feedback from different demographic groups across the Region. Consultation will continue until December, with recommendations for the new vision then presented to York Regional Council.

Throughout our history, York Region has been a leader in sound planning and governance, evident by numerous awards and certifications for progressive programs. This issue of York Works details some of these accomplishments, and provides updates on new programs and initiatives for our residents.

If you would like to be added to the Vision 2051 email or mailing list, please contact us at vision2051@york.ca or **1-877-464-9675**, extension **1532**. For other inquiries please contact us at yorkworks@york.ca or **1-877-464-9675** extension **1234**.





SUSTAINABILITY

Building Upon a Strong Foundation



Moraine Hero Award for the York Regional Forest Advisory Team

York Region is one of Canada's fastest growing municipalities, adding an average of 30,000 new residents each year. Accommodating this growth is a challenge the Region carefully and strategically manages.

Vision 2051 furthers the sound planning foundation and community-building principles the Region has established since inception in 1971. A strong focus on sustainable development will help to ensure that future generations continue to benefit from a strong social, economic and environmental legacy.

York Region is committed to delivering innovative, quality services to our residents and building a safe, dependable and sustainable infrastructure.

Whether it be roads or wastewater, buses or blue boxes, York Region is a municipal leader in providing value to residents. In 2010, the Region continued to demonstrate leadership in many areas, with such accolades as:

- The Watershed Hero Award for the *Water for Tomorrow* program
- The Sustainable Community Award for solid waste management
- The Going Green Award for Housing York Inc. non-profit housing projects
- The Moraine Hero Award for the York Regional Forest Advisory Team

These awards demonstrate a commitment to conservation and renewability that are critical elements in creating a sustainable community for the future.

Leadership in Energy Conservation

Among a number of conservation initiatives that York Region has pioneered include a commitment to energy management. The Region recently adopted the LEED® silver certification for all new buildings that meet strict guidelines for water efficiency, indoor environmental quality, clean air and sustainable energy use.

Last year, York Region established a higher threshold for energy management by opening three facilities to the higher LEED® gold certification, including:

- The Scott Somerville Fire and Rescue Service Station and York Region Emergency Medical Services Paramedic Response Station in the City of Vaughan
- Tom Taylor Place, affordable housing, in the Town of Newmarket
- Vaughan Community Environmental Centre

York Region will continue to lead by example and adopt rigorous standards for energy conservation in future building projects. Being leaders in conservation and energy management is important in creating a sustainable community.



Tom Taylor Place



Protecting Green Spaces

Last year, 63 hectares (156 acres) of properties were protected in York Region for conservation purposes through the Greening Strategy Securement program. This is a partnership with the Nature Conservancy of Canada and the Oak Ridges Moraine Land Trust with the support of Environment Canada through the Natural Areas Conservation program.

York Region will be adding 25 hectares (62 acres) of these newly secured properties to the York Regional Forest by establishing a new tract in King Township.

Over the last four years, 462 hectares (1,145 acres) have been secured by the Region and our partners.

Street Tree Program

York Region Forestry staff planted more than 2,100 trees along Regional roads in 2010 and provided ongoing maintenance to a further 7,000 “street trees”.

Street trees typically require continual care for the first three years after planting. Staff water more than 5,000 trees six times each year to help keep them healthy.

The Region wraps “gator” bags around the base of new street trees to ensure they receive appropriate amounts of water over a set period of time. The bags are useful in controlling water run-off and can be filled very quickly, increasing the number of trees that can be watered daily.



Forest Re-certification

The York Regional Forest has received its second re-certification following an extensive audit of its management plan and operations.

The York Regional Forest became the first public forest in Canada in 2000 to be certified as well-managed in accordance with the Forest Stewardship Council standard (FSC). FSC is an international, independent, non-governmental, not-for-profit organization established to promote the responsible management of the world’s forests.

FSC certification is recognized internationally as a gold standard for forest management. Certification involves a third-party audit of the management and operation of the forest and recertification every five years.

Successes

This past September, a new one-kilometre accessible trail was opened in the York Regional Forest Hollidge Tract to provide access to all users. It is one of the first to be built to the Government of Ontario’s Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) proposed Built Environment Standard.

In October, the York Region Advisory Team received the 2010 *Monitoring the Moraine Hero Award* for their volunteer towards the management of the York Regional Forest.

The Moraine Hero Award follows an earlier recognition by the World Wildlife Fund, David Suzuki Foundation, Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society and the Canadian Boreal Initiative for York Region’s forest management successes and successful FSC re-certification of the York Regional Forest.

Guided Tours of the Forest

York Region offers free, monthly guided tours of the York Regional Forest. For a list of forest walks, please visit www.york.ca and click the Take a Walk in the Forest brochure under Important Links.



Protecting our Pedestrians

York Region Traffic Management and Intelligent Traffic Systems (ITS) Branch continues to make improvements to our road network to provide pedestrians with a safe and efficient means of travel.

