



Thursday, November 20, 2008

For Immediate Release

York Regional Council – November 20, 2008

New Deputy Clerk named for The Regional Municipality of York

York Regional Council approved the appointment of Christopher Raynor to the position of Deputy Clerk for The Regional Municipality of York.

Before joining York Region, Mr. Raynor spent more than five years as Committee Clerk for the Town of Markham and worked in the telecommunications industry in England.

York Region United Way Campaign exceeds goal

York Region Chairman and CEO Bill Fisch joined members of Regional Council to congratulate York Region and York Regional Police staff for their recent achievement of raising more than \$234,000 for the United Way of York Region.

The spirit and generosity of staff lead York Region to its most successful campaign result ever – achieving nearly \$10,000 more than the campaign goal of \$225,000.

York Region's staff campaign committee encouraged their peers to give to the United Way through payroll donations and participation in fundraising events.

York Region will be holding its 14th Annual United Way Craft & Gift Sale on Thursday, November 27th from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., at the York Region Administrative Centre, located at 17250 Yonge Street in the Town of Newmarket. Members of the public are invited to attend.

The Regional Municipality of York wins gold sustainability award

The Regional Municipality of York won a gold "Whole City Award" at the 2008 International Awards for Liveable Communities presented in Dongguan, China earlier this month. The United Nations-endorsed LivCom awards recognize how a community is performing with respect to the cultural, political, economic, geographic and climatic environment in which they are situated.

York Region won first place in the population category of more than 750,000 residents. York Region's current population is estimated at more than 1 million residents.

A total of 17 countries and 43 delegate groups attended the event. Presentations by the contenders were assessed by an experienced panel of experts in the field of local government planning, the environment and sustainability. The judging criteria focused on six key areas: Enhancement of the Landscape, Heritage Management, Environmentally Sensitive Practices, Community Sustainability, Healthy Lifestyles and Planning for the Future.

For more information on the International Awards for Liveable Communities, please visit the website at www.livcomawards.com/media-2008/press-releases.htm

Highway 9 east to Highway 400 renamed Davis Drive West

York Regional Council has approved the renaming of Highway 9 between Highway 400 and Yonge Street to Davis Drive West. The name change will take effect January 1, 2009.

The name change to Davis Drive West is one of a number of changes recommended by York Regional Council in April as part of improved safety measures for the roadway and is consistent with the Council's objective of redefining this Regional road as a municipal street and not a highway.

York Region acquires new property in the Towns of East Gwillimbury and Whitchurch-Stouffville

York Regional Council approved the purchase of a 121-hectare (299-acre) property in the Towns of East Gwillimbury and Whitchurch-Stouffville to expand the Bendor and Graves tract of the York Regional Forest.

The land was acquired as part of the York Region Greening and Securement Strategy, whose goal is to secure environmentally-significant properties from development. Since the strategy began in 2001, York Region has secured 800 hectares (2,000 acres). This property acquisition is the largest to date.

The cost of the property securement is approximately \$3.3 million.

Fact sheets on immigration, language and diversity point to complex ethno-cultural mix

The Regional Municipality of York, in partnership with the York Region Social Data Strategy Consortium and the Community Reference Group, has released the next series of *Just the Facts About Your Community*. The fact sheets provide the stories behind the numbers regarding York Region's population.

Based on the most recent Census data collected by Statistics Canada, three new fact sheets in the *Just the Facts About Your Community* series detail York Region's diversifying and changing population. The topics of the new fact sheets are:

- Immigration and Mobility
- Ethnic Origin and Visible Minorities
- Languages of Residents Living in York Region

Just the Facts About Your Community are distributed across York Region to residents, local municipalities, community agencies, the business community and other stakeholders. The fact sheets can be viewed on York Region's website at www.york.ca/yrcsd

York Region requests additional funding to support service gaps in addiction services

York Regional Council will request the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (MOHLTC) allocate additional provincial funding to support service gaps and shortfalls for addiction services in The Regional Municipality of York, including development of a local residential withdrawal (detox) facility.

Although health care funding is based on a per capita spending formula, provincial funding to support local health care, including addiction services, does not match the Region's expansive growth and significant gaps have been identified.

York Region is the fastest growing Census division in Ontario and has experienced a 22-per cent growth in population between 2001 and 2006. It's estimated that 15 per cent of any population may have addiction problems.

C. difficile reporting will benefit public health and hospitals

York Regional Council approved a report detailing York Region public health's role in new mandatory provincial reporting for *Clostridium difficile* (*C. difficile*) introduced in September 2008.

Ontario hospitals are now required to report *C. difficile* information and associated disease outbreaks to local public health units. The decision follows an announcement from the Ministry of Long Term Care (MOHLTC) on May 28th requiring all Ontario hospitals to report on eight different patient indicators, including *C. difficile*.

The goal of mandatory reporting is to keep local health units informed and prepared in the event of an outbreak, as well as assist hospitals to track and control *C. difficile*. As part of the new reporting program, public health responsibilities are increased, requiring the hiring of an additional public health nurse.

C. difficile is a bacterium that can cause symptoms ranging from diarrhea, fever and/or weight loss to severe, life threatening disease. *C. difficile* is the most common cause of infectious diarrhea in hospitals.

The *C. difficile* report will be circulated for information to the Central Local Health Integration Network (LHIN), Central Region Infection Control Network, Southlake Regional Health Centre, Markham-Stouffville Hospital and York Central Hospital.

York Region complying with Ontario Regulation regarding implementation of AODA standards for customer service

York Regional Council received an update on the obligations connected to the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), 2005*, specifically the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service (Ontario Regulation 429/07). This is the first regulation under the *AODA*.

