



# York Regional Council Highlights



The Regional Municipality of York



May 24, 2007 Meeting

## Development Charge By-Law Enacted

York Regional Council today approved enactment of a by-law to establish revised York Region development charges (DCs) for construction of new residential and industrial / commercial / institutional properties. The DC by-law, which comes into effect on June 18, 2007 and replaces the current by-law (which expires on June 22, 2007), will help The Regional Municipality of York recover a greater share of the costs associated with growth-related services and infrastructure.

Full cost recovery rates under the newly enacted by-law (which include the TTC Subway expansion into York Region), broken down by property class are as follows:

- **Single / Semi-Detached Family Dwelling** – \$22,157 (an increase of \$5,908)
  - **Multiple Unit Residential Dwelling** – \$18,317 (an increase of \$4,471)
  - **Apartment (Two or more Bedrooms)** – \$13,792 (an increase of \$3,635)
  - **Apartments (Less than Two Bedrooms)** – \$8,917 (an increase of \$2,457)
  - **Industrial/Office/Institutional** – \$10.93 per square foot of gross floor area (\*an increase of \$6.96)
  - **Retail** – \$21.58 per square foot of gross floor area (\*an increase of \$13.69)
- \*factors in the elimination of discounting / credits*

Cost recovery phase-ins periods broken down by property class are as follows:

### Residential (all types)

- 25 per cent of rate and 2/3 of subway portion, effective June 18, 2007
- full cost recovery rate on September 18, 2007 for singles, semis and multiples
- full cost recovery rate on December 18, 2007 for apartments

### Industrial/Office/Institutional

- 10 per cent of rate and 2/3 of subway portion, effective June 18, 2007
- full cost recovery rate phased in over three years

### Retail

- 25 per cent of rate and 2/3 of subway portion, effective June 18, 2007
- full cost recovery rates phased in over one year

The new by-law comes into effect June 18, 2007 and expires June 17, 2012.

## 31<sup>st</sup> Annual Easter Seals Run/Walkathon to take place Sunday, May 27<sup>th</sup>

York Regional Council received for information a presentation by Bruno Tombari, Member of the Executive Volunteer Committee and Kaitlyn Lenchak, a 13 ½ year old, town of Aurora resident and Easter Seals Ambassador, regarding the annual Easter Seals Run/Walkathon.

The Annual Easter Seals Run/Walkathon, founded by local entrepreneur and philanthropist, Joe Persechini, will kick off its 31<sup>st</sup> year this Sunday, May 27<sup>th</sup>. The Run/Walkathon has raised more than \$3 million to date for Easter Seals, a charitable foundation dedicated to helping children and young adults with physical disabilities. Honourary Co-Chairs of the Run/Walkathon are York Region Chairman and CEO Bill Fisch and Town of Newmarket Mayor Tony Van Bynen.

## **Town of Markham Mayor Frank Scarpitti Appointed to Police Services Board**

York Regional Council today approved the appointment of Town of Markham Mayor Frank Scarpitti to the York Regional Police Services Board. The appointment takes effect Friday, May 25<sup>th</sup>, 2007. Mayor Scarpitti assumes to role from Town of Richmond Hill Mayor Dave Barrow.

## **More than 17 million riders depend on YRT/Viva annually**

York Region Transit (YRT) and Viva Rapid Transit continue to enjoy ridership gains with a year-to-date increase of 8.2 per cent. More than 4.5 million passengers have used either YRT or Viva this year (January to March) compared to 4.2 million passengers for the same time period in 2006. Every weekday, approximately 63,000 trips are made on the YRT/Viva system (based on 2007 January - March statistics).

YRT's Mobility Plus door-to-door service is also enjoying ridership gains in 2006 with more than 72,000 individuals using the service, an 8.2 per cent increase over 2006.

YRT and Viva operate as a single system, with Viva operating rapid transit service in four key corridors along Yonge Street and Highway 7. YRT transports passengers throughout the Region and acts as a "feeder" service to Viva. YRT also operates the door-to-door Mobility Plus service for individuals with disabilities

For more information on YRT and Viva routes and fares, please visit [www.yrt.ca](http://www.yrt.ca) or call toll-free at 1-866-MOVE-YRT (668-3978), locally at (905) 881-5167 or TTY line at 1-866-276-7478. For information on Viva Rapid Transit please visit [www.vivayork.com](http://www.vivayork.com)

## **York Region to recognize Community Living Month**

York Regional Council endorsed a request by Community Living Georgina to recognize May 2007 as Community Living Month.

