



York Regional Council Highlights

Thursday, September 22, 2005

Regional Council recognizes Child Care Worker & Early Childhood Educator Appreciation Day Wednesday, October 26th, 2005

Regional Council will recognize Wednesday, October 26th, 2005, as Child Care Worker & Early Childhood Educator Appreciation Day in recognition of the influence, dedication and commitment of child care workers to children, their families and the quality of life of the community.

Requested by the Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care and the Canadian Union of Public Employees, the resolution states that according to recent studies, trained and knowledgeable Early Childhood Educators and child care workers are the most important element in quality child care, and good wages and working conditions are associated with higher job satisfaction and morale and lower staff turnover. All result in higher quality care.

Regional Council endorses 2014 Commonwealth Games bid

Regional Council formally endorsed a plan to bid for the 2014 Commonwealth Games. With Regional Council's endorsement, York Region will now move forward with the preparation of an official bid package to national bid organizers – Commonwealth Games Canada (CGC).

It is estimated that the economic impact of the Commonwealth Games for York Region would be over \$3 billion in sport facilities and transportation infrastructure, accompanied by business investment and visitor spending. There could be up to 4,000 person years of employment in facility preparation and construction.

The Games will attract substantial federal and provincial government commitment, as well as corporate support. Hosting the Games will create a sporting legacy for York Region, and accelerate our plans for York Region Transit and Viva Rapid Transit, Regional roads construction and streetscaping initiatives.



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York Region's Emergency Management Program approved by province

York Region's Emergency Management Program received a formal nod of approval from the province in the form of a presentation to Council from Emergency Management Commissioner Julian Fantino.

Commissioner Fantino presented Regional Council with a certificate acknowledging the Region's Emergency Management Program met 'Essential Level' requirements of the Ontario *Emergency Management Act*.

To meet this level of compliance, the Region developed and implemented a comprehensive emergency management program, adopted by Regional Council by bylaw on December 16, 2004.

York Regional staff worked diligently with provincial and municipal counterparts to ensure that York Region has emergency plans in place that take into account numerous types of occurrences and the appropriate responses for each.

Regional Council covers shortfall for eEmergency sShelters

To fill the gap created by inadequate provincial per diem funding, Regional Council approved increases to Emergency Shelter expenditures associated with Leeder Place and Sutton Multi-Service Youth Centre. In 2005, \$56,000 will be managed within the 2005 budget, and \$496,000 for inclusion in the 2006 budget to be approved by Council during its budget deliberations. These expenditures are necessary to fill the gap created by inadequate provincial per diem funding.

Council also gave the go-ahead to prepare the new shelter beds at the Sutton Multi-Service Youth Centre opening for this coming winter, and to enter into agreements with Transitional and Supportive Housing Services of York Region (TSHSYR) and the Governing Council of the Salvation Army of Canada to deliver emergency shelter services.

Emergency Shelters provide critical supports to York Region's residents in crisis. They provide the stability needed for individuals and families to keep jobs, go to school and have the supports they need to re-establish stable, long-term housing in the community.



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York Region to expand child care services

York Region received new funds totalling \$67.1 million to expand child care services across the Region. Details of the Region's Best Start plan were confirmed in a report to the Regional Council today.

The new funding will apply over a 2-½-year period beginning October 2005 through March 2008, and will include:

- \$44.7 million to increase the number of child care fee subsidies, increase the number of children with special needs receiving services and increase wages for Early Childhood Practitioners
- \$22.4 million to expand the number of licensed child care spaces in York Region

Best Start is an early learning and care strategy designed to provide Ontario's children with the best possible start in life so they may achieve success in school. The initiative, which will be phased in over the next 10 years, is comprised of a number of components, including the expansion of the licensed child care system.

The \$67.1 million in provincial funding will allow York Region to add some 1,500 new child care fee subsidies for children up to five years of age, and to administer funding to child care operators to create 1,480 additional child care spaces by March 2008. It will also help increase wages for Early Childhood Practitioners.

