



COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS



The Regional Municipality of York

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Thursday, February 20, 2014

York Regional Council – February 20, 2014

York Regional Council recognizes World Lupus Day

York Regional Council is recognizing May 10, 2014 as World Lupus Day and October as Lupus Awareness Month.

Lupus is a chronic autoimmune disease characterized by inflammation in one or more parts of the body. A complex disease, it can target any tissue or organ of the body including skin, muscles, joints, blood, lungs, heart, kidneys and the brain.

For more information, please visit: <http://lupusfoundationofontario.com>

York Regional Council revises load restrictions for Major Mackenzie Drive in City of Vaughan

Major Mackenzie Drive between Highway 27 and Huntington Road has been reconstructed to accommodate heavy commercial vehicles. As such, a load restriction on this section of road is no longer necessary and will be removed. The load restriction between Huntington Road and Highway 50 will continue to remain in effect.

The purpose of a load restriction is to protect the pavement on designated sections of roadway from being damaged by heavy commercial vehicles and trailers.

YRT/Viva ridership totals 22,709,612 in 2013

York Regional Council today received transit ridership numbers for 2013 which show YRT/Viva experienced an increase of 527,000 riders in 2013, up 2.4 per cent over 2012 ridership for a total of 22,709,612.

These ridership statistics represent the highest transit numbers registered in the 13-year history of YRT/Viva.

YRT/Viva transit services will become even more convenient with the opening of additional bus rapidway segments along Highway 7 in the City of Markham and Town of Richmond Hill later this year. The first rapidway segment opened in August 2013 on Highway 7 between Highway 404 and Bayview Avenue.

When complete, the Region's bus rapidways will remove Viva buses from regular traffic and complement future TTC subway service into the City of Vaughan.

York Region's archaeological resources protected under comprehensive management plan

York Regional Council today adopted Regional Official Plan Amendment 6, and endorsed the York Region Archaeological Management Plan, to protect and guide responsible management of York Region's archaeological resources.

The preparation of an archaeological management plan is particularly important for The Regional Municipality of York which is expected to grow to 1.5 million residents, 510,000 households and 780,000 jobs by 2031.

The York Region Archaeological Management Plan guides the protection and management of archaeological resources through the development review and approvals process, since municipally-approved developments constitute the majority of land-disturbance activities in the province.

As of spring 2012, 1,453 archaeological sites had been registered within the Region. These sites date from the earliest period of human occupation in the Region and surrounding areas 11,000 years ago, through to the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

See the [report](#) for more information.

York Region streetscape, pedestrian and cycling partnership programs creating safe streets and attractive communities

York Regional Council today received a report outlining the status of projects under the Municipal Streetscape Partnership Program and the Pedestrian and Cycling Municipal Partnership Program which shows approximately two-thirds of all approved projects have been completed.

These programs provide an excellent opportunity for The Regional Municipality of York to partner with local municipalities and conservation authorities to create safe streets and attractive communities.

The Municipal Streetscape Partnership Program, originally approved by Regional Council in 2006, offers local municipalities the opportunity to cost-share on locally-initiated streetscape projects on Regional roads such as enhanced coloured zebra crosswalks, trees and drought resistant plants and decorative streetlight poles.

Approved by Regional Council in 2007, the Pedestrian and Cycling Municipal Partnership Program offers local municipalities, conservation authorities and other agencies the opportunity to cost-share on the implementation of pedestrian and cycling infrastructure such as dedicated bike lanes and multi-use paths alongside Regional roads.

See the [report](#) for more information, including a list of projects.

Construction of York Region's second accessible trail scheduled for 2014

The beauty and health benefits of the York Regional Forest will become more accessible this year, with two kilometres of accessible trail being built in North Tract, in the Town of East Gwillimbury.

The York Region Forest includes 23 properties and more than 2,300 hectares, which provides more than 120 kilometres of recreational trails. In 2010, the Region created a one-kilometre accessible trail in the Hollidge Tract, featuring granular material to provide a durable surface for wheelchairs and other assistive devices. The trail is wide, cleared of obstructions and graded to ensure ease-of-movement. Using the 2013 Accessibility Design Guidelines for the York Regional Forest trails, nine additional kilometres of accessible trail have been identified. The remaining seven kilometres of accessible trails will be constructed in subsequent years.

