



**six** Implementation

## 6. Implementation

### 6.1 Partnerships and Accountability

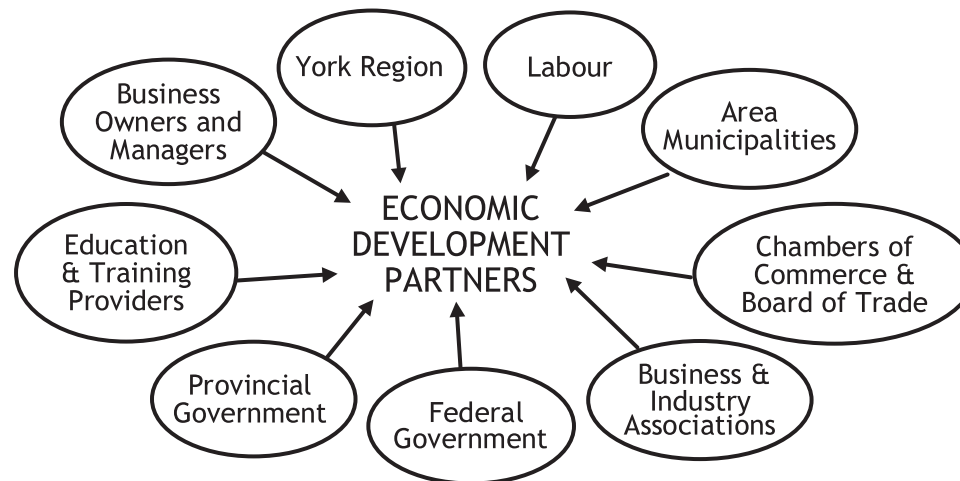
Business and government at all levels are facing a series of driving forces that include the increased expectations of customers and constituents, the pace of technological change and the regulatory environment, unrelenting financial pressures, and unpredictable threats from geopolitical events and terrorism. All of these factors drive the need for strategic collaboration and sharing of resources.

A number of different organizations play key roles in the Region's economy and have been involved in economic development at the neighbourhood, municipal, regional, provincial and federal levels. There are a number of benefits that accrue from working in partnership:

- Business, labour, education and government bring a range of experience to help implement economic development programs.
- Broadly based community partnerships stand a better chance of securing senior level government support for new initiatives.
- The interrelationship between economic, social, and environmental issues can best be met through cross-sectoral collaboration.
- The continuing growth and diversity of the Region's population provides opportunities for new market access and cultural enrichment.

Creating successful and sustainable partnerships requires clear accountability and responsibilities for program funding, program delivery, and program evaluation and management.

The Accountability Framework in Appendix 1 sets out the proposed Actions, Partners and Implementation for all of the Strategic Objectives in the Economic Strategy. Where the actions are best undertaken by organizations working in partnership, clearly defined expectations and performance metrics will need to be put in place. This will be undertaken as part of the detailed Implementation Plan that will be produced after further consultation with stakeholders and final adoption of the Economic Strategy by Regional Council.



## 6.2 Priority Action Areas

The five Strategic Directions within the Economic Strategy establish the framework that will guide the Regional Municipality of York and its economic partners towards the Vibrant Economy goal of *Vision 2026*. All of the Actions contained in the Economic Strategy reflect the needs expressed by a broad range of stakeholders in York Region and all will help the Region become more competitive. However, implementing the Strategy does not imply that every one of the Actions within the Strategy will need to be addressed at once.

The realities of finite staff and budget resources mean that not all of these actions can be implemented solely by the Regional Municipality of York.

York Region's role will range from facilitation and support, to initiating and sustaining some of these actions. Other stakeholders and levels of government will also need to collaborate and take ownership, either to initiate, support, or assist in carrying out specific actions and tasks identified in the Strategy.

An Evaluation Matrix was used to determine where the Region needs to place its priorities for implementation, and where to encourage partnerships to share responsibility for execution.

The Actions in the Economic Strategy was evaluated relative to their position on the Matrix in terms of their "Dimension of Impact" and their "Dimension of Alignment".

"Impact" ranks Actions which beneficially impact a broader geographical, economic or social segment of the Region. "Alignment" ranks Actions based on those which can be implemented more quickly, where existing resources or expertise already exists, or where current Regional mandates or accountabilities already exist.

The following list identifies the priority areas of implementation for the Economic Strategy. When implemented, these Actions form a foundation for continued progress in achieving the Strategic Objectives and serve as a catalyst for the creation of further alliances and partnerships.

