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Media Release

Council Highlights

30 June, 2017

York Regional Council Highlights

Canada 150 flag flown at Regional buildings

York Region is commemorating Canada's 150th anniversary of Confederation by raising the Canada 150 flag at many Regional buildings.

Additionally, now through July 28, visitors to the York Region Administrative Centre at 17250 Yonge Street in the Town of Newmarket can enjoy two heritage exhibits:

- Built to Last: Heritage Properties from York County through to York Region
- Shaping Canada: York County's Influence on a Nation archival exhibit

Take part in Canada's coast-to-coast celebration and participate, celebrate and explore #Canada150. Join the local conversation using #YRCanada150.

Sunder Singh appointed as City of Vaughan Regional Councillor

York Regional Council welcomed Sunder Singh as the new City of Vaughan Regional Councillor as she signed her declaration at the Regional Council meeting June 29. Councillor Singh was appointed by the City of Vaughan Wednesday, June 28 and will serve as Councillor for the remainder of the current council term.

Regional Council composition remains unchanged

In April 2017, York Regional Council requested the consent of local municipalities for a bylaw to increase the number of Council members from the City of Vaughan from four to five. The majority of municipalities did not consent and the additional position will not move forward for the next term of Council. York

York Region recognizes National Aboriginal Day

York Regional Council recognized National Aboriginal Day, June 21, recognizing the unique heritage, diverse cultures and ongoing contributions of Indigenous Peoples to this country.

York Region Chairman and CEO Wayne Emmerson acknowledged that York Region extends over lands originally used and occupied by Indigenous Peoples, and on behalf of York Region thanked First Nations and the Métis for sharing this land. The Chippewas of Georgina Island First Nation were also acknowledged as York Region's closest First Nation community.

Arrival of York Region Matters signals start of summer

Region's resident newsletter, York Region Matters, will arrive in mailboxes across York Region starting today. The summer edition highlights programs and services available to York Region residents and useful information about transit, roads and the environment.

Print and online readers are encouraged to complete a survey to provide opinions and ideas for upcoming newsletters. From all submissions, one winner will be drawn to receive a \$50 gift card to a mall in York Region.

York Region wins 11 communication awards

York Regional Council congratulated York Region communication professionals on their recent win of 11 prestigious International Association of Business Communicators awards. Included in the honours was the Communications Team of the Year, the second consecutive win for York Region.

York Region's communication teams keep residents informed of programs, services and decisions made by York Regional Council.

September to be recognized as Childhood Cancer Awareness Month

York Regional Council will recognize September as Childhood Cancer Awareness Month. In May 2016, Queen's Park officially proclaimed September as Childhood Cancer Awareness Month in Ontario to recognize the gold ribbon as the awareness symbol of childhood cancer, and to strongly encourage all citizens to join in the fight against childhood cancer.

York Region receives two prestigious financial awards

For the 19th consecutive year, the Government Finance Officers Association has awarded York Region with the Canadian Award for Excellence in Financial Reporting for its 2015 Annual Community Report. This award recognizes municipal governments providing financial reports that are easily readable, well organized and meet established guidelines.

York Region also received the Popular Annual Financial Reporting Award for its abbreviated annual financial report, which was visually appealing and presented clear financial information in easily understood language.

Strategic Plan update shows 85 per cent of key measures progressing well

York Regional Council received the 2016 Community Report, a combined update on the progress of the 2015 to 2019 Strategic Plan and the Region's 2016 financial performance. Eight-five per cent of the Strategic Plan's key performance measures are progressing well, with two years left in the current term of Council.

The Strategic Plan provides a detailed course of action over the term of Council. Accomplishments in 2016 across the four strategic result areas include:

- Economic Vitality – Strengthen the Region's economy
 - Completed 181 kilometres of road rehabilitation, including 85 kilometres of road preservation and 96 kilometres of road resurfacing
- Healthy Communities – Support community health and well-being
 - Administered more than 38,000 immunizations and delivered more than 678,000 doses of vaccine through York Region Public Health
- Sustainable Environment – Manage environmentally sustainable growth
 - Reviewed and optimized 591 traffic signals to provide better traffic movement
- Good Government – Provide responsive and efficient public service
 - Increased number of social media followers by 38 per cent

York Region Rapid Transit Annual Report highlights 2016 progress

York Regional Council received the York Region Rapid Transit Annual Report highlighting key accomplishments in 2016, as well as current and future initiatives. York Region Rapid Transit is responsible for planning, design and construction of the Region's rapid transit network. These projects support future growth, manage congestion and play an important role in a seamless transit system across the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area.

Ontario Basic Income Pilot will weigh benefits and challenges over next three years

York Regional Council received an overview of the purpose, potential benefits and challenges related to the Ontario Basic Income Pilot.

The Province announced a three-year Ontario Basic Income Pilot in April 2017 in select Ontario communities. The Basic Income program is a government payment to provide a minimum level of income to individuals or families. Under the pilot, a basic income is unconditional, meaning people receive the benefit without requirements to work, look for work or participate in training.

Research suggests benefits of a basic income program could include:

- Reducing poverty and its effects on individuals, families and communities
- Improving people's ability to meet basic needs and engage in socially productive work
- Providing income stability to support retraining or lifelong learning, manage job precarity and respond to the impact of automation, artificial intelligence and robotics on jobs
- Simplifying current income benefits and reducing program complexity
- Promoting basic health and well-being.

