



York Regional Council Highlights



The Regional Municipality of York



April 2007

York Region's 2007 Budget and Business Plan approved

York Regional Council today approved The Regional Municipality of York's *2007 Business Plan and Budget* which features a continued investment in York Region's capital infrastructure including major roads construction, transit and rapid transit expansion, increased water/wastewater capacity and enhancements to Policing; a debt reduction strategy and a capital asset replacement program.

The \$1.8 billion *2007 Business Plan and Budget* – which factors in 3.3 per cent assessment growth – includes a 4.8-per cent tax levy. The resulting impact for the average York Region home with an assessment value of \$371,000 is approximately \$80 for the year or 22 cents a day.

The Regional budget includes approximately \$1.2 billion in operating costs required to maintain existing services and outlines \$565 million for capital expenditures, including costs required for the ongoing maintenance and replacement of existing assets as well as growth and service improvements, including:

- Major road construction and improvement projects
- Expanded transit routes and new transit vehicles
- Additional police officers, vehicles and civilian support staff
- Expanded water/wastewater facilities and additional capacity
- Continued implementation of the Source Separated Organics program (Green bins)

Major factors in York Region's *2007 Business Plan and Budget* include:

- Phased Elimination of GTA Pooling
- Gas Tax Revenues
- Debt Reduction and Capital Asset Replacement

Robert Johnston, former Mayor of Town of Georgina, remembered

York Regional Council today remembered, Mr. Robert Johnston, a former member of York Regional Council, who died on April 6th.

Robert Johnston, the former Mayor of the Town of Georgina, was a member of York Regional Council for two terms from 1988 to 1994.

Mayor Johnston was very active during his terms, sitting on numerous committees, including Community Services, Health and the York County Hospital Board.

York Region Chairman and CEO Bill Fisch mentioned Mayor Johnston's contributions were significant and definitely made a difference to our Region.

York Regional Council Highlights

York Region CAO Michael Garrett retires

York Region Chairman and CEO Bill Fisch expressed words of gratitude and appreciation on behalf of Regional Council, for retiring CAO Michael Garrett. In his nearly five years with the Region, Mr. Garrett has had a lasting effect on The Regional Municipality of York as Chief Administrative Officer.

Mr. Garrett helped to champion major infrastructure initiatives, such as the York Durham Sewage System (YDSS) expansion and 16th Avenue road improvement projects. Mike also greatly contributed to York Region's Rapid Transit plan which is now entering into its second phase.

York Region was also awarded the designation as Top 100 employers and Top 50 in the GTA while under his administrative leadership. He had a significant impact with Regional employees, leaving behind a strong sense of corporate vision and performance measurement.

Until 2001, Mr. Garrett was the Chief Administrative Officer for the City of Toronto where he led the amalgamation of the seven former municipal governments into one city administration. He also served as CAO for the Regional Municipality of Peel and held a succession of postings with the Ministry of Natural Resources, including serving as Assistant Deputy Minister.

York Region approves the hiring of Bruce Macgregor as new York Region CAO

York Regional Council today confirmed the hiring of Bruce Macgregor as new Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) for The Regional Municipality of York. Mr. Macgregor's appointment, effective May 1st, follows an extensive, four-month recruiting campaign.

Mr. Macgregor succeeds retiring CAO Michael Garrett, who assumed the post in 2002.

Mr. Macgregor assumes the post of CAO after nearly two years of outstanding service as Commissioner of Transportation and Works for York Region. Mr. Macgregor assumed the Region's Commissioner role after a very successful 4.5-year term as Commissioner of Engineering and Public Works for the Town of Richmond Hill. Mr. Macgregor also served the Region as Director of Water and Wastewater Services from 1995-2000 and as Capital Projects Manager from 1991-1995.

Mr. Macgregor brings a wealth of public sector and private sector expertise to the CAO position with impeccable credentials in both engineering and administration. He is an extremely highly regarded leader who is noted for his strong work ethic, management skill and commitment to working cooperatively. He holds a Bachelor of Applied Science degree and has completed the Executive Program in the Faculty of Business at Queen's University.

