



Friday, June 25, 2010

For Immediate Release

## York Regional Council – June 24, 2010

### *York Region Annual Report*

York Regional Council received the 2009 Annual Report which documents the Region's financial performance related to the delivery of Regional programs and services. The 2009 Annual Report for Housing York Inc. is also included.

The report captures information on the accomplishments of York Regional Council, committees and staff, as well as audited financial statements.

Copies are available at the Information Kiosk in the York Region Administrative Centre, 17250 Yonge Street, Newmarket, or online at [www.york.ca](http://www.york.ca) under "Important Links".

### *The Regional Municipality of York AAA credit rating reaffirmed*

The Regional Municipality of York has maintained its AAA credit rating with Standard & Poor's for the ninth consecutive year.

Standard & Poor's cited York Region's sound financial operating results, cash and investment holdings as well as stable financial outlook as part of its analysis and positive rating.

York Region's favourable credit rating means that the Region will continue to benefit from favourable borrowing rates for financing major capital projects and servicing debt.

The Region also possesses a AAA credit rating from Moody's Investors Service, maintained since 2000.

### *York Region Community Environmental Centre wins prestigious award*

York Region Chairman and CEO Bill Fisch announced that The Regional Municipality of York has received the 2010 Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) Sustainable Community Award for the York Region McCleary Court Community Environmental Centre (CEC) in the City of Vaughan.

The McCleary Court CEC provides residents with a convenient location to drop off a variety of materials, including clothing, household electronics and appliances as well as construction waste.

### *York Regional Councillor Brenda Hogg re-elected to Federation of Canadian Municipalities*

Town of Richmond Hill Regional Councillor Brenda Hogg was re-elected to the National Board of Directors of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) at their annual conference on May 28<sup>th</sup>. Deputy Mayor Hogg was first elected to FCM's Board in 1997. Acting as the national voice of municipal governments, FCM has more than 1,775 members representing municipalities across Canada.

### ***York Region recognized for 2010 Clean Air and Climate Change Summit Achievement***

York Regional Chairman and CEO Bill Fisch and City of Vaughan Regional Councillor Joyce Frustaglio announced that The Regional Municipality of York has been recognized for our efforts to improve local air quality and reduce greenhouse gas emissions at the Clean Air Partnership's Clean Air and Climate Change Summit held earlier this month.

Among York Region's initiatives are:

- Promoting walking and biking through the Region's Pedestrian and Cycling Master Plan
- Adopting a minimum of a LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Silver standard for all new buildings and retrofitting existing facilities to be more energy efficient
- Managing more than 2,200 hectares of Regional Forest in 20 different tracts
- Promoting water conservation through our award-winning *Water for Tomorrow* program
- Encouraging people to leave their cars at home and take our Viva and YRT transit services

### ***York Region Social Services General Manager appointed president of OMSSA***

York Region General Manger of Social Services David Rennie was appointed President of the Ontario Municipal Social Services Association (OMSSA) at its annual conference held earlier this month.

Celebrating its 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary, OMSSA promotes policy development and program delivery in the areas of children's services, affordable housing, homelessness prevention and social assistance.

Mr. Rennie's appointment carries forward a tradition of York Region staff members who have served as OMSSA presidents. Past York Region presidents have included former CAO Alan Wells, former Commissioner of Community and Health Services Joann Simmons and current Commissioner of Community and Health Services Adelina Urbanski (during her tenure with Halton Region).

Joann Simmons was also honoured at the conference with a Lifetime Achievement Award for a legacy of contributions made over her 30-year career in municipal community services.

### ***Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Awareness Day***

York Region will recognize Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Awareness Day on September 9, 2010. Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Awareness Day promotes a better understanding about the dangers of drinking during pregnancy and the plight of individuals and families who struggle with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FSAD). People with FSAD are at high risk for learning disabilities, dropping out of school, drug and alcohol addiction, mental illness, unemployment and poverty.

### ***Appointment of an Associate Medical Officer of Health***

York Regional Council approved a bylaw for the appointment of Dr. Lilian Yuan as Associate Medical Officer of Health. The appointment will be made official upon approval by the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care.