Regional Council recognizes Biotech week

Regional Council will recognize September 26 - 30, 2005 as Biotech Week in York Region as part of ImaGENEnation, the National Biotech Week celebration.

York Region is committed to encouraging the development and nurturing of the biotechnology sector through YORKbiotech, a partnership that includes York University, the National Research Council/Industrial Research Assistance Program, the Town of Markham and York Region.

With its YORKbiotech partners, York Region will celebrate National Biotech Week with students by providing tours of local biotech companies. The partners will also host a special event for businesses, academia and government in the Markham Civic Centre September 29th.



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York Region to promote influenza immunization

Regional Council adopted a strategy to improve the uptake of influenza immunization in the community and by health care workers employed by hospitals and long-term care homes in the Region during the 2005–2006 influenza season.

Influenza is a highly contagious virus that is a leading cause of respiratory illness. In Canada, the influenza season typically runs from November to April, and an estimated 10-25 per cent of Canadians may contract influenza each year. Influenza can cause significant morbidity, particularly in children under the age of two, people over 65, and people with underlying health conditions.

Transmission of influenza in hospitals and long-term care homes has been well documented, with significant impacts on patient and resident morbidity and mortality. However, the uptake of influenza immunization among health care workers remains purely voluntary as there is no current Federal or Provincial legislation on mandatory vaccination.

For a list of strategies to be implemented this flu season, see [Influenza Immunization In York Region](#).

Progress Report: Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan Watershed Planning Studies

Regional Council received and approved a semi-annual progress report on watershed planning studies submitted by the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority (LSRCA) and the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA). These reports fulfill requirements of the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan (ORMCP).

LSRCA and TRCA have been active in developing and maintaining watershed plans in York Region for many years. With the introduction of the ORMCP, staffs of the Region and conservation authorities developed a comprehensive five-year work plan to fulfill the ORMCP watershed planning requirements.

The target date for the completion of watershed plans is April 23, 2007. Approximately \$1.6 million remains in the budget for watershed planning to be spent before 2007.



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York Region adopts 2006 tourism marketing program

Regional Council adopted in principle the components of the 2006 Tourism Marketing Program, subject to the approval of the 2006 economic development operating budget.

York Region tourism supports industries such as accommodation, food and beverage, culture, recreation, entertainment, transportation and retail. In 2004, York Region welcomed 2.5 million visitors spending \$184 million on tourism activities which contributed \$136.7 million in GDP and 2,500 jobs in the Region. These jobs generated \$73.1 million in wages and salaries and \$5.8 million in area municipal taxes.

The Region's tourism program recovers revenues through advertising sales and sponsorships. In 2005, the Council-approved gross tourism operating budget was \$422,163. The Region's budget is offset by advertising revenues budgeted at \$150,000 which would result in a net expenditure of \$272,163.

In 2005, the Region's tourism program was enhanced with a \$250,000 Destination Marketing Fee funding partnership with Tourism Toronto. In 2006, if approved, the second year of the program will provide \$350,000 for promotional activities identified in the memorandum of understanding with Tourism Toronto.

The purpose of York Region's tourism program is to develop and deliver an integrated, research-driven marketing strategy in partnership with industry stakeholders to ensure the growth and sustainability of the region's tourism industry. The 2006 program identifies activities that provide the tourism industry with specific information and analysis while facilitating partnerships to strengthen competitiveness and build developmental and investment opportunities. The program supports and augments emerging local municipal tourism efforts to foster strong urban and rural communities. For details, please see the [Report](#).



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Update to Council: the Economy of York Region

When developing the Economic Strategy, *The Economy of York Region* report was prepared to provide an estimate of the scale and diversity of the Region's economy. This summer, an update was prepared.