Mr. Macgregor will assume administrative responsibilities for a \$1.8 billion corporation with a staff complement that exceeds 2,500 full-time employees in more than 40 offices.

York Regional Council Highlights

More than 80 per cent of respondents rated YRT/Viva services as good, very good or excellent

York Regional Council received a report today outlining the results of the 2006 Mobility Plus and York Region Transit (YRT)/Viva customer satisfaction surveys. The results presented indicate that more than 80 per cent of respondents rated YRT/Viva services as good, very good or excellent and 90 per cent of respondents were satisfied or very satisfied with Mobility Plus performance.

Highlights of the survey results:

- 96 per cent of respondents gave Viva services either a good, very good or excellent rating
- 81 per cent of respondents rated YRT conventional service as good, very good or excellent
- 75 per cent of respondents were satisfied or very satisfied with public transit as a whole in York Region, including YRT, Viva and other public transit systems operating in the Region
- 70 to 80 per cent of Mobility Plus respondents gave the top rating of “very satisfied” for a variety of categories, including Call Centre staff friendliness, Call Centre staff knowledge, safe driving, courtesy of drivers and door-to-door assistance
- Customer satisfaction in all categories improved by 3 to 16 per cent when compared to results from the previous 2004 satisfaction survey

Two customer satisfaction surveys were administered by a third-party agency, Oxygen Research Group Inc., in November 2006, one survey for YRT/Viva and a second for Mobility Plus. The YRT/Viva survey results are based on 6,027 rider responses, including a combination of interviewer-led questions and self-completed questionnaires. The Mobility Plus survey results are based upon 401 telephone surveys that took approximately 15 minutes each.

Detailed survey results will be available next week on the York Region Transit website: www.yrt.ca

National Emergency Medical Services Week 2007

York Regional Council declared May 20 – 26th as *National Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Week 2007*. *National EMS Week 2007* is an opportunity to increase public awareness surrounding the value and accomplishments of EMS paramedics in our community.

For 2007, the international theme of National Emergency Medical Services Week is “Extraordinary People, Extraordinary Service.” Events throughout the week will honour the paramedics and individuals who provide daily lifesaving services and educate the public about injury prevention, safety awareness and medical emergencies.

York Regional Council Highlights

York Region outlines growth management options for discussion

York Regional Council today endorsed five staff reports regarding *Planning for Tomorrow*, the Region's growth management initiative. The reports include:

- Population and employment forecasts
- 2031 land requirements
- Residential intensification strategy
- Residential area analysis – preliminary report
- Public engagement and consultation

Six open house meetings being held across York Region in early May will provide opportunities for the public to participate in the *Planning for Tomorrow* discussions.

Schedule of Planning for Tomorrow open houses

City of Vaughan, Council Chambers

Town of Markham, Canada Room

Town of Richmond Hill, OMB Hearing Room

Town of Aurora, Council Chambers

Town of East Gwillimbury, Council Chambers

Town of Newmarket, Council Chambers

Tuesday, May 1st

Thursday, May 3rd

Tuesday, May 8th

Wednesday, May 9th

Thursday, May 10th

Tuesday, May 15th

Time and format for these events

6:00 to 7:00 p.m. - Open house

7:00 to 7:30 p.m. - Presentation

7:30 to 9:00 p.m. - Facilitated Discussion

The findings from the *Planning for Tomorrow* open houses will be reported as part of the Region's Growth Management Review. The open houses will help guide Regional staff in reviewing and updating the *Regional Official Plan*. They will also contribute directly into the *Infrastructure Master Plan* updates for water, wastewater, transit and transportation.

In addition to the information presented in these five staff reports, the Planning for Tomorrow open houses will include a summary of the issues received from public consultations last year during the first phase of the Growth Management Review.

York Region's website: www.york.ca provides information on the Region's Growth Management initiative as well as opportunities to submit online feedback. Click on the "Planning for Tomorrow" icon on the main page for more information, or email comments or questions to futureyork@york.ca

York Regional Council Highlights

New numbers paint picture of affordable housing imbalance in GTA regions compared to Toronto

York Regional Council today received *Housing by the Numbers*, a study of affordable housing and homelessness in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) that provides statistical evidence of the affordable housing imbalance in York Region and the other GTA regions compared to Toronto.