- 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.
- Convene 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.
- 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 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.
- Undertake a detailed economic structural analysis of the Region's high performance clusters.
- Develop a marketing and communications plan to promote York Region and its natural and cultural attributes.
- Undertake a major events infrastructure audit to identify capacity to host major cultural and sporting events that could be attracted to York Region.
- Engage businesses to promote, support and practise transportation demand management and to provide alternative employee journey to work choices.

This list is a beginning, and not an end unto itself. These Actions represent ones that the Region can undertake utilizing existing staff and budget resources and which are intended to lay the groundwork to increase the innovation and competitiveness of the Region's firms, attract and retain high quality jobs, reinforce the quality of life, and ensure sustained economic prosperity. The next step will be to encourage partnerships and alliances to address the other elements of the Economic Strategy.

### 6.3 Key Performance Indicators

As part of the implementation of the Economic Strategy, the Region will need to measure its progress against other jurisdictions to ensure its continued competitiveness. Success also needs to be measured against existing levels of service and results to date. An annual assessment and “report card” on the activities under the Economic Strategy will be essential. The following key performance indicators set out possible measures that can be used to measure progress in each of the five Strategic Directions of the Strategy

#### ***Strategic Direction: Creating an Environment to Share Information and Ideas***

Progress will be measured in terms of how well the Region has been able to make the information available to the business community, how many new collaborative opportunities to share information have been established, and how effective they have been at attracting funding and stimulating economic success. This may entail the undertaking of a satisfaction survey to gauge responses from the business community.

#### **Suggested Measures:**

- Value of research and development performed within York Region.
- The extent of broadband telecommunications coverage within the Region.
- Amount of financial support from senior governments to economic development projects in the Region.

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

Progress will be measured by benchmarking the Region against other similar Regions in the GTA and elsewhere in North America. Measures need to address both the quality and the quantity of the Region’s workforce.

#### **Suggested Measures:**

- Measures of prosperity: average wages and benefits, income per household, full-time/part-time employment, number and types of occupation in the workforce.
- Measures of equity: labour force participation rate, unemployment rate amongst immigrant workers, youth unemployment rate, number of foreign trained professionals in full-time employment for which they are trained.
- Live-work ratio.
- Reductions of gaps between resident labour force occupation and types of jobs available in the Region.
- Educational attainment.

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

Progress will be assessed relative to the growth and diversification of the Region's economic base through the creation of new enterprise, technological innovation, the retention of current employment, and the expansion or growth of local firms into global exporters. The Region could compile a series of economic performance measures from existing Statistics Canada databases as well as initiatives such as the yearly Employment Survey conducted.

#### **Suggested Measures:**

- New business start-ups.
- Volume and value of new ICI building permits.
- Volume of exports sales and growth.
- Measures of Productivity.
- Measures of energy efficiency and waste reduction.

### ***Strategic Direction: Enhance the Quality of Place***

Progress can be measured in terms of how well the Region is attracting new visitors, and how well York Region performs relative to other GTA and provincial destinations. New performance indicators and data sources, such as regular visitor satisfaction surveys will need to be developed.

#### **Suggested Measures:**

- Numbers of tourist visits to the Region.
- Economic impact of tourism spending.
- Numbers of room-nights booked in Regional accommodations.
- Number of major sporting/cultural/ethnic events/ hosted in the Region.

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

Progress will be assessed in terms of how improvements to the transportation system has eased traffic congestion, and how effective the TDM measures have been in changing people's commuting behaviour. Detail performance indicators will have to be further developed with York Region Transit and as part of the Transportation Master Plan initiative.

#### **Suggested Measures**

- Number of transportation data requests received and disseminated.
- Number of businesses recruited to the Transportation Management Associations (TMA's).
- Number of employees of TMA members utilizing the shared transportation services.
- Ridership on YRT as a measure of service utilization.
- Number of revenue service hours (i.e. number of actual service hours on the road) provided by YRT as a measure of service provision.
- Number of transit trips/capita.
- Expenditure on transit/capita.

#### 6.4 Conclusion and Next Steps

The Economic Strategy is a guide for the Regional Municipality of York to continue the path towards an economic future defined in *Vision 2026*.

The research that has been undertaken as part of this project makes clear that the economy of York Region is diverse, resilient and very dynamic. However, as the consultations with business and community stakeholders have shown, this economic success cannot be taken for granted given the increasing expectations, competition, and uncertainties of a global market.

Success in the future will be based on building communities with a high quality of place that nurture and sustain specialized skills, entrepreneurship and innovation. The actions in the Economic Strategy establish a framework which will accomplish that.

After circulation for comments and upon adoption by Regional Council, the Economic Strategy will be implemented in accordance with a detailed Implementation Plan that sets out the timelines, accountabilities and performance indicators to measure success.

Review of the Economic Strategy will be undertaken on an annual basis to reflect shifts in the micro or macro economic climate.

