Tell us what you think

We always look for ways to enhance our publication and include information you are interested in.

For a chance to win a $50 gift card to your favourite York Region shopping mall, tell us what you think about this edition and what you would like to see in the future at york.ca/yorkregionmatters

Out and about

Get to know us and the important services we provide at any of these upcoming community events:

Richmond Hill Has Talent (Richmond Hill) – Thursday, July 20
CNE (Toronto) – Tuesday, August 29
Tastes of the Hill (Richmond Hill) Sunday, September 24

YRT/Viva is going green(er)

A single bus can replace up to 40 vehicles on the road. In addition to being a sustainable travel option, YRT/Viva also looks for innovative ways to further reduce greenhouse gas emissions and reduce impacts on the environment.

To help reduce our carbon footprint, a number of green initiatives are being tested or have been implemented including:

• Going paperless – Starting July 1, 2017, YRT/Viva fares may be paid in cash, via smartphone with the new mobile payment app, YRT/Viva Pay or with PRESTO
• Electric bus trial – Electric buses will be added to the YRT/Viva fleet in spring 2018; look for York Region’s first electric bus charging station in the Town of Newmarket
• Solar power shelters – 254 solar-powered shelters currently provide energy to the electrical grid; new shelters are being tested with solar panels to power lighting and digital screens with real-time transit information
• Solar powered mobile charging stations – Charge your mobile devices on the go; solar charging stations are installed at the Richmond Hill Centre Terminal and Promenade Terminal
• Fleet adjustments – Changes to vehicle technology help to achieve annual fuel reduction and savings of approximately 1.8 million litres and a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions of up to 12 per cent

For information about YRT/Viva, visit yrt.ca

On the right path to meet Region’s goal of producing zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2051.
Going behind the scenes

Live video feeds from 140 cameras across York Region are monitored to help keep traffic moving on Regional roads. Real-time video allows the Region to adjust traffic signal timing or dispatch road crews to respond to delays caused by construction, vehicle collisions or emergency road repairs.

York Region roads are also patrolled regularly to ensure roadways are maintained. Residents can report a problem such as potholes, damaged street signs and signal timing concerns across the Regional road network via the York Region mobile app, available for download in the app stores and our website, york.ca

On any given day, motorists may use a local road, Regional road and provincial highway when travelling across the Region. Local city and town roads are found mostly in residential areas. York Regional roads are typically main arteries, such as Highway 7 or Yonge Street and carry significant amounts of traffic. These roads are interdependent; they connect us to the 400-series highways, rural areas and major commercial or institutional hubs.

Did you know? Not all roads belong to York Region

To learn more about Regional roads, visit york.ca/roads
Great Streets in York Region

Over the past three years, 2nd Concession from Bristol Road in the Town of Newmarket to Queensville Sideroad in the Town of East Gwillimbury has undergone a major transformation to improve the corridor for motorists, pedestrians and cyclists.

Bridging the needs of tomorrow with the realities of today, enhancements to 2nd Concession included three major improvement projects in one:

- Road widening to four lanes, cycling facilities and three new bridges, including a pedestrian bridge and bridges over the Holland River and CN rail corridor
- Installation of water and sewer infrastructure
- Construction of pumping stations as part of the York Durham Sewage System

While some construction is still underway, 2nd Concession has re-opened to traffic. The newly revitalized area now offers views of Rogers Reservoir along with trail connections to explore the area. The boardwalk and a pedestrian bridge connect walkers, joggers and cyclists to the Nokiidaa Trail and Rogers Reservoir hiking trail.

The bridges and retaining walls were designed to blend with the historical and natural features at the site, which include the historic canal lock and swing-bridge.

Get outdoors this summer and explore this unique part of York Region – on foot, by bicycle or even by car. Final construction is expected to be complete this summer. Follow us on social media for information about the 2nd Concession grand opening event.
You won’t beLEAF the benefits

York Region’s forests and trees such as those along streets, yards, cemeteries and around businesses provide significant economic, social, environmental and public health benefits. They play a key role in making our communities healthy, livable and sustainable.

In addition to their beauty, trees and forests will:

- Save $8 million in energy costs by reducing heating and cooling needs, annually
- Purify air by filtering out 3,400 tonnes of air pollution, annually
- Remove and store 80,000 tonnes of carbon, reducing the causes of climate change, annually
- Cool the air in their shade by up to 10°C Celsius
- Improve physical, emotional and mental health
- Absorb and hold rainwater, reducing the risk of floods
- Increase property values – trees can increase property values up to 15 per cent
- Block UV rays and help protect from skin cancer
- Provide endless adventure; 2,100 hectares of Regionally owned forest free to use and open 24/7 for everyone to explore

It’s easy to bring these benefits to your own property. With York Region’s subsidized backyard tree planting and Grow Your Legacy programs, you can experience more of these benefits for yourself and future generations.

Did you know?

