



Thursday, March 24, 2011

For Immediate Release

York Regional Council – March 24, 2011

York Regional Council approves \$2.4 billion Budget for 2011 with continued investment in infrastructure and services

York Regional Council today unanimously approved The Regional Municipality of York's \$2.4 billion Business Plan and Budget which includes more than \$900 million in additional funding for capital projects and \$1.5 billion to maintain and operate York Region services.

The 2011 Business Plan and Budget includes a 1.94-per cent tax levy increase, which represents approximately:

- \$23 increase for a home assessed at \$250,000
- \$37 increase for a home assessed at \$400,000
- \$56 increase for a home assessed at \$600,000

Highlights of the **2011 Operating Budget** include:

- \$239 million for York Regional Police, including 28 additional police officers and 10 civilian staff
- \$193 million for Transportation Services, providing over 3,500 lane kilometres, 800 traffic signals and more than one million transit service hours
- \$141 million for Community and Health Services, including \$1 million contribution to the Housing Repair Reserve and \$3.2 million for multi-year plan initiatives
- \$40 million for Solid Waste Management, including a new Community Environmental Centre (CEC) in the Town of Richmond Hill, upgrading the Georgina Transfer Station to include CEC features; managing over 350,000 tonnes of solid waste in 2011 while maintaining one of the highest diversion rates in the Province
- \$30 million for Capital Asset Replacement to provide for future infrastructure requirements
- \$26 million for GTA Pooling, money collected from York Region to help pay for Social Assistance and Social Housing programs in the City of Toronto
- \$12 million for debt reduction

The 2011 Capital Budget will be paid through a combination of Provincial and Federal government support as well as Development Charges (DCs), which are one-time fees charged for developing a property.

Some of the new multi-year projects approved in the **2011 Capital Budget** include:

- \$245 million in Water infrastructure, including development of water supply projects with Peel Region and the City of Toronto
- \$229 million in Wastewater infrastructure, including the upgrade and refurbishment of York Durham Duffin Creek Water Pollution Control Plant in the City of Pickering
- \$147 million in Roads, including widening of Bloomington Road from Yonge Street to Bayview Avenue and widening of Major Mackenzie Drive from the CPR rail line (approximately 1.5 kilometres west of Highway 27) to Highway 27
- \$114 million in Rapid Transit, including preliminary engineering for the Yonge Street Subway extension and construction of the Vaughan Metropolitan Centre Viva-subway Interface
- \$73 million in Conventional Transit, including the purchase of 47 conventional buses and implementation of PRESTO card fare payment system
- \$18 million in Housing, including a housing development in the Woodbridge community of the City of Vaughan
- \$9 million in Emergency Medical Services (EMS), including the replacement of 11 ambulances

April, May and June are Sustainable Works months

York Regional Council received information on planned events for Sustainable Works months, which showcase our environmental initiatives and services.

Throughout April, May and June, events and activities will be featured to raise public awareness of the environmental programs available and provide residents with an opportunity to understand their impact on their surroundings – both at home and in their community.

Some of the many events include:

- *Water for Tomorrow* Gardening Seminar Series
- YO! Youth Onboard Earthweek Displays
- Compost Awareness
- *Water for Tomorrow* Gardening Centre Workshops
- 13th Annual York Children's Water Festival
- National Public Works Week
- Our Greener Side Celebration
- Rain Barrel Sales Event

York Region's Sustainable Works events and activities are co-ordinated and attended by 700 Environmental and Transportation Services staff as well as volunteers.

For information on Sustainable Works months, please visit www.york.ca/sustainableworks

York Region will celebrate National Access Awareness Week May 29 to June 4

The Regional Municipality of York will recognize May 29 to June 4 as National Access Awareness Week in York Region.

National Access Awareness Week was established in 1988 in response to a request from Rick Hansen following his Man in Motion World Tour. Its primary aim is to bring together people with disabilities, the organizations who serve them, and business, labour and government, to facilitate changes that will allow the full participation of people with disabilities in all aspects of Canadian life.