In celebration of Community Living Month, Community Living Georgina will hold a provincial public awareness campaign titled *Kids Belong Together!* to highlight the educational needs of children with an intellectual disability in the classroom.

## **York Region to recognize National Access Awareness Week**

York Regional Council today endorsed a motion by Georgina Regional Councillor Danny Wheeler to recognize May 28-June 1, 2007 as National Access Awareness Week.

National Access Awareness Week was established in 1988 in response to a request from Rick Hansen following his Man in Motion World Tour, to promote better access for people with disabilities. The week serves as a reminder of the importance for all individuals, businesses and government partners to work together to promote an inclusive and barrier-free community.

### **York Region re-names a portion of Yonge Street to avoid confusion for emergency services**

In an effort to eliminate confusion for emergency services, York Regional Council has approved a motion to re-name sections of Yonge Street in the Town of East Gwillimbury to differentiate between adjoining sections of roadway with the same name.

Through an agreement reached with East Gwillimbury, the following changes will be made:

- Yonge Street (YR 1) from Morningside Road to the York/Simcoe boundary will become Highway 11
- Holland Landing Road (YR 83) from Yonge Street/Highway 11 (YR 1) to Yonge Street/Holland Landing Road (YR 83) will become Yonge Street
- Yonge Street (YR 13) from Holland Landing Road (YR 83) to Bradford Street (YR 13) will be confirmed as Yonge Street and renumbered YR 51.

Affected residents will be advised of the change, and new signage with the revised street names will be installed.

### **York Region to install fluorescent signs in school zones**

York Regional Council today endorsed a plan to install fluorescent yellow green signs in school zones to increase visibility in these high pedestrian traffic areas.

The signs will be installed in addition to, or in certain instances, in place of the traditional blue and white signs. The new colour will create uniformity with other local jurisdictions that have switched to the new fluorescents, as well as increase visibility in low light conditions.

### **The Regional Municipality of York assists 33,000 residents with 38 services purchased through \$2.5 million investment from the Community Development and Investment Fund**

York Regional Council today received a report regarding 38 purchased community support services that will benefit more than 33,000 York Region residents. In 2006, Council had approved the purchase of \$2.5 million in services through York Region's Community Development and Investment Fund (CDIF).

The CDIF strategy focuses on three main areas of community programs and services for York Region residents:

- Child and family supports
- Services to the homeless and prevention of homelessness
- Employment skill development

Examples of 2006 successes include:

- The York Region Food for Learning and Family Day Care Services provided breakfast, snack and/or emergency lunch programs to an additional 19,200 school children in need
- The Canadian Mental Health Association's ID Clinic helped more than 1,200 individuals and families who are homeless or who have little or no income to acquire personal identification needed to obtain necessary services such as health care, income and employment supports and housing
- The York Region Food Network's Community Kitchen provided training to more than 200 low income women, teaching them new, economical and safe ways of cooking

## **Rental housing report confirms high cost and low vacancy rate of York Region rental market**

York Regional Council received a report providing information about the findings of *Where's Home? 2006 – A Picture of Housing Needs in Ontario*, an examination of the rental market in Ontario. The study was published by the Ontario Non-Profit Housing Association (ONPHA) in partnership with the Co-operative Housing Federation of Canada (CHF).

This report is the eighth annual examination of rental markets in Ontario. This year's publication is the first that separately tracks York Region's data. It shows that York Region has among the highest rental cost increases over time, combined with the lowest vacancy rate over time, of any municipality surveyed.

Only 13.7 per cent of the housing stock in the Region is rental, the lowest percentage in the GTA.

The production of rental housing has been very limited in York Region when compared to other municipalities in Ontario. Between 1996 and 2005, the annual average number of rental units completed in York Region is 27, compared to 616 in Toronto, 340 in Ottawa and 163 in Peel.

This lack of rental housing may impact on the continued economic growth and prosperity of the Region. As noted in the 2004 Regional publication *Housing and our Economy – Remaining Competitive*, a significantly high proportion of in-commuters to the Region live in multi-residential units that are outside of the Region. As indicated in that study, an increased supply of affordable housing is critical to maintaining York Region's economic competitiveness and high quality of life.