In York Region, there are approximately 29 million trees or 24 trees for every resident

Visit [york.ca/forestry](http://york.ca/forestry) for information on York Region’s tree planting programs.
Be a water smart gardener

You can have a healthy lawn or garden without using a lot of water

Follow six tips to keep your yard beautiful this season:

1. **Choose the right plant for the right place:** Look at your yard. Does it get full or partial sun? Is the soil wet or dry? Use plants that thrive under the conditions best suited to them.

2. **Use rainwater:** Rain gardens are a beautiful new trend that allow rainwater to seep into the ground where it’s needed most.

3. **Don’t overwater:** Too much water can be just as harmful to plants as not enough; only water if the soil feels dry to the touch, approximately five centimetres (two inches) below the surface. If you need to water, use a soaker hose to send moisture deep into the soil.

4. **Use mulch:** Add about five centimetres (two inches) of mulch to your garden to help keep moisture in the soil while keeping weeds out.

5. **Maintain your irrigation system:** If you have an underground sprinkler system, consider hiring a Water Smart irrigation professional to ensure it’s in good condition and not wasting water. For more information, visit watersmartirrigationprofessional.ca

6. **Lawns require nitrogen for healthy growth:** Natural fertilizers such as cow manure and compost provide nitrogen able to withstand the elements and won’t readily dissolve in water.

For more water-saving ideas for home and garden including information about your local city or town’s outdoor water use bylaw, visit york.ca/waterfortomorrow
More than a subway

In December 2017, the Toronto-York Spadina Subway Extension will open. The subway, located near Highway 7 and Jane Street, will connect the City of Vaughan and Toronto’s urban centres and provide greater residential, employment and entertainment options to York Region. At the same time, in addition to the subway extension, the first YRT/Viva buses will begin service to and from the terminal, enabling customers to walk underground between the terminal and the subway.

Starting spring 2018, a unique rapidway station will also open on Highway 7 providing customers with a direct connection from the street to the Vaughan Metropolitan Centre Subway Station below.

Visit vivanext.com for more information on transit infrastructure projects in York Region.
**How may I best help you?**

At York Region, we ask ‘How may I best help you?’ because customer service is not one-size-fits-all. As our customer, you deserve timely, consistent and helpful customer service, no matter how you connect with us.

York Region offers more ways to reach us than ever before, including our Access York contact centre providing information, referral and application services. Call us at 1-877-464-9675 Monday to Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on matters from Ontario Works to waste and recycling. Public Health questions, social housing application inquiries and everything in-between? Just ask us.

If the phone is not a good fit – no problem. Visit us at [york.ca](http://york.ca), email [accessyork@york.ca](mailto:accessyork@york.ca), contact us through social media, download the York Region mobile app, speak to us in person at our service counter located at 17250 Yonge Street, Newmarket or at one of our community booths.

We are passionate about customer service. We work daily to improve and transform the way we serve you. As we evolve the way our people and technology work together to deliver exceptional service, we hope you will reach out. We’re here to help.

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**Grow your own groceries**

There are many great things about gardening. Think about picking a fresh tomato right from a vine in your backyard. It’s delicious and it’s yours.

**Homegrown.**

**Fresh.**

**Clean eating at its best.**

When you grow your vegetables, you will likely place greater value on them because you appreciate the effort made in getting them to your plate. They are also less likely to go to waste. Homegrown produce is better for your diet, your health, your wallet and the environment.

The five easiest vegetables to grow are carrots, cucumbers, green beans, lettuce and zucchini. Remember, make sure you grow what you really like to eat.

While you’re at it, set up a backyard composter where you can easily add your garden clippings and kitchen scraps such as vegetable and fruit peelings, eggshells and coffee grounds. Making your own compost adds nutrients back into your soil so you can grow more vegetables.

**Little or no green space?**

Check out farmers’ markets in York Region at [yorkscene.com/farmfresh](http://yorkscene.com/farmfresh) for local produce. York Region Food Network offers a Community Garden Program. Visit [yrfn.ca](http://yrfn.ca) for details.

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For tips on how best to store your harvest, visit [york.ca/goodfood](http://york.ca/goodfood) or for more composting information visit [york.ca/waste](http://york.ca/waste)
As the months of warmer weather stretch before us, I want to extend an invitation to you and your family on behalf of York Regional Council to explore the very best York Region has to offer. Throughout the summer months, our nine cities and towns are vibrant with multi-cultural festivals, sporting events and natural trails to explore. Discover the beauty of the York Regional Forest, visit a local farmers’ market or enjoy the sounds of a free concert in the park.

From the sandy shores of Lake Simcoe to the breathtaking thrills of Canada’s Wonderland, York Region is home to hundreds of natural and built attractions, all just minutes from wherever you are. Find out what’s waiting in your own backyard by visiting yorkscene.com

Best wishes for a safe and warm summer.

Sincerely,

Wayne Emmerson