



York Regional Council Highlights



The Regional Municipality of York



York Region supports City of Vaughan resolution to encourage federal government support of Spadina subway extension

York Regional Council has voted to support a resolution from the City of Vaughan that encourages the Government of Canada to support the Spadina subway extension.

The resolution requests the Government of Canada work in partnership with the Government of Ontario to confirm that federal funding is available for this important transit project.

The Government of Ontario has pledged one-third funding for the \$1.5 billion expansion of the Spadina subway system, contingent on one-third funding from the Government of Canada and one-third funding from York Region and the City of Toronto.

Durham York Residual Waste Study proceeds with consultant recommendation of energy from waste solution

York Regional Council has approved the consultants' recommendations on the Durham York Residual Waste Study to proceed with managing residual waste by thermal treatment with energy recovery.

The announcement follows a series of six public information centres held in York Region and Durham Region from May 9th to 11th, as well as public depositions, with 80 per cent of the participants in favour of using a controlled combustion technology that yields energy from waste. York Region and Durham Region are co-proponents in the Environmental Assessment (EA) process for the study.

The report from the consultants recommended two options for managing residual waste (waste remaining after recycling and composting):

- Thermal Treatment of Municipal Solid Waste and Recovery of Energy followed by Recovery of Materials from Ash/Char
- Thermal Treatment of Municipal Solid Waste and Recovery of Energy of Solid Recovered Fuel

Both systems use controlled combustion technology to handle residual waste and both recover energy.

In the first option, recycled metals are recovered following thermal treatment from the ash or char. In the second option, recyclable materials, including metals and some plastics are recovered prior to thermal treatment. In both cases, only a small portion goes to landfill.

The consultants' report has recommended selecting either option based on the results of a competitive bid process on a processing facility.

Public information sessions will be held this fall to help determine a site location for a thermal facility.

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Successes in managing traffic congestion

York Regional Council received a report outlining a number of improvements over the past year to manage traffic congestion. Highlights of these initiatives include:

Intersection improvements:

- Double left turn lanes installed at 16th Avenue and Muriel/Vogel Road
- Turn lanes and signals installed at Warden Avenue and Aurora Road
- Turn lanes and signals installed at Queensville Sideroad and 2nd Concession
- Turn lanes and signals installed at Lloydtown Aurora Road and Jane Street
- Turn lanes and signals installed at Lloydtown Aurora Road and Weston Road
- Turn lanes and signals installed at Dufferin Road and 18th Sideroad

Road widening improvements:

- Islington Avenue from Langstaff Road to Major Mackenzie Drive
- Dufferin Street from Rutherford Road to Major Mackenzie Drive
- Langstaff Road from Islington Avenue to Weston Road
- Teston Road from Jane Street to Keele Street
- Rutherford Road from Napa Valley Road to Highway 50
- Markham By-pass from Highway 407 to Highway 7
- Markham By-pass from 16th Avenue to Major Mackenzie Drive
- Warden Avenue from Highway 407 to Apple Creek Boulevard
- Bayview Avenue from Wellington Street to Mulock Drive
- St. John's Sideroad from Yonge Street to Bayview Avenue
- Gamble Road from Yonge Street to Bathurst Street

Trip delay reductions due to intersection signal timing improvements:

- Davis Drive from Harry Walker Parkway to Main Street – 48.7 per cent reduction in wait times
- Bayview Avenue from Major Mackenzie Drive to Highway 7 – 44.5 per cent reduction in wait times
- Major Mackenzie Drive from Woodbine Avenue to Bayview Avenue – 15.7 per cent reduction in wait times

Transit improvements:

- Ridership doubled since amalgamation of service in 2001 – 7.6 million riders to 15.2 million riders
- Service hours increased by 20 per cent each year
- Yonge Street corridor ridership up 16 per cent
- Ridership projected to reach 19.5 million in 2006

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The Regional Municipality of York receives three awards in environmental planning and geomatics

The Regional Municipality of York is the recent recipient of three awards in recognition of outstanding products in environmental planning, geospatial infrastructure and Web-based geomatics services.

On behalf of the Region, Planning and Development Services Commissioner Bryan Tuckey accepted the "2006 Award for Planning Excellence - Environmental Planning" from the Canadian Institute of Planners for York Region's *2005 State of the Environment Report*, at the World Planners Congress this month in Vancouver.