Pedestrian Countdown Signals

Since 2007, pedestrian countdown signals have been installed at all new signalized intersections and retrofitted at existing signalized intersections that have a high volume of pedestrian travel.

In 2010, the Region installed pedestrian countdown signals at 500 signalized intersections. Over the next two years, all intersections with pedestrian signals will include this countdown feature.

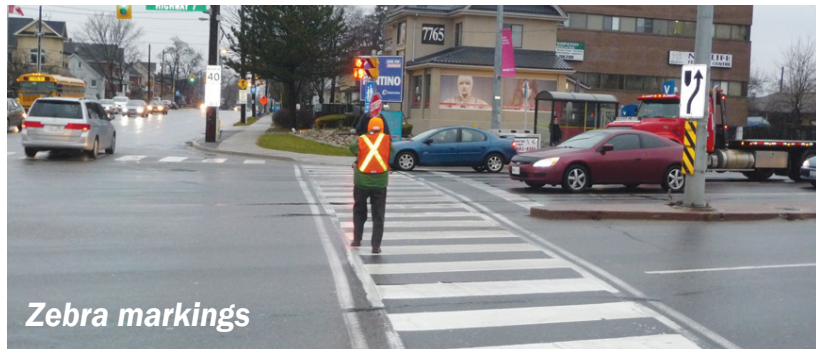
Extending crossing times at intersections

York Region recently adopted a new standard for crossing times at signalized intersections. The new standard supports an average walking speed of one metre per second. This better meets the needs of seniors, families or those with limited mobility.

Zebra Marking Pilot Project

Last September, the first zebra crosswalk in York Region was installed at the intersection of Highway 7 and Kipling Avenue as part of a pilot project to increase visibility for both pedestrians and drivers.

The new markings help to improve safety by dramatically highlighting the designated crossing area, making pedestrians more visible to approaching drivers.



Highway 404 Extension Update



Last fall, the Ministry of Transportation of Ontario (MTO) started construction on the first Highway 404 extension contract between Green Lane and Queensville Sideroad in the Town of East Gwillimbury.

This first MTO contract includes the construction of a new full interchange at Queensville Sideroad and a new bridge for Doane Road

to pass over Highway 404. The Queensville Sideroad and Doane Road bridges will include sidewalks on both sides of these roads, as well as paved shoulders to accommodate cyclists over Highway 404. Future interchange ramps at Doane Road are planned to be built by the Region when traffic volumes increase.

To assist with construction, Doane Road is closed to all but local traffic between Leslie Street and Woodbine Avenue. The road is expected to be fully re-opened this August. Queensville Sideroad remains open during construction.

MTO is also tendering the construction of the remaining portion of the Highway 404 extension from Queensville Sideroad to the intersection of Woodbine Avenue and Ravenshoe Road. This portion of the work will include a new bridge for Highway 404 to pass over Holt Road. Provisions for snowmobile usage of the Holt Road shoulders have been included in the Ministry's design. Construction on this second contract is expected to commence this spring.

MTO will open the entire Highway 404 extension by the end of 2012.



VivaNext Construction Updates

York Region's plan for the next generation of rapid transit – vivaNext – is well underway. The vivaNext plan includes two subway extensions, two light rail transit lines and dedicated rapidway lanes for Viva vehicles along its busiest corridors.

Demolition of buildings along Davis Drive in Newmarket is complete and early construction activities are moving ahead. Road construction on the Davis Drive rapidway lanes are set to begin this fall.

Early construction work continues in the area of Enterprise Drive and Warden Avenue in Markham, including the completion of York Region's first vivastation, complete with arched glass canopies and a fully-enclosed heated section to shelter riders.

Surveying is being conducted along Yonge Street in Richmond Hill between Highway 7 and 19th Avenue and on Highway 7 from Yonge Street to past Highway 400 in preparation for rapidway construction along these corridors.

To stay up-to-date on the latest information about the vivaNext rapid transit plan, visit www.vivanext.com

Spadina Subway Extension

Construction of the Spadina subway extension is currently underway. The subway will extend 8.6 kilometres north from Downsview Station in Toronto to Vaughan Metropolitan Centre Station at Highway 7 in the City of Vaughan and include six stations along its route.

Tunnel boring for the Spadina Subway will begin this year and is scheduled for completion in 2015.

Viva Expands its Fleet

York Region has added 15 new Viva Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) vehicles to its fleet. The Region has an option to order an additional 36 BRT vehicles through a joint funding partnership with the Government of Canada and the Government of Ontario (through Metrolinx).

The additional BRT vehicles will be available for order in phases, with final delivery in 2014.

The new Viva vehicles will help accommodate growth, help reduce traffic congestion and increase the reliability and efficiency of York Region's transit system.

Customer Satisfaction Surveys

York Region Transportation Services responds to the needs of residents through a series of customer satisfaction surveys.