Conducted by York, Durham, Peel and Halton Regions, *Housing by the Numbers* is a comparative statistical analysis of affordable housing and homelessness in each region and the City of Toronto (The City of Toronto did not participate in the analysis but confirmed the accuracy of their statistics).

Housing by the Numbers covers a wide range of housing and homelessness statistics in areas such as vacancy rates, average market rents, ability to afford rental housing, the number of affordable housing units on an absolute and per capita basis, the number of shelter and domiciliary hostel beds on an absolute and per capita basis and the average price of ownership.

Highlights of the study:

- York Region's supply of rental accommodation is 30,580 units compared to 464,535 in the City of Toronto.
- York Region's vacancy rate of 1.6 per cent is low when compared to 3.3 per cent in the City of Toronto.
- Rent on a one-bedroom apartment in York Region is on average 98.7 per cent of the cost of a similar unit in the City of Toronto.
- If present trends continue, rents in York Region could exceed average market rents in Toronto by 2008 .
- York Region's supply of social housing units is 6,385 units compared to 90,003 in Toronto.
- For every unit of available social housing in York Region, there are 10.55 households on the waiting list. In Toronto, there are only 4.25 families, so the waiting time would be shorter there.
- York Region has 59 emergency shelter beds compared to Toronto's 4,181.
- For every emergency shelter bed in York Region, there are 108.22 women who have annual incomes under \$10,000, compared to 15.89 women per shelter bed in Toronto.

All but 194 of York Region's 6,385 social housing units were built prior to 1993, when the population was significantly smaller.

Since GTA pooling was established in 1998, York Region has contributed nearly three-quarters of a billion dollars to the City of Toronto. GTA pooling is scheduled to be phased out over the next five years.

Grade 5 student named Police Chief for a Day

York Regional Police (YRP) Chief Armand LaBarge today introduced Jared McNabb as winner of the "Police Chief for a Day" contest. Donning his specially-made uniform, Jared, a 10-year old grade five student from Saint Paul Catholic School in the Town of Newmarket was sworn in for the day at York Regional Council.

The Chief for a Day contest involved the participation of 81 schools in the York Catholic District School Board and students taking part were asked to submit an essay. The contest is sponsored by the York Regional Police Appreciation Dinner Committee.

York Regional Council Highlights

York Regional Council endorses National Research Centre Institute in Markham

York Regional Council endorsed a report outlining the Ontario Ministry of Research and Innovation's Strategic Plan and a recommendation to express support for the establishment of the National Research Centre Institute in the Town of Markham.

The proposed National Research Centre Institute is an example of a partnership initiative that supports innovation and convergence technologies. It will be the first National Research Centre facility to be established in the GTA and is the result of a collaborative effort between the federal and provincial governments, York University, the Town of Markham and other public and private sector partners.

The institute will serve as a catalyst for the convergence of life sciences and information technology to accelerate research, development, and commercialization. The objective is to drive new transformative technologies that will readily attract capital for commercialization and which have exponential and multiplier effects in the economy.

York Region will send letters of support to the Premier of Ontario and the Prime Minister of Canada to request that funding approval for the National Research Centre institute be expedited.

Staff authorized to study the establishment of a York Region Industry Education Council

York Regional Council today endorsed a staff report providing background research on industry/business education councils in other jurisdictions and provided authorization to conduct a feasibility study for the establishment of an Industry Education Council in York Region.

Staff will report back to Regional Council in the last quarter of 2007 with the findings of the feasibility study, including a work plan for the next phase.

Administrative Professionals Week

York Regional Council will recognize April 23rd to 27th as Administrative Professionals Week, as established by the International Association of Administrative Professionals (IAAP).

The IAAP provides administrative assistants, executive secretaries, office coordinators, information specialists and other administrative professionals with education and networking opportunities, certification and other career-enhancing programs, while advancing the image of administrative professionals.

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The next Regional Council Meeting will be held Thursday, May 17, 2007 at 9:30 a.m.

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.