Also on behalf of the Region, Director of York Region's Geomatics Branch Nancy Prout accepted Silver awards for "Best Municipal GIS Challenge" and "Best Web GIS Challenge" from the Ontario Chapter of the Urban and Regional Information Systems Association (URISA) at the URISA Ontario 2006 Be Spatial Conference in May.

The York Region Internet mapping site ensures that the Region's geographic data holdings and products are accessible to users throughout York Region, including the public sector, businesses and residents. It helps strengthen the local economy, improves education in York Region's schools and assists decision-making.

York Regional Council receives final report from Towards Sustainability in York Region Advisory Group

York Regional Council today agreed with the preliminary findings of the final report from the Towards Sustainability in York Region Advisory Group. The advisory group has suggested that the solutions to the Region's growth and development challenges require a sustainability approach that creates benefits along economic, community and environmental lines. Regional Council has directed staff to look in detail at how the Region can apply the recommendations to address growth-related challenges facing the Region over the next 30 years.

As part of the report to Council, Regional Council endorsed seven key recommendations for short-term implementation by York Region, as follows:

1. Complete a linked natural heritage system across York Region, in consultation with local municipalities and Conservation Authorities.
2. Utilize a sustainable development theme in the growth management review which will update the Regional Official Plan review and Infrastructure Master Plans.
3. Consider the establishment of an "Office of Progress Towards Sustainability" to provide advice towards achieving Regional Official Plan objectives.
4. Improve on sustainability monitoring and reporting.
5. Strengthen sustainability dialogue with informal meetings between Regional partners and senior Management.
6. Commit to becoming a leader in sustainability-based governance and decision-making.
7. Undertake assessments of the outcome of these key recommendations.

Council directed staff to report back on the advisory group's report and to bring forward a detailed Sustainability Strategy work plan.

York Regional Council Highlights

Growth Management consultations engage public

York Regional Council today received an interim report on the progress to date of efforts to reach out to the public with information about the Region's growth management challenges, with the aim of obtaining comments and input from residents about the choices facing York Region.

The public information sessions, written comments and interest group sessions have provided valuable input to assist Regional staff and Council in framing and discussing the issues and challenges that are most important to residents.

A number of issue areas were presented at the Town Hall meetings, including the following eight topics: Growth, Environment, Economy, Intensification, Infrastructure / Human Services, Moving York and Quality of Life - Place and Culture.

York Region has already successfully implemented a variety of sustainability priorities, ranging from the Oak Ridges Moraine and Greenbelt initiatives to Viva Rapid Transit, the Centres and Corridors Strategy and the *Water for Tomorrow Program*.

York Region's Web site – www.york.ca – provides information on these meetings and issues as well as opportunities to submit online feedback. Click on the "Planning for Tomorrow" icon on the main page for more information, or e-mail your comments or questions to futureyork@york.ca

Transit-oriented development guidelines encourage urban developments to be transit user-friendly

York Regional Council received an interim draft of the Regional Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Guidelines today outlining planning and design concepts that will shape the community in a way that meets the needs of existing and potential transit riders and generate a more frequent and, ultimately, higher quality transit service.

The Region's planned urban structure calls for Regional centres linked by Regional corridors and served by rapid transit.

The guidelines are organized into six key elements:

1. Pedestrians – Encourage access, safety and comfort
2. Parking – Provide well-designed, attractive facilities that put transit first
3. Land Use – Attract the right type, intensity and mix of land uses
4. Built Form – Address transit through appropriate volume, density and height
5. Connections – Link buildings and the spaces in between them to transit
6. Implementation – Apply TOD approaches throughout the planning process

Regional staff will continue public consultations and obtain feedback from local municipalities and other stakeholders throughout the summer as they prepare a final version of the guidelines for the consideration of York Regional Council in September 2006.

York Regional Council Highlights

York Region Street Atlas launched

The Regional Municipality of York has launched a new York Region Street Atlas, which is used by York Region Emergency Medical Services (EMS), York Regional Police, other Regional departments and the public.

The York Region Street Atlas replaces the Street Index, which was first prepared in 1975 for York Regional Police. The original versions were hand-drawn and updated once a year in a labour-intensive process. As technology progressed, distribution of the publication expanded to service all Regional departments.