On Thursday, June 2, York Region will host an educational and best practice-sharing forum for the 15 accessibility advisory committees from across the Region, including the nine area municipalities, local hospitals and school boards.

York Regional Council recognizes Girls Rights Week May 2 to 6

The Regional Municipality of York recognizes May 2 to 6 as Girls Rights Week in York Region.

York Region acknowledges the valuable lives and contributions of all girls and women living in York Region. York Region resolutely supports the premise that girls require and deserve the awareness, attention and commitment of a wide range of individuals and organizations to promote their healthy development.

York Region also recognizes the contribution that Girls Incorporated of York Region, a non-profit organization dedicated to empowering girls and young women to seek the highest quality of life possible, makes in helping girls develop to the fullest of their capacities in all areas of life. It strives to enhance confidence and self-esteem in girls and young women, while giving them the skills and tools they need to be empowered, productive and contributing members of society.

York Regional Council recognizes Pride Week June 5 to 12

The Regional Municipality of York recognizes June 5 to 12 as Pride Week in York Region.

York Region acknowledges the lives and contributions of people of all sexual orientations and gender identities living in York Region.

Green Bin program implements mandatory compostable bags as of May 1, 2011

York Regional Council received an update on the numerous educational initiatives undertaken to support the implementation of mandatory compostable bags for Green Bins and kitchen containers.

Effective May 1, 2011, plastic bags will no longer be accepted in York Region's Green Bin program.

Plastic bags cannot decompose into organic composted material. When used as bin liners in the Green Bin program, they are removed from the final composted material and sent to landfill for disposal. Bags labelled as biodegradable only break down into smaller particles, contaminating the final composted material with bits of plastic.

Certified compostable bags made of cornstarch or other plant-based materials break down completely into compost. Only certified compostable plastic bags, displaying the compostable logo, will be accepted. Paper bags, which do not require the compostable bag logo, will also be accepted.

York Regional Council commends Greening Strategy achievements

Preservation of environmentally-significant properties, tree planting and educational programs for York Region residents are highlights of The Regional Municipality of York's 2010 Greening Strategy achievements that received York Regional Council's approval and commendation.

Last year, York Region helped to preserve 63 hectares (156 acres) of land on three properties in the Township of King, with the assistance of the Nature Conservancy Canada, Toronto and Region Conservation Authority, Oak Ridges Moraine Land Trust and Environment Canada. The Region also planted 80,000 trees with the help of 2,000 volunteers and educated another 2,000 residents on the benefits of our forests through the popular Nature's Classroom program.

York Regional Council appoints 2011 - 2014 York Region Accessibility Advisory Committee

York Regional Council is pleased to announce the appointment of members to the 2011-2014 York Region Accessibility Advisory Committee. In addition, Regional Council appointed Town of Richmond Hill Regional Councillor Vito Spatafora as Chair of this Committee.

This Committee advises Regional Council and York Regional Police on issues and opportunities for making it easier for people with disabilities to use the Region's many programs and services.

The YRAAC was established to meet the requirements of the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001* (ODA) and the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA). The purpose of the committee is to advise on the implementation of the ODA, including the preparation, implementation and effectiveness of the Region's annual accessibility plan and to advise on the Region's compliance with the accessibility standards of the AODA.