## ***Development Charge bylaw amended for roads, water and wastewater costs***

York Regional Council approved an amendment to The Regional Municipality of York's 2007 Development Charge (DC) bylaw to better reflect growth-related capital infrastructure costs.

The rate changes were prompted by a study undertaken by York Region which determined that an estimated \$8.9 billion in development charges will be needed to build roads, water and wastewater infrastructure through to 2031, based on the Province of Ontario's *Places to Grow* population forecast and the Region's updated Transportation and Water and Wastewater Master Plans. The new DC rates take effect June 25<sup>th</sup> and will be phased-in as follows:

### **Single / Semi-Detached Family Dwelling**

June 25, 2010:	\$24,181
September 24, 2010:	\$26,181
January 10, 2011:	\$30,951 (fully phased-in)
June 18, 2011:	\$30,951 (plus indexing adjustment)

### **Multiple Unit Dwelling**

June 25, 2010:	\$19,993
September 24, 2010:	\$21,593
January 10, 2011:	\$25,604 (fully phased-in)
June 18, 2011:	\$25,604 (plus indexing adjustment)

### **Apartments (Two or more bedrooms)**

June 25, 2010:	\$15,054
September 24, 2010:	\$16,254
January 10, 2011:	\$19,284 (fully phased-in)
June 18, 2011:	\$19,284 (plus indexing adjustment)

### **Apartments (Less than two bedrooms)**

June 25, 2010:	\$9,732
September 24, 2010:	\$10,532
January 10, 2011:	\$12,459 (fully phased-in)
June 18, 2011:	\$12,459 (plus indexing adjustment)

### **Industrial/Office/Institutional (per square foot)**

June 25, 2010:	\$11.58
September 24, 2010:	\$11.58
January 10, 2011:	\$11.58
June 18, 2011:	\$13.58 (plus indexing adjustment)

\*Full rates for roads, water and wastewater with implementation of new DC bylaw in June 2012

### **Retail (per square foot)**

June 25, 2010:	\$22.87
September 24, 2010:	\$22.87
January 10, 2011:	\$22.87
June 18, 2011:	\$25.87 (plus indexing adjustment)

\*Full rates for roads, water and wastewater with implementation of new DC bylaw in June 2012

The DC rates for all property classes will be reviewed again in advance of the implementation of a new DC bylaw scheduled for June 2012.

### ***Status of Infrastructure Stimulus Fund Projects***

York Regional Council received an update on The Regional Municipality of York's 17 infrastructure projects approved under the Government of Canada's Infrastructure Stimulus Fund Program.

Substantial progress has been made on all York Region's Infrastructure Stimulus Fund projects with three projects complete to date:

- Bathurst Street resurfacing – Steeles Avenue to Centre Street
- Weston Road resurfacing – Langstaff Road to Rutherford Road
- Keele Street resurfacing – Rutherford Road to Major Mackenzie Drive

Three more projects are near completion:

- Dufferin Street resurfacing - Glen Shields Avenue to Langstaff Road
- Warden Avenue resurfacing – Steeles Avenue to McPherson Street
- Bathurst Street microsurfacing - Major Mackenzie Drive to King Road

Among York Region's key projects identified as part of the Stimulus funding, include:

- Richmond Hill Community Environmental Centre (CEC)
- Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Central Support Facility in the Town of East Gwillimbury
- Garfield Wright Material Recovery Facility upgrades in the Town of East Gwillimbury

Under the funding conditions, all projects must be substantially complete by March 31, 2011.

The total cost of these projects is estimated at \$79 million of which the Region will receive \$26 million or one-third funding from each of the federal and provincial governments. The Region is responsible to fund the remaining \$26 million total project costs.

The report detailing the status of all 17 projects can be accessed by clicking [here](#).

### ***Heavy Trucks on Nashville Road***

York Regional Council passed a bylaw to temporarily ban heavy trucks from using Nashville Road in the City of Vaughan, between Highway 27 and Highway 50 through to October 1, 2010.