The new York Region Street Atlas features 32 layers of information in the publication, including: roads, railway, lakes, rivers, hydro corridors, forests, trails, parks, schools, emergency response stations, hospitals, health care facilities, day care facilities, community centres, arenas, golf courses, malls and conservation areas.

The York Region Street Atlas is available for purchase by the public. For more information, please contact Planning & Economic Development Services Department at (905) 830-4444 at Ext. 1550 or 1 877 464-9675 Ext. 1550.

Council approves York Region Transit makeover

York Regional Council today approved a recommendation to update York Region Transit's (YRT) brand, including repainting all existing buses to reflect the new brand and logo.

The refreshed identity for YRT will align itself more closely with the Viva identity, reinforcing the "1 System" concept linking YRT with Viva, and clarifying the relationship for residents.

The re-branding of YRT's new image and repainting of buses will span a period of six years and cost a total of \$868,000. Once the project is completed, 346 buses will be converted to the new brand.

York Region Transit's Five-Year Service Plan approved

York Regional Council today approved York Region Transit's (YRT) new Five-Year Service Plan (2006-2010). The new Five-Year Plan will replace the original service plan adopted in 2001 when York Region assumed responsibility for the funding and operation of public transit throughout York Region.

The new Five-Year Plan will provide direction regarding the planning and implementation of future services to ensure ridership growth targets are achieved. The Plan also identifies opportunities for service improvements including route extensions, frequency improvements, potential markets and the restructuring of services to better integrate with a broader transit network.

The Five-Year Plan includes an increase of 1.5 million service hours, the addition of 84 new vehicles (30 Viva vehicles and 54 YRT vehicles) and a total ridership target of 26.9 million individuals by 2010.

To find out more about YRT's Five-Year Service Plan and to view a copy, please visit <http://yrt.ca/serviceplanning/>

York Regional Council Highlights

York Region Releases 2005 Annual Report

York Regional Council today received the Regional Municipality of York's 2005 Annual Report, entitled *Vision. Service. Growth.*

The 2005 Annual Report is a 65-page document that highlights information on York Regional Council and the goals and accomplishments of Regional Committees and staff. A report from the Regional Treasurer is included, in addition to financial statements, a statistical review and reports from auditors.

The Report features a description of each of the nine area municipalities and a list of the essential services provided by York Region.

The 2005 Annual Report is available at the information kiosk in the York Region Administrative Centre, 17250 Yonge Street, Newmarket. The Report is also available online at York Region's Web site www.york.ca under "Important Links".

York Regional Council recognizes Big Brothers Big Sisters Month

York Regional Council will recognize September 2006 as Big Brothers Big Sisters Month.

Big Brothers Big Sisters of York Region is a leading child and youth-serving organization providing mentoring programs across the Region. Men and women (age 18 or older) give their time to become mentors to youth who can greatly benefit from having an adult role model to look up to.

For more information on Big Brothers Big Sisters, please visit: www.bbbsy.ca

York Regional Council acts on results of Hospital Offload Delay Project

As a result of a pilot project that assessed the impact of assigning an Emergency Medical Services Operations Supervisor to a hospital emergency department to help minimize offload delay times, York Regional Council today approved the addition of one permanent staff EMS Operations Supervisor position, effective August 1, 2006.

York Regional Council Recognizes Dick Illingworth's 90th Birthday

York Regional Council extended birthday greetings to Dick Illingworth on the occasion of his recent 90th birthday. Mr. Illingworth, a former Mayor for the Town of Aurora, was recognized for his political and journalistic contributions to York Region and the local community.

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Collective Agreement reached with Ontario Nurses' Association

The Regional Municipality of York and the Ontario Nurses' Association (ONA) have reached a collective agreement on a new 39-month contract. The contract, which covers the period January 1, 2006 to March 31, 2009, was approved by York Regional Council and ratified earlier by the ONA.

Distinguished Budget Award

The Regional Municipality of York is the recipient of the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) Distinguished Budget Presentation Award for the 2006 York Region Business Plan and Budget.

The GFOA is a professional association serving 14,000 government finance professionals throughout North America. The organization assesses how published budgets that have been submitted for the award serve as a policy document, financial plan, operations guide and communications tool.