Following are some highlights:

- In 2004, York Region generated an estimated \$37.5 billion of output. The Region's economy is greater than each of the Atlantic Provinces.
- York Region's share of the Ontario population in 2004 was about 7.1% while York Region's contribution to Provincial GDP was slightly above 7.2%.
- Between 1991 and 2004, York Region's Real GDP grew 112%, compared with 56% for Ontario. The Region's rapid growth is indicative of a vibrant economic and business environment.
- In December 2004, there were 89,876 enterprises in York Region, up 13% from 2003. Of the total number of enterprises, 57,932 had no payroll employees, i.e. were owner-managed. This represents an increase of 20% compared to 2003, which underscores the strong entrepreneurial capabilities of the Region's population and a very positive environment for business creation.
- Small firms remained the dominant form of enterprise in York Region, with approximately 94% of the firms employing less than 20 employees.
- Larger firms with over 100 employees grew by 10% compared to 2003, with the largest increase (28.3%) in enterprises with over 500 employees. This growth reflects a strong and robust economy which can attract new, large enterprise as well as accommodate the growth of local firms.
- The growth in the number of enterprises is seen across all industry sectors, which reinforces the strength of York Region's diversified economic base.
- In 2003, there were 2,640 exporters in York Region, exporting total commodity value in the \$10 billion range. The Region is not dependent on one or two leading industries. This diversity makes it less vulnerable to the cyclical downturns of top performers.
- Manufacturing exports account for over 37% of York Region's GDP and is vital to the growth of its economy.
- Based on data from Statistics Canada, the Region's manufacturing sector was comprised of 2,619 establishments in 2002, employing 65,138 production workers and 18,193 administrative employees. In total, \$3.6 billion in salaries and wages were paid to these employees, while \$9.4 billion was spent on material and supplies, and \$196 million for fuel and electricity. Shipments from the Region's manufacturing sector totalled \$18 billion, with the value added portion accounting for over \$8.4 billion.



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York Region's inventory of vacant employment land is updated

Regional Council received and approved the 2005 Vacant Employment Land Inventory, which is the first complete update to the regional inventory of the supply and demand of employment lands in York Region since 2001.

After the encumbered lands and industry on private services lands are excluded from the analysis, there are currently 1,754 net hectares (4,336 net acres), or an 11.8 year supply of vacant employment land in York Region.

There are long term supply issues in some municipalities. The City of Vaughan accounts for 48% of the total inventory and the local municipalities of Aurora, Newmarket and Richmond Hill are approaching complete build-out.

Another challenge is how to address 400-series highways, main corridors and extensions. The 400 Series Highways are extremely important for employment lands from a strategic location and market accessibility point of view. The pressure to re-designate lands along these corridors to residential uses will continue to be great. It is important to ensure these strategically located lands are preserved for employment uses in the long term. It is also critical to make investments in transportation and servicing infrastructure in a timely manner so the lands are available to meet the demands of the marketplace.

The Employment and Industry Report 2004

Regional Council received the Employment and Industry Report 2004, a summary of Regional employment growth and economic development, and directed staff to circulate it in print and electronic form to the public, area municipalities and agencies, and to make it available on the corporate Web site.

The report provides analysis of the information gathered in the 2004 York Region Employment Survey, which monitors the location, type and characteristics of businesses in York Region, provides insight into the business and employment opportunities across the Region and monitors global economic trends and their impacts on the Regional economy.

Employment growth is on target with projections and exceeds both national and provincial averages. It is estimated that there are approximately 27,000 businesses employing 440,000 people in York Region in 2004. York Region's continued business expansion across a variety of industry sectors contributes to an already broad-based economy, insulating the Region from sudden shifts in the business cycle.

In addition, the information collected through the survey is used as background data for various purposes,



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such as land use planning, forecasting servicing requirements (e.g., transit, wastewater servicing), infrastructure planning and coordinating services. To view data highlights, please see the [Report](#).

Council update: Smart Commute Initiative 2004-05

Regional Council received an update on the Smart Commute Initiative and the development of transportation management associations in York Region.