The temporary ban is pending a review by York Region Transportation Services' staff to transfer Nashville Road from The Regional Municipality of York to the City of Vaughan.

### ***York Region Waste Management Master Plan moves forward***

York Regional Council endorsed a set of guiding themes for developing York Region's Integrated Waste Management Master Plan, which will direct York Region's management decisions over the next 25 years.

The themes include continued leadership in sustainable waste management, ongoing public transparency, environmental protection, municipal partnerships, informed and engaged communities, innovation and fiscal responsibility.

York Regional Council has approved \$1.3 million to develop the Terms of Reference and Master Plan. The Terms of Reference are expected to be completed later this year. The Master Plan process will begin in 2011.

### ***Dedicated Off-load Nursing Project continues***

York Region has received \$788,000 from the Government of Ontario to continue the Dedicated Off-load Nursing Project through to March 2011. The project secures dedicated emergency room nurses to speed patient off-load times from York Region Emergency Medical Services.

EMS off-load delays reduce the number of ambulances available in the community. Off-load times in York Region range between 75 and 100 minutes. York Region hopes to reduce the average delay to 30 minutes by 2014.

Since 2008, an average of 16 hours per ambulance has been freed daily. The new funding is expected to recover an additional 13 ambulance hours per day and recover \$1.9 million in service time.

### ***Rapid Risk Factor Surveillance System to provide health and lifestyle data for York Region***

York Regional Council approved a three-year service agreement with the Institute of Social Research for Rapid Risk Factor Surveillance System (RFSS) data for a three-year period from 2010 through 2012.

RFSS resident telephone surveys administered by the Institute for Social Service gather important community health and lifestyle data for the York Region Community and Health Services Department.

The cost for RFSS services for three years is approximately \$150,000 with 75 per cent of funding provided by the Government of Ontario.

### ***Viva Operations and Maintenance contract extended***

York Region has extended the Viva rapid transit operation and maintenance contract with York BRT Services LP to September 7, 2013 for an estimated cost of \$68,850,252.

The contract, which includes an option to negotiate two additional years, will also see the Region pay \$500,000 annually for a cost-shared vehicle maintenance program that will ensure ongoing service reliability and extend the service time of Viva vehicles.

### ***YRT/Viva Special Constable jurisdiction now extends into the City of Toronto***

York Region has amended the Joint Services Agreement between York Region and York Regional Police Services Board to extend the jurisdiction of York Region Transit (YRT)/Viva Special Constables to the City of Toronto. YRT/Viva Special Constables provide security, enforcement and customer service on YRT/Viva services throughout York Region, including those that cross the Steeles Avenue border travelling to and from the City of Toronto. The amendment allows YRT/Viva Special Constables full authority to enforce the Criminal Code of Canada and municipal bylaws south of Steeles Avenue.

### ***York Region to re-examine 12-year transit bus life***

York Region will re-examine the issue of retiring conventional transit buses after 12 years of service following the elimination of the Ontario Bus Replacement Program (OBRP) elimination in the 2010 Provincial Budget. Items for consideration in returning to the 12-year standard include experiences of other transit agencies, environmental considerations and impacts on the operating and 10-year capital budget.

York Region previously retired buses after 18 years of service, but revised this when OBRP funding become available in November 2009 towards the purchase of new buses. The province will honour 2010 OBRP subsidies of \$7.9 million toward the purchase of 51 transit buses being replaced this year.

### ***York Region, Brampton Transit partner on rapid transit service***

The Regional Municipality of York and the City of Brampton have partnered to offer a new integrated rapid transit service on Highway 7 between Highway 50 and York University. The service, which launches this September, will allow seamless, cross-boundary service on one-fare on York Region's Viva service and Brampton's new Zum service.

As part of the new agreement, Viva orange will continue to operate along Highway 7 between Martin Grove Road and York University, and Brampton Transit Zum service will be introduced along the Queen Street corridor between downtown Brampton and York University at a frequency of 7.5 minutes. YRT/Viva and Brampton Transit transfers will be accepted on both services.