## **The Regional Municipality of York donates decommissioned ambulance to Ecuador**

York Regional Council today authorized the donation of a York Region Emergency Medical Services (EMS) ambulance with supplies and equipment decommissioned from service, to the country of Ecuador through the Friends of Ecuador. The expense for shipping, permits and related costs will be covered by the Friends of Ecuador.

In 2002, and 2005, York Region EMS donated decommissioned ambulances and surplus medical supplies to Ecuador through Friends of Ecuador, as a not-for-profit Ontario organization.

York Region EMS ambulances are required to be replaced based on an established life cycle of 54 months, or when the mileage exceeds 250,000 kilometres. To maintain the vehicle fleet and comply with the legislative required preventative maintenance program under the Ambulance Act, York Region EMS has in place a 10-year Capital Vehicle Replacement Plan based on Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (MOHLTC) vehicle standards and a performance-based service delivery model.

This year, as part of its vehicle replacement strategy, York Region EMS will decommission nine ambulances, which normally are put up for auction annually through an approved vendor.

The Regional Municipality of York once again has an opportunity to provide those less fortunate than us with a much needed emergency vehicle, equipment and supplies.

## **York Regional Council today endorsed recommendations to regulate trans fat**

York Regional Council today endorsed Health Canada's Trans Fat Task Force recommendations to phase-in regulations that limit trans fat in our foods.

Industrially produced trans fats are created by the partial hydrogenation of unsaturated, liquid fats. The resultant fats are semi-solid, making them ideal for spreads. They are also more stable, meaning they do not spoil as readily and are much cheaper than natural fats. Partially hydrogenated fats are also ideal for use when flaky, crispy and more tender characteristics are desired in the food product.

Significant sources of trans fat in our food supply include:

- shortening
- stick margarines
- commercially-manufactured donuts, cakes, and cookies
- crackers
- microwave popcorn
- french fries
- soup mixes
- hot chocolate mixes
- breaded and fried foods
- coffee whiteners

High intakes of trans fat increase LDL (bad) cholesterol and decrease the HDL (good) cholesterol. This raises an individual's risk of heart disease. A systematic review of studies of trans fats published in the New England Journal of Medicine in 2006 found that a two per cent increase in energy intake from trans fatty acids was associated with a 23 per cent increase in the incidence of coronary heart disease.

In their 2002 report, the Institute of Medicine stated that there is no safe level for trans fat and recommended that intake be as low as possible. The World Health Organization (WHO) and the American Heart Association recommend that less than one per cent of total calories come from trans fat, which is equivalent to about two grams per day.

Canadian intake of trans fat is one of the highest in the world. Research from Health Canada finds that the average Canadian intake of trans fat is 8.4 grams per day, which is about 10 per cent of daily calories. Even more alarming is that young men aged 18 to 34 are estimated to eat 39 grams of trans fat per day.

York Region's support of the Trans Fat Task Force's recommendations, along with support from several other municipal health units in Ontario, may provide the needed endorsement to further the legislation so that it can be enacted into law.

## **York Regional Council requests acceleration of GTA West Transportation Corridor environmental assessment study**

York Regional Council today received a report explaining the environmental assessment study of the GTA West Transportation Corridor that was recently initiated by the Ministry of Transportation (MTO).

The purpose of the environmental assessment study is to identify and protect a transportation corridor, the GTA West Corridor, from Guelph east to the City of Vaughan. The eastern terminus of this new highway corridor is expected to be Highway 400.

Regional Council requested that provincial ministries involved be asked to expedite the GTA West Corridor and other environmental assessments that are needed to meet the Provincial Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, and to work with York Region and other affected municipalities to investigate other processes and mechanisms that will allow the Province to plan and protect the GTA West Corridor within a two-year period.

An earlier completion of the GTA West Corridor EA will facilitate an earlier definition of land use designations in the northern part of Vaughan.

## **Spadina Subway extension study evaluates development potential**

York Regional Council today endorsed *Spadina Subway Extension Study: Development Forecast for Proposed City of Vaughan Subway Stations*, a consultant's report on the development potential on properties adjacent to proposed stations on the Spadina subway extension into York Region.