Federal/Provincial Fiscal Imbalance

York Regional Council endorsed the Government of Ontario's position and its efforts to address the Federal/Provincial fiscal imbalance. Among the Government of Ontario's demands:

- The federal government treat Ontario in an equal manner with all provinces and territories; with each receiving federal transfers on a per capita basis and a fairer share of funding for infrastructure, training and EI programs;
- The federal government refrain from increasing the equalization program which is funded 43 per cent by Ontario taxpayers;
- The federal government conduct a review of fiscal arrangements through a National Public Commission that would include municipal governments.

Addressing the Federal/Provincial fiscal imbalance will allow the Government of Ontario to address the Provincial/Municipal fiscal imbalance which currently undermines the sustainability of Ontario Communities and to meet its commitment to remove the municipal share of provincial social programs currently borne by property taxes.

***Swim to Survive* pilot program expanded**

York Regional Council approved the continuation of the *Swim to Survive* program for 2006-2007 incoming Grade 3 students at a cost of \$30,000.

Implementing *Swim to Survive* in York Region has been an innovative and groundbreaking pilot initiative. The Lifesaving Society has stated that York Region is the first municipality to implement this program on such a large scale.

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Non-disabled family members of Ontario Disability Support Program clients gain access to Ontario Works employment services

York Regional Council was informed today of mandated province-wide changes to the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP).

This year, the Ontario government is implementing a series of regulatory changes to improve access to employment and strengthen incentives to work for all ODSP recipients, including non-disabled spouses and all members of their families.

The changes promote enhanced access to employment services through Ontario Works for non-disabled spouses and dependent adults and improved employment incentives.

York Regional Council seeks a short-term solution for funding of emergency shelters

York Regional Council directed staff to communicate to the Province the need for increased provincial per diem funding as a short-term measure to address critical funding short-falls in emergency shelter operations across Ontario.

Emergency shelters are a critical part of York Region's homelessness services system but face mounting funding pressures as a result of an inadequate provincial per diem. While York Region has developed local strategies to mitigate the most serious immediate impacts on emergency shelters in their communities, and increased per diem payments of two per cent, a provincial solution is needed to stabilize shelter operations.

These actions were taken in conjunction with Regional Council receiving and supporting, in principle, the main findings and recommendations of the report by the Emergency Hostel Task Force of the Ontario Municipal Social Services Association (OMSSA), entitled *Emergency Shelter Services: More Than Just a Bed*.

York Regional Council approves increases for Ontario Works allowances

York Regional Council approved a two per cent increase to the provincially-cost shared per diem paid to emergency shelter operators and monthly Personal Needs Allowance (PNA) for residents of emergency shelters. The ratio of Provincial funding to municipal funding stands at an 80:20 ratio.

These increases provide needed financial support to emergency shelter operators and clients and will have a positive impact on the level of care provided to vulnerable residents across York Region.

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York Region agrees to let Province deliver Affordable Home ownership component of the Canada-Ontario Affordable Housing Program

York Regional Council agreed to accept the Province's proposal to deliver the Affordable Homeownership Component of the Canada-Ontario Affordable Housing Program directly. The Region will propose that the Province deliver the same number of units and dollar allocations under the program as had been allocated for regional delivery, to ensure available funding is spent locally.

The Affordable Homeownership Component, as presently constituted, does not meet a primary mandate of the Region to serve those households in the greatest need of affordable housing. Further, there are potentially too few units in the Region meeting program constraints that could help families in social housing. Delivering the program would cost considerably more to the Region to deliver and administer than the administrative fees being offered by the Province.

York Regional Council approves Housing Delivery Plan for the Rental Component of the Canada-Ontario Affordable Housing Program

York Region has prepared a Housing Delivery Plan, as required by the Province, to participate in the Rental Component of the Canada-Ontario Affordable Housing Program.

The plan is a best-efforts approach to generate community interest and creativity and develop a short list of projects for consideration in the delivery of the \$25.9 million program and 370 affordable rental housing units allocated to the Region.

York Region will commence a two-stage Request for Proposals (RFP) process. The first stage of the RFP will be issued to assess community capacity to deliver affordable rental housing under the proposed Housing Delivery Plan and results will be reported back to Council in September 2006.

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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.