### ***Watercourse identification signage in Town of Markham***

York Region will contribute \$10,800 towards a joint effort with the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority and the Town of Markham to install watercourse identification signs along Regional road rights-of-way within the Don and Rouge river watersheds.

The signs will be located within the Town of Markham. The cost for producing the signs will be paid by the Town of Markham, with the Region paying for installation costs.

The watercourse signs are part of an effort to raise awareness of the importance of rivers and streams to our environment and communities.

## ***York Regional Council approves Water Financial Plan in support of Walkerton Inquiry recommendations***

York Regional Council approved a Water Financial Plan to meet the requirements of the Government of Ontario's Safe Drinking Water Act. The Water Financial Plan will ensure that necessary funds are available over the long term to meet operating costs for our drinking water system.

### ***YRT/Viva summer service changes on the way***

The Regional Municipality of York will introduce more than 40 York Region Transit (YRT)/Viva summer service changes, effective Sunday, June 27. Residents are advised to use the YRT/Viva website and Customer Service Centre to stay informed and plan ahead.

Service changes include:

- Viva Blue "A" will operate five new trips in the morning and afternoon rush hours between Newmarket GO Bus Terminal and Finch GO Bus Terminal, bypassing Richmond Hill Centre Terminal
- All Viva routes and YRT Routes 4/4A, 20, 23, 54, 85 A/B, 88 A/E, 90/90B and 91 A/B/E will undergo schedule adjustments to better reflect actual trip times and ensure improved on-time service
- All High School Specials and school service trips are discontinued for the summer and will resume in September
- YRT Route 520/521 Newmarket Community Bus will be extended to three new locations: 155 Main Street, Tom Taylor Place and Magna Centre

### ***Co-ordinated road network plan***

York Regional Council received an update on road projects scheduled over the next several years to help accommodate growth in the northern portion of York Region. Some of the road improvements include:

- Highway 404 extension – Highway extension from Green Lane to Ravenshoe Road (Construction underway by Ontario Government)
- Woodbine Avenue – Reconstruction and widening (Construction underway)
- Bathurst Street "missing link" – Proposed road reconstruction, intersection improvements and bridge replacement on Bathurst Street between Green Lane West and Yonge Street (Construction to begin in 2012)
- Queensville Sideroad – Highway 404 interchange (Construction to begin 2013)
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Concession – Proposed road widening, reconstruction and intersection improvements (Construction to begin in 2014)
- Doane Road – Proposed road re-alignment (Construction to begin in 2015)
- Yonge Street corridor transit improvements

### **All new high-rise residential buildings in York Region to provide three-stream waste management**

York Regional Council approved a plan recommending a policy for area municipalities regarding three-stream waste collection in high-rise multi-family residential buildings by January 2011. Three-stream waste collection includes garbage, Blue Box recyclables and Green Bin organics. York Region will consult with area municipalities for implementing this initiative in new and existing buildings.

### ***New southeast roads maintenance depot***

York Region staff will work together with staff from the Town of Markham to complete a Municipal Class Environmental Assessment (EA) for a joint roads operations facility to address growth in the east end of the Region.

York Region currently operates four road depots in the Towns of Georgina, Richmond Hill, Whitchurch-Stouffville and the City of Vaughan. However, with the expansion of York Region's arterial road network from 2,450 lane kilometres in 1995 to an estimated 4,125 lane kilometres by 2020, further capacity is required, particularly for winter road maintenance.

York Region's lease on the Richmond Hill depot is set to expire in 2015, providing a timely opportunity to explore new road facility options.

A joint facility would allow for potential duplication of services to be reduced, while providing extra capacity to meet both municipal and Regional road operation needs.

### ***Mid-York transportation corridor***

York Region will move forward with a preliminary engineering and feasibility study to investigate potential east-west travel improvements along Highway 400 between Teston Road and Highway 9.

The Region's Transportation Master Plan identifies the need for east-west road improvements to address traffic growth and connectivity and traffic capacity issues. Currently, many of the east-west arterial roads in the study area are not continuous or provide limited access to Highway 400.

The study will determine the feasibility of adding another Highway 400 interchange, recommend a preliminary design and assess the potential environmental and socio-economic impacts that an interchange would bring to the area. Following the study, the Region plans to move forward with an Environmental Assessment.