The Smart Commute Initiative delivers transportation demand management programs and services to the Greater Toronto Area and Hamilton. The objective is to change travel behaviour by reducing single occupant vehicle trips. This is achieved by promoting a variety of programs that encourage more efficient use of existing transportation infrastructure and services. Strategies include ride-matching for carpooling, guaranteed emergency ride home, employer vanpools and a regional marketing and education campaign.

Transportation management associations are non-profit, member-controlled organizations aimed at providing sustainable transportation solutions as well as improved mobility and accessibility in a specific development area. In conjunction with the Towns of Richmond Hill and Markham, a new association centred on the areas surrounding the interchange at Highways 404 and 7 was developed and launched in July 2004. The programs and services of Smart Commute 404-7 are being delivered through the Markham Board of Trade and the Richmond Hill Chamber of Commerce.

Regional staff is working with Town of Newmarket staff and politicians to develop a new transportation management association centred on Newmarket. A draft work plan has been developed and a working committee of municipal and private sector staff has been formed. Its first stakeholder meeting involving private sector, institutional sector and municipal staff was held in July. This new association is expected to be launched later this year.

As an employer, York Region has taken steps to further its commitment to establish transportation demand management as an integral component of York Region's Transportation Master Plan. York Region has set up a transportation demand management program as a part of its employee benefits package. The programs now available to employees include transit ticket discount, compressed work week and flexible work hours.



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Adaptive Control Signal Control corridor selection

Regional Council received a report recommending Kennedy Road between Steeles Avenue and Highway 7 be selected for a pilot project on the use of Adaptive Traffic Signal Control (ATSC) technology. This technology allows for monitoring of traffic patterns and changes traffic signal timing in response to changing on-street traffic volume.

In March 2005, Regional Council entered into an agreement with Transport Canada for funding of 50 per cent up to \$250,000, for an ATSC pilot under Canada's Intelligent Transportation Systems Deployment and Integration Plan. Since March, York Region staff has made a preliminary list of intersections that could benefit from the ATSC technology.

Kennedy Road was selected from among five intersections under consideration based on a detailed analysis of traffic patterns, including a focus on major corridors in the south of the Region, areas that generate a great deal of traffic and where there are frequent traffic fluctuations.

The pilot is expected to start in 2006 with possible expansion should the technology produce a reduction in traffic congestion.

YDSS Interceptor Sewer update

York Regional Council received an update report of the progress of the 19th Avenue/YDSS Interceptor Sewer project, which included:

- Acknowledgement of 19th Avenue as the preferred route
- Submission of the preferred route to the Peer Review group and Ministry of Environment (MOE) for consideration
- 60 per cent completion of the detailed work

York Region staff is currently reviewing and addressing preliminary comments from the Peer Review team on fisheries and hydrogeological data, understanding that the Peer Review has deemed York Region's extensive technical assessments to have gone well beyond the normal scope of work.

York Region will continue its public consultation process in October. The Peer Review report will be available to the public prior to an anticipated November tendering of the work and subsequent awarding of the work in December, pending MOE approval.



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Greening Vaughan strategy

Regional Council approved \$50,000 to support the City of Vaughan's Greening Strategy, which includes reduction of residual waste and the implementation of a source separated organics (SSO) program for kitchen waste in 2006.

The funds will be used for public education on issues of garbage bag limits, changes to blue box pickup and the implementation of SSO collection.

Update on Kraft bag for yard waste

Regional Council received an update report on the progress on the use of Kraft bags for the collection of yard waste.

York Region banned the use of plastic bags for the collection of yard waste in January. The move to biodegradable paper (Kraft) bags will save the Region an estimated \$200,000 in processing costs.

To date, public response has been overwhelmingly positive about the change with only five per cent of the nearly 1,100 calls to the Region's hotline related to the use of Kraft bags.

York Region's new Waste Management Centre diverts more recyclables from landfill

Three months after opening York Region's new Waste Management Centre, a facility in East Gwillimbury that allows for expanded processing of mixed Blue Box materials, York Region is capturing significantly more recyclables.