The 2011-2014 Committee is comprised of 11 citizen members from across the Region and three members of Regional Council. The appointees are:

- York Region Chairman and CEO Bill Fisch (ex-officio)
- Town of Richmond Hill Regional Councillor Vito Spatafora (Chair)
- Town of Georgina Regional Councillor Danny Wheeler
- Christine Arnold
- Leslie Bolt
- Bob Creighton
- Steve Foglia
- Margaret Gaukel
- Cindy Gorlewski
- Donna Hardaker
- Lilian Hulme-Smith
- Linda Jones
- Brian Edward Lynch
- Frank Maggisano

Employment and Industry Report 2010 shows trends in York Region economy

York Regional Council received the Employment and Industry Report 2010, which provides a detailed overview of industry and employment trends in The Regional Municipality of York, including sector breakdowns and local municipal profiles. Economic outlook and trends at the national and provincial levels are also examined in the report. Following are highlights:

- In terms of employment growth, the national and provincial economies are forecast to continue a moderate recovery through 2011, after experiencing declines from 2008 to 2009 and a strong recovery from 2009 to 2010. As of mid-year 2010, the national and provincial economies have recovered the majority of jobs lost since mid-year 2008.
- There are about 28,000 businesses employing 501,000 people in York Region in 2010.
- Employment increased by 8,000 jobs or 1.9 per cent from midyear 2009 to mid-year 2010, compared to 1,000 jobs and 0.1 per cent from 2008 to 2009 during the recessionary period.
- Businesses employing more than 100 people has increased by over 200 firms (+35 per cent) since 2001, to a total of 770 firms.
- 84 per cent of firms employ 20 or less people, while the overall average business size is about 16 employees.
- Manufacturing has continued to decline both nationally and provincially, while growth industries in common to both economies were professional, scientific and technical services and construction.
- The services-producing sectors of business services and personal services now rival manufacturing with approximately 16 per cent of Regional employment. All service-producing jobs now account for 77 per cent of total employment.
- The fastest-growing sectoral groupings between 2001 and 2010 were: health care and social assistance, education and business services.

The York Region Employment Survey, upon which the Employment and Industry Report 2010 is based, is one of only a few surveys of its kind in all of Ontario. The information gathered through the survey is used to better understand the Regional economy, to forecast employment trends, as well as to monitor economic development goals.

York Region makes significant progress in implementing Transportation Master Plan

York Regional Council received an update on the progress of implementing the York Region Transportation Master Plan Update (2009), which envisions an enhanced mobility system using a people and transit first approach to connect land use and transportation planning. At the forefront of this approach is an emphasis on walking, cycling, transit use and a per capita reduction in automobile/single occupant vehicle trips taken.

The plan includes a five-year action plan and commitment for on-going monitoring of the implementation progress of recommended policies, programs and infrastructure improvements.

Significant progress in implementing the five-year action plan includes major road and transit studies and capital projects that are underway, as well as the Spadina subway extension and vivaNext rapidways currently under construction. While the Yonge subway extension remains unfunded, progress is still being made on this critical project through the ongoing conceptual design study.

York Regional Council requests Metrolinx to expedite financing strategy

York Regional Council will ask Metrolinx to expedite its comprehensive investment strategy for financing the Regional Transportation Plan. Metrolinx currently plans to complete the financing strategy in 2013.

Regional Council made the request in conjunction with a staff report that summarizes a list of alternative sources of funding for transportation infrastructure improvements in the Region and Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area that are needed to address the growth in travel demands.

The report reviews discussion papers on the topic prepared by the Toronto Board of Trade and the Toronto City Summit Alliance.

Early completion of Metrolinx's comprehensive investment strategy will assist municipalities in determining tools and mechanisms to address transportation infrastructure financing needs. Council will continue to seek support from the Provincial and Federal governments for guaranteed cash flows and will consider alternative methods for delivery of major transportation infrastructure projects.

York Regional Council approves the Sutton/Jackson's Point Secondary Plan

York Regional Council has approved the Town of Georgina Official Plan Amendment No. 111 (the Sutton/Jackson's Point Secondary Plan), as modified. The adopted Sutton/Jackson's Point Secondary Plan represents a comprehensive plan to guide growth and development within the area. Several modifications to the plan are recommended to ensure that the plan conforms to current Provincial and Regional plans and policies and represents good planning.