The *AODA* applies to both the public and private sectors and covers every aspect of life except private homes. The goal of the *AODA* is to ensure that all Ontarians with disabilities have full and equal access to goods, services, facilities, accommodation, employment, buildings, structures and premises by January 1, 2025.

The purpose of the Customer Service Regulation is to make organizations' customer service operations accessible for people with disabilities by identifying and removing barriers to customer services in operational practices, policies and procedures, communication and staff training.

With the input of the York Region Accessibility Advisory Committee, York Region will continue to integrate accessibility planning into business practices and processes across all departments.

Proposed Sites for Private Electric Power Generation

York Regional Council received a report outlining York Region's work to monitor the proceedings of the Ontario Power Authority (OPA) as it conducts a preferred site selection process for a 350-megawatt peaking plant in northern York Region.

As of October 1st, proponents have identified eight potential sites within York Region for the proposed peaking plant.

All proposals are subject to the Environmental Assessment process. Regional Council resolved that all proponents responding to the OPA's Request for Proposal for a 350-megawatt peaking plant must conduct a human health and environmental risk assessment for each site, to be provided for public review and comment.

Council also requests the OPA extend the commenting period for Environmental Assessments until after it has made its decision on the preferred site, expected in January 2009.

Regional staff will monitor the Environmental Study Reports and, if necessary, provide comments to the MOE during the 30-day commenting timeframe to ensure any issues are identified and appropriately addressed by the MOE and/or the proponent.

New Agency Development Fund will expand York Region's investment in community-based services

York Regional Council approved the New Agency Development Fund (NADF) Strategy, which allocates \$500,000 to help build the capacity of new and emerging community-based social services agencies in 2009.

York Region's growth and diversifying population has put pressure on community agencies to provide an increasing level of support. The NADF funding helps overcome this by encouraging growth of new agencies to support growing needs. The new source of funds will assist agencies to be better organized and provide more service to those in need.

To maximize the success of this program, renewable funding may be offered to successful agencies for a total of three consecutive years, based on achieving annual objectives. The Region will also provide non-financial support to assist in developing the organizational structure of these agencies.

This Strategy is a result of extensive community and social service agency consultations, research on new agency funding strategies and discussions with other levels of government. Interested agencies will be invited to apply for funding through a community-wide call for proposals process in 2009.

Developing Opportunities for Ontario Renters (DOOR) - 90 Dew Street, Township of King

York Regional Council authorized staff to proceed with the development of a 40-unit addition to the existing 27 unit Housing York Inc. building at 90 Dew Street in the Township of King.

York Region will commit up to \$300,000 from the Developing Opportunities for Ontario Renters (DOOR) fund to cover development-related costs that may be required until a financing mechanism is selected and approved by Regional Council.

A Request for Proposal for architectural services for this project will be issued. York Region will also investigate partnership opportunities with community service agencies to provide supportive housing for this project.

The development of this site meets several goals of the Region, including providing much needed affordable housing, improving accessibility for existing residents and intensification of an underutilized building site.

2009 International Investment Attraction Program

York Regional Council approved the 2009 work plan for the York Region International Investment Attraction Program and budget, subject to the approval of the 2009 Economic Development budget.

The International Investment Attraction Program focuses on attracting new investment opportunities from sustainable companies that are leaders in their industries.

As outlined in York Region's Sustainability Strategy, sustainability will make York Region more competitive in attracting a talented labour force in high value jobs with leading edge companies.

The program is a key component in achieving the Region's Growth Management plans that have identified the creation of 320,000 new jobs for a total of 780,000 jobs by 2031.

York Region encourages local businesses to become more sustainable through greening strategy

York Regional Council has adopted a number of sustainability initiatives for York Region businesses for implementation in 2009.

The initiatives are designed to strengthen entrepreneurship and encourage the development of networks, industry clusters and a highly-efficient workforce. They include the *Guide to Greening Your Business*, an information resource for local municipalities and their Economic Development Officers who assist local businesses with sustainable economic development.

In addition, sustainability workshops and a training initiative with Seneca College will strengthen the development and growth of the environmental sector in the local municipalities.

The initiatives will assist local businesses in adopting sustainability and will provide opportunities for sharing information and ideas and forming new linkages and networks within the business community. These linkages will be essential to foster sustainable procurement and foster conditions where environmental innovation can thrive.

2008 York Region Business Directory released

York Regional Council today released the 2008 York Region Business Directory, a listing of approximately 26,800 businesses within The Regional Municipality of York.

The Directory supports business activities such as marketing and the sourcing of local trades and suppliers. It also assists residents when conducting job searches and locating specific products and services within York Region.

The online directory enables residents to search the data using a combination of criteria, including company name, product or service, city or town, postal code, industry classification and the number of employees.

To access the 2008 York Region Business Directory, please go to www.york.ca then follow the links for Business and Business Directory.

The CD-ROM version of the 2008 York Region Business Directory is \$180, but is available free-of-charge to non-profit organizations, local libraries and area municipalities. To obtain a copy, please contact York Region Planning and Development Services Department at 905 830-4444, Ext. 1550.

Next meeting of York Regional Council

York Regional Council will meet on Thursday, December 18th at 9:30 a.m. in the York Region Administrative Centre Council Chambers, located at 17250 Yonge Street, Newmarket.

- 30 -

Council Highlights compiled by:

Kim MacGillivray, Communications Specialist, York Region
Phone: 905 830-4444, ext. 1209 or Cell: 905 251-6412
Email: Kim.MacGillivray@york.ca