York Region Transit (YRT)/Viva completed its annual survey last November and will report the survey recommendations to York Regional Council in April.

A comprehensive survey to determine overall satisfaction with all transportation services in York Region is also underway. Phone interviews were completed in January, with a series of focus groups planned over the coming weeks. Results of this survey will be reported to York Regional Council later this year.





WASTE MANAGEMENT

Waste Updates

Community Environmental Centres

The McCleary Court Community Environmental Centre (CEC) in Vaughan provides residents with convenient access to Regional waste management services. Since opening in July 2009, the McCleary Court CEC has processed 2,566 tonnes of waste.

The McCleary Court CEC is the first of three facilities that York Region has planned over the coming years. Construction of York Region's new CEC in Richmond Hill continues (located on Elgin Mills Road between Bayview Avenue and Leslie Street) and will be complete this spring.



McCleary Court CEC

Durham-York Energy-from-Waste facility

The Durham-York Energy-from-Waste facility (EFW) Environmental Assessment has been approved by the Ontario Ministry of Environment (MOE).

The EFW facility will process garbage left over after Durham and York Region's diversion efforts, including the Blue Box and Green Bin programs.

The EFW facility will be located in the community of Clarington, in The Regional Municipality of Durham. Construction of the EFW facility will begin this year and be completed in 2014.

Once in operation, York Region will send 30,000 tonnes of garbage per year to the EFW facility.

Compostable Bags



York Region is asking residents to make the switch to compostable bags in the Green Bin.

Green Bin material is shredded before composting. Currently, plastic bag liners are screened from the end product and processed as waste. However, compostable bags break down within the composting process and support a more environmentally-friendly process.

While plastic bag liners are currently accepted in the Green Bin program, York Region will phase in a mandatory shift to certified compostable bag liners, starting May 1.

York Region will launch an education campaign, promoting the use of certified compostable bags this spring.

Compostable bags are available at many grocery, hardware and retail locations throughout York Region. Certified compostable bags are labelled with a Compostable BPI (Biodegradable Products Institute) logo on the packaging.

Visit www.york.ca/waste for full details of the Green Bin Compostable Bag program and a list of certified compostable bag retailers across York Region.





York Region Ranks First in GTA Water Quality

Residents of York Region, raise a cold, delicious glass of tap water! The Region's drinking water quality has again received top scores in the 2008/2009 Chief Drinking Water Inspector's Annual Report. York Region achieved 100 per cent on the Ministry of the Environment facility inspections and 99.97 per cent for drinking water quality, putting us first among all Greater Toronto municipalities.

York Region's water facilities are registered to the ISO 9001 Quality Management Standard and are fully accredited under Ontario's Drinking Water Quality Management Standard. Water quality reports are available for review at www.york.ca/water

Lake Simcoe Protection



York Region is working closely with our municipalities, the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority and our provincial and federal governments to help protect Lake Simcoe. Our commitment to this important resource is being demonstrated through:

- Innovative drinking water quality treatment technology at the Keswick Water Pollution Control Plant
- Latest water treatment technology upgrades to water pollution control plants in the Lake Simcoe watershed

Long-term Water Conservation Strategy

York Region has long considered water saved through conservation to be a viable source of water. With this in mind, the Region is creating a Long-term Water Conservation Strategy to anticipate water needs 40 years into the future, and design a blueprint to achieve these goals.

A series of water cafes were held last fall to bring together residents and stakeholders to discuss the future of water in York Region from a cultural, infrastructure and innovation perspective. For details on these discussions, please visit www.openwater.ca

York Region is a recognized leader in water conservation through our comprehensive *Water for Tomorrow* program. To learn more, visit www.waterfortomorrow.ca

Infrastructure Update

Two key York Durham Sewage System (YDSS) wastewater projects are underway, enabling York Region and Durham Region to meet provincially-mandated population growth forecasts through 2031.

The twinning of the existing Southeast Collector Trunk Sewer will allow for growth, provide backup to the existing system and allow the ability to perform inspection and repairs.

The Duffin Creek Water Pollution Control Plant is being expanded to provide additional capacity to serve growth in all municipalities serviced by the YDSS over the next 25 years. This plant provides treatment that exceeds the standards of most large treatment plants discharging into Lake Ontario.

York Region owns and operates more than \$2.5 billion worth of water, wastewater and waste management infrastructure, which is carefully maintained through ongoing audits and maintenance schedules. An analysis of these resources was recently compiled and is available for download at www.york.ca



Mayor
Frank Scarpitti
Markham



Regional Councillor
Jack Heath
Markham



Regional Councillor
Jim Jones
Markham



Regional Councillor
Gordon Landon
Markham



Regional Councillor
Joe Li
Markham



Mayor
David Barrow
Richmond Hill



Regional Councillor
Vito Spatafora
Richmond Hill



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Brenda Hogg
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