The study examines existing policies and market potential and undertook a detailed property analysis within the context of the broader market. The study provides an independent, market-based estimate of the physical development potential around the proposed subway stations to the year 2036. These development numbers will provide the basis on which Tax Increment Financing (TIF) and Development Charge (DC) reviews will be calculated. The study represents "due diligence" on the part of the Region to ensure the development numbers are fundamentally sound and realistic.

The development potential provides a basis to assess the financial ability of the Region and City of Vaughan to finance York Region's portion of the subway costs through development charges, tax increment financing and tax levies. A further report will specifically address these financing issues.

The results of the market analysis undertaken demonstrate there is significant potential to evolve station and corridor areas into transit-oriented, mixed use, high density areas. The estimated seven to eight million square feet of additional development over a 30-year period resulting from the Spadina Subway Extension is significant.

## **New appointees to York Region Tourism Advisory Group to give direction to a long term regional tourism destination development strategy**

York Regional Council today authorized the York Region Chairman to appoint members for a second term to the York Region Tourism Advisory Group and endorsed a report outlining the development of a long term regional tourism destination development strategy.

In 2004, Tourism industry representatives were appointed to the York Region Tourism Advisory Group for a three year term, which has now expired. Staff will work through the Regional Chairman's Office to identify and appoint 12 industry stakeholders for a three year term (2007-2009). Town of Markham Regional Councillor Tony Wong was appointed in December 2006. The Advisory Group will play an integral role in providing leadership and direction throughout the project.

Developing a long term regional destination strategy requires a process that engages local municipalities in the formulation of strategies that ensure the most appropriate and sustainable opportunities are developed. The strategy will:

- Provide a regional strategic vision to bring about economic vitality
- Provide direction on economic development opportunities with respect to tourism
- Define areas of potential locations across the Region for development that supports tourism
- Identify potential tourism investment opportunities
- Explore public/private partnership opportunities that the Region and local municipalities could establish and promote as destinations for recreation and tourism

The strategy will build on the findings of the Premier Ranked Tourist Destination research project that York Region undertook in 2006.

The process to create a long term tourism strategy will occur in two phases. Phase one, to be completed by the end of the first quarter of 2008, will define the long term regional tourism strategy. Phase two will establish a unique marketing and brand identity for York Region as a viable tourism destination.

The strategy development process will include research, analysis and industry consultation leading to the formulation of strategic policies, key objectives and recommended actions. An examination of other tourist destinations will be undertaken to provide approaches and insight into competitive destination investment, infrastructure and best practices. Direction and guidance will also be solicited from all levels of government, local municipalities and stakeholders. A third party consultant or organization will be retained to assist with the process and formulation of the strategy.

For further information about this report, please contact York Region Tourism at 905 830-4444 ext. 1553 or visit [www.yorktourism.com](http://www.yorktourism.com).

## Economic factors continue to indicate vitality in York Region

The Regional Municipality of York today released the *Economic and Development Review 2006*, which provides information on regional demographic and economic trends as well as development activity.

The *Economic and Development Review 2006* outlines the growth and competitiveness of the Region's economy. The information provided can be used by businesses to aid in business investment decisions in both the short and long term.

The report highlights several indicators that point to the Region's continued economic prosperity during the past year:

- York Region's population was estimated at 950,700, an increase of 32,300 from December 2005
- York Region issued approximately 10,900 new residential building permits in 2006, making it the third largest issuer of new residential permits in Canada
- Housing completions reached 10,162 units in 2006, a 13 per cent increase from 2005
- York Region's total estimated construction value exceeded \$3 billion for the first time
- Industrial, commercial, institutional (ICI) construction accounted for 29 per cent of the total construction value in York Region in 2006
- The unemployment rate was 5 per cent

Copies of this publication will be circulated to area municipalities, Chambers of Commerce, Boards of Trade, other business groups and key stakeholders. The reports are available via the Region's website at [www.york.ca](http://www.york.ca)

To obtain copies of the *Economic and Development Review 2006*, please call York Region's Planning and Development Services Department at 905 895-1231 ext. 1550 or toll-free at 1-877-464-9675, or send your request via email to [strategicplanning@york.ca](mailto:strategicplanning@york.ca)

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The next Regional Council meeting will be held Thursday, June 21, 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 website at [www.york.ca](http://www.york.ca) under Regional Government.