### ***Climate Change Adaption Strategy***

York Regional Council has approved a work plan for the Climate Change Adaptation Strategy, which was identified as a priority in the Region's Sustainability Strategy. The Climate Change Adaptation Strategy work plan provides an outline of key tasks and timelines, an exploration of best management practices, risk management successes in other jurisdictions and the impacts to York Region which result from climate change impacts.

### ***York Region applies for provincial funding for manufacturing sector program***

York Region has submitted an application to the Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities to implement the Innovation in Manufacturing Program, a three-part strategy to assist in the revitalization of the manufacturing sector. York Region has a diverse economy, with manufacturing comprising 17 per cent of overall employment.

### ***York Regional Council endorses guide to foster community collaborations***

The Regional Municipality of York has released the *Community Collaborative Planning Guide: Weaving Collaboration into a Tapestry of Change*, a step-by-step educational tool for communities to increase collaboration. The guide includes 12 elements required to build a collaborative group, examples of organizational structures, testimonials and advice from individuals who were involved in collaborative models.

The guide will be posted on the website of the Human Services Planning Board, [www.york.ca/hspb](http://www.york.ca/hspb) and will be distributed to the broader community and local municipalities.

### ***York Regional Council endorses final Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority Watershed Plans***

York Regional Council endorsed in principle, the East and West Holland, Maskinonge and Black River Sub-Watershed Plans as outlined in the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan (ORMCP) and the Lake Simcoe Protection Plan.

The watershed plans were prepared by the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority and, together with the plans already prepared by Toronto and Region Conservation (TRCA), fulfil York Region's requirements to prepare watershed plans and water conservation and water budgets under the ORMCP.

The plans detail the sustainability of managing both ground and surface water, especially in new and intensifying areas of growth.

### ***York Region provides progress report on Vision 2026 and the York Region Sustainability Strategy***

York Regional Council has released *Vision 2026: Sustainability Progress Report 2009*, a report of the progress made by The Regional Municipality of York in implementing both the Region's *Vision 2026* and *Sustainability Strategy*.

*Vision 2026* and the *Sustainability Strategy* describe York Region's long-term vision for our communities. It outlines what York Region residents want to see happen over the next 25 years and the *Sustainability Strategy* provides the framework to implement this vision.

The progress report is organized in six areas from the *Sustainability Strategy*: Corporate Culture of Sustainability; Healthy Communities; Economic Vitality; Sustainable Natural Environment; Education and Partnerships; Sustainability Implementation and Monitoring.

*Vision 2026: Sustainability Progress Report 2009* will be distributed to the public, stakeholders and local municipalities and will be available online at [www.york.ca](http://www.york.ca). To obtain a copy, please contact Dawn Seetaram at 905 830-4444, Ext. 1570.

### ***York Region to plan 40-year vision***

York Regional Council endorsed a 40-year timeframe for the next update to The Regional Municipality of York's vision statement, currently known as *Vision 2026*.

While commemorating the past 40 years since 1971 when the Region was incorporated, the Region's next vision exercise will ask residents to look forward 40 years to the year 2051 to describe the kind of Region they want to exist.

Vision 2026 outlined what York Region residents wanted to see occur over the next 25 years. Since its release in 2002, both the Province and York Region have developed key initiatives that influence the way the Region conducts business.

To keep pace with these developments, York Regional Council wants to ensure our vision statement reflects and builds on recent successes, including innovative and progressive concepts in sustainability that are already incorporated, or will be, over the coming years.

Like Vision 2021 before it, Vision 2026 was based on direct input from residents, stakeholders and regional staff. Similarly, a consultation will occur throughout the remainder of this year and an updated vision document, Vision 2051, will be completed for York Regional Council's approval next year.

The new vision will build on key policies, including the Sustainability Strategy, the Regional Official Plan, Climate Change Discussion Paper and the Best Practices for New Communities Discussion Paper.

### ***Next meeting of York Regional Council***

York Regional Council will meet on Thursday, September 23 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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