Data collected by York Region following the July opening of the state-of-the-art centre shows that the Region has collected over 13,500 tonnes of Blue Box recyclables; a full 1,000 tonnes more than that captured during the same period in 2004.

York Region will continue to promote the new recycling program this fall with a series a colourful multimedia advertising campaigns including advertisements in newspapers, York Region Transit and outdoor signage.



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York Region negotiates contracts for organic waste processing

Regional Council today approved contracts for Orgaworld B.V. and Conestoga-Rovers and Associates, and Miller Waste Systems, to process organic waste as part of a nearly \$4.7 million package designed to meet the Region's expanding source separated organics (SSO) and yard waste needs.

Under the new agreements:

- Orgaworld B.V. and Conestoga-Rovers and Associates will process up to 30,000 tonnes of SSO per year at a new facility to be constructed and operational by September 2006. The 10-year contract is for an initial price not to exceed \$122.44 per tonne.
- Orgaworld B.V. and Conestoga-Rovers and Associates will provide emergency capacity of up to 30,000 tonnes per year for 10 years, at an initial price not to exceed \$111.92 per tonne.
- Miller Waste Systems will provide a free residential public drop-off and processing capacity of up to 25,000 tonnes of yard waste at their Richmond Hill facility, starting in April 2006. The contract is for 10 years at an initial price not to exceed \$59.92 per tonne. As part of the arrangement, York Region will contribute \$30,000 to assist with site improvements for the public drop-off.
- Miller Waste Systems will provide contingency yard waste capacity to the Region this fall, and sell compost to local municipalities and the Region for compost giveaway days at a reduced price.

The new contracts will coincide with the expiration of the Region's current SSO processing contracts. However, the Region will extend its contract with GSI Environmental Ltd. for processing of up to 12,000 tonnes per year as a contingency capacity.

Funding of 2005 property tax capping requirements

Regional Council authorized the Regional Solicitor to prepare the necessary by-law to give effect to the following clawback rates for the 2005 taxation year:

Property class clawback rate	
Multi-residential	99.0517 %
Commercial	73.5886 %
Industrial	81.1286 %

The calculation of the clawback percentages, applicable to 2005 for each of the three protected classes, is based on assessment data provided by Online Property Tax Analysis (OPTA). In consultation with local treasurers, OPTA was requested to limit data entry to those updates received prior to June 1, 2005 and freeze further adjustments to this data as of June 30, 2005.



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2005 Business Plan and Budget

Regional Council received for information a report outlining mid-year program highlights and financial results. Report highlights include:

Operating programs

- York Region's 2005 gross operating budget is \$971 million of which 97% is projected to be spent by year-end.
- As of June 30, 2005, 89% of the year to date gross operating budget has been expended.
- Transportation and Works is forecasting a \$600,000 unfavourable variance by year end, with \$700,000 in Roads Transportation and \$700,000 in Solid Waste Management, offset by a \$800,000 favourable variance in Transit.
- GTA Pooling is expected to be \$600,000 over budget.
- Viva Rapid Transit is projecting a favourable variance of \$400,000.
- Police are forecasting a \$500,000 favourable variance.
- Community Services and Housing has forecasted a \$2.1 million favourable variance.
- Net operating expenditures (tax levy funded) are 90% of budget at mid-year and are estimated to be 99% of budget at year-end.

Capital programs

- York Region's 2005 gross capital expenditure budget including funds approved in previous years of \$323 million is \$900 million of which 94% is dedicated for Transit, Roads Transportation, Solid Waste and Water and Wastewater. The remaining expenditures are primarily for Police, Emergency Medical Services, Long Term Care and Housing Services.
- At mid year, 33% of budgeted capital projects are tendered, under construction or complete, and approximately 73% of total capital projects are deemed to be on schedule.
- At year end, gross capital expenditures are projected to total 75% of the budget.

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