190,000 tonnes of garbage diverted from landfill in 2012

Waste Diversion Ontario (WDO) confirmed The Regional Municipality of York's diversion rate for 2012 was 57.25 per cent, placing York Region first in WDO's Large Urban category. When factoring in waste diverted from landfill through energy-from-waste, York Region's diversion rate is an impressive 82 per cent.

Waste Diversion Ontario does not credit York Region for 80,212 tonnes of waste diverted from landfill to an energy-from-waste facility in 2012. As not all municipalities have access to this technology, WDO maintains a level playing-field by crediting only waste diverted through green bin and blue box initiatives.

Waste diversion is attributed to many initiatives including the SM4RT Living Plan, a comprehensive Master Plan addressing planning and delivery of waste management programs in the Region for the next 25 to 40 years. The plan focuses on waste prevention and reuse, while maximizing diversion through recycling, composting and energy recovery options.

The Regional Municipality of York helps bring Rouge National Urban Park closer to completion

Rouge National Urban Park, Canada's first national urban park will, be one step closer to reality once a land transfer agreement between The Regional Municipality of York and partner governments and conservation authorities is signed.

The agreement will capture key elements reflecting the Region's interests in natural environment protection, growth management, infrastructure and agriculture.

In 2010, York Regional Council endorsed the recommendation to work with Parks Canada to advance the creation of a federal park subject to protection of Regional interests. The Memorandum of Agreement fully protects present and future Regional infrastructure while providing the park with natural heritage protection and visitor experience opportunities.

Once established, Rouge National Urban Park will be recognized as a significant environmental destination providing enhanced recreation, conservation, business, education and tourism opportunities.

York Regional Council releases update on source water protection

The Regional Municipality of York released its Source Water Implementation 2013 Annual Report, outlining the efforts York Region, the Province of Ontario, local municipalities and conservation authorities have taken to ensure drinking water safety through the Source Protection Program.

Under the *Clean Water Act, 2006*, municipalities are required to submit annual reports on implementation efforts. The Regional Municipality of York's 2013 Annual Report summarizes work implemented to maintain safe drinking water.

See the [report](#) for more information.

York Region will support Earth Hour 2014 by switching off unnecessary lights on March 29

The Regional Municipality of York will turn off all non-essential lights at Regional facilities for one hour in recognition of the World Wildlife Fund's Earth Hour, which takes place Saturday, March 29 at 8:30 p.m. York Region will turn off all lights at facilities where feasible and without jeopardizing safety. In particular, the Region will focus attention at four main locations:

- York Region Administrative Centre; 17250 Yonge Street in the Town of Newmarket
- York Region South Services Centre; 50 High Tech Road in the Town of Richmond Hill
- York Region Transportation Operations Centre; 80 Bales Drive in the Town of East Gwillimbury
- York Region EMS Operations Centre; 90 Bales Drive in the Town of East Gwillimbury

York Region employees and their families will be encouraged to turn off the lights at home and any desk lighting as well as their computer monitors when leaving the office prior to Earth Hour on Saturday.

York Regional Council renews its partnership with the York Region Arts Council

York Region today extended its formal partnership with the York Region Arts Council through 2014.

The renewed partnership allows the York Region Arts Council to lead the continued marketing and promotion of arts, culture and tourism to local residents. It also provides support for Yorkscene.com, an online resource for promotion of tourism, arts and cultural events.

Events, theatres, museums, natural environment and historic downtowns are an integral part of the Region's community and demonstrate why York Region is an attractive place to live, visit and invest.

See the [report](#) for more information.

Next regular meeting of York Regional Council

York Regional Council will meet on Thursday March 27 at 9:30 a.m. in the York Region Administrative Centre Council Chambers, located at 17250 Yonge Street in the Town of Newmarket.

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The Regional Municipality of York provides services to 1.1 million residents and 42,000 businesses that employ 533,000 people