The plan addresses the population growth projections for the next 20 years. It is anticipated the population within the area will increase by approximately 8,155 people from the existing population of 6,995 people. The total population (municipally-serviced and privately-serviced) within the area is projected to be 15,150 people by the year 2031.

The Regional Municipality of York develops cycling map

The Regional Municipality of York has developed its first Regional cycling map, identifying existing regional and local bicycle lanes, boulevard paths, signed bicycle routes, multi-use trails and paved road shoulders. It also provides descriptions of typical bicycle signs, rules of the road for cyclists and important safety tips.

A Regional cycling map is one of the key outreach components of the York Region Pedestrian and Cycling Master Plan. It is a partnership between York Region, the nine local municipalities and Conservation Authorities and was funded in part by the Ontario Ministry of Health Promotion and Sport.

Interactive versions of the cycling map will be available online. It will allow users to create custom cycling maps of smaller areas and with different points of interest.

For a printed copy of the cycling map, please contact Yvonne Kaczor in the Planning and Development Services Department at 905-830-4444, Ext. 5051 or email Yvonne.kaczor@york.ca

Long-term debt financing for Mapleglen Residences approved by York Regional Council

York Regional Council today approved a recommendation to enter into two long-term loan agreements for up to \$9.72 million on behalf of Housing York Inc. for Mapleglen Residences in the City of Vaughan.

Mapleglen Residences is a four-storey, 82,400-square foot building designed to achieve a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Silver certification. The building will accommodate 84 units in total. Approximately 60 per cent of the apartments at Mapleglen Residences will be rent-geared-to-income units. The balance of the apartments will have market rents.

The loan agreements between Housing York Inc. and York Region will be repaid through operating income and through funding from the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

The building is currently under construction with occupancy expected in June 2011.

York Regional Council received highlights of Heart Alive program's success

York Regional Council today received a report outlining the successes of the Region's Heart Alive Program.

The Heart Alive program began in 2003 with the placement of 65 automated external defibrillators at Regional facilities. More than 500 staff members were trained in the operation of the devices. Since then, an additional 122 defibrillators have been placed in the Region through 100-per cent funding from the Ontario Heart and Stroke Foundation, along with training of 400 more responders.

Today, public places where people gather or locations that have a high, daily attendance of staff and visitors within York Region and local municipal facilities are protected with defibrillators.

In 2011, York Region will submit the Heart Alive First Aid and CPR program to the Ontario Workplace and Safety Insurance Board for recognition. Once recognized by the Board, the Heart Alive program may be used to train Regional and municipal staff wishing to obtain valid CPR and First Aid certificates.

Starting in 2012, a new response approach will recognize that the response time clock is "stopped" when any defibrillator-equipped member of the public attends to a sudden cardiac arrest patient. This amendment to the Ambulance Act will grant emergency ambulance personnel the time they need to respond appropriately to patients who are in need of receiving defibrillator treatment as part of rapid, pre-hospital care.

York Regional Council receives update on 2010 capacities of drinking water systems

York Regional Council received an update on the status and capacities of the Region's drinking water systems that were approved under each Permit to Take Water for the 2010 reporting year. This annual report must be submitted to Regional Council and to the public before March 31.

All of York Region's drinking water systems met the monthly average flow, maximum daily withdrawal and the allowable daily withdrawal limits imposed by the water permits.

The Ministry of the Environment has a comprehensive inspection program from municipal residential drinking water systems. In June of each year, the Ministry publishes the Ontario Chief Drinking Water Inspector's report and results from the last rating period. York Region achieved a 100 per cent compliance score and a score of 99.97 per cent for Provincial quality standards. These scores put York Region first among Greater Toronto Area municipalities.

Next regular meeting of York Regional Council

York Regional Council will meet on Thursday, April 21 at 9:30 a.m. at the York Region Administrative Centre Council Chambers, located at 17250 Yonge Street in the Town of Newmarket.

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