Potential concerns related to Basic Income include costs, adequacy of benefits, impact on work incentives and 'crowding out' of other support programs or new initiatives that may be more cost-effective.

The pilot will test basic income with 4,000 participants over three years with results expected in 2020. York Region will monitor and report back to Council on the progress of the pilot.

York Region Social Housing energy retrofits reduce costs and emissions

Energy-saving retrofits at five York Region social housing locations are expected to save 533 tonnes of carbon dioxide and approximately \$75,000 in energy costs per year.

York Region received \$768,123 in funding for the updates through the provincial government's Social Housing Electricity Efficiency Program. Updates completed across the five housing locations included:

- Additional attic installation
- Electrical baseboard heater replacement
- LED replacement bulbs
- Timer bathroom fans
- Programmable thermostats
- Hot water tank insulated blankets
- Electrical heat pumps

As a result of the energy-saving upgrades, tenants should experience a reduction in their individual electricity bills. An annual report on energy use will be provided to the Province over the next three years to track the impact of the work.

York Region tackling housing actions to provide a place for everyone

York Region's 10-Year Housing Plan 2016 Progress Report shows continued progress toward building complete communities and housing options for all.

Actions under the Housing Plan are based on four goals to increase the supply of rental housing, sustain the existing rental supply, support home ownership and reduce homelessness. Accomplishments highlighted in the 2016 progress report include:

Opening the Richmond Hill Hub, offering 202 new rental units to families, singles and seniors, as well as the Youth Hub, providing support programs and services, 14 emergency and 11 transitional beds

- Applying approximately \$5.9 million in federal and provincial repair funding to support 34 housing providers with projects such as window and roof replacements, kitchen and bathroom replacement and heating system energy efficient upgrades
- Providing more options to applicants to apply for subsidized housing and update applications through the York Region Access York Contact Centre
- Forming the York Region Local Municipal Housing Working Group to begin to address housing supply and affordability issues
- Connecting homeless and at-risk women living at Belinda's Place to services and supports, including 81 women to drop-in services and 228 women to emergency or transitional housing

Since 2014, York Region has addressed the growing and diverse housing needs of residents and workers under the 10-Year Housing Plan Housing Solutions: A place for everyone. Although housing affordability and lack of rental supply in the Region remain a challenge, collaboration and partnerships from all levels of government and community partners are enabling the Region to move forward to meet housing goals.

- Help families with low income access licensed child care

Funding boost strengthens early years childcare and learning for York Region families

York Region has received an additional \$12.6 million in provincial funding for 2017 to maintain and enhance the early learning and child care system for York Region children and families.

New provincial funding has been allocated to municipalities across Ontario to improve early years children's services over the next five years for children from birth to age four. In York Region, an additional \$12,680,652 in 2017 funding will be used to:

- Minimize wait time for new families applying for fee assistance
- Help with the cost of repairs and maintenance at licensed child care centres
- Provide wage enhancement funding to more licensed child care centres
- Provide additional services for children with special needs, including funding and supports to licensed child care operators serving children with special needs

Since 2013, York Region has received \$31 million in new provincial funding for investment in the child care system. This funding helps maintain a stable and supportive early learning and child care system for York Region families. For more information on children's services in York Region, visit york.ca/children

Update on the SM4RT Living Plan

York Regional Council received an update on the 2016 SM4RT Living Plan which shows 32 initiatives for managing waste are on track for completion by end of 2017.

The SM4RT Living Plan identifies more than 60 initiatives that set the course for managing waste in our communities over the next 25 to 40 years. A total of 32 initiatives were identified for the first five years of the plan. By the end of 2016, the Region and local municipal partners had launched 24 of the 32 initiatives.

York Region's nine cities and towns actively participate in waste reduction pilots and programs. Initiatives launched or expanded in 2016 and 2017 include:

- Curbside swapping events involving three municipalities
- Textile collection
- Trash Blasters school program to promote waste reduction and recycling
- Backyard composting programs

In 2018, the Region will conduct a review to update the SM4RT Living Plan and identify new actions and targets for the next five years. To learn more about ways York Region is helping residents join the conversation and take action on managing waste, watch the SM4RT Living video.

Corporate Energy Report shows York Region making progress on emission targets

York Regional Council received an update on the 2016 Corporate Energy Report which tracks progress towards the Region's greenhouse gas emissions targets.

In 2016, greenhouse gas emissions from Regional operations totaled 92,384 tonnes, equivalent to emissions of more than 18,000 cars, and 2.5 per cent lower than forecasted.

York Region had notable success in 2016 in reducing greenhouse gas emissions including:

- Lighting and mechanical upgrades
- Sustainable building certifications including Bill Fisch Forest Stewardship and Education Centre LEED Platinum certification
- Ambulance anti-idling technologies
- Building energy audits
- Water conservation
- Tenant engagement workshops and facility retrofits

Greenhouse gas emission trends in 2016 are on track with the 2021 target in the Energy Conservation and Demand Management Plan.

Waste-Free Ontario Act proposes blue box transition

York Regional Council received an update on the Waste-Free Ontario Act, 2016 which includes plans to transition responsibility of the blue box recycling program from municipalities to producers by 2022. Producers are brand holders or others with a commercial connection to designated products and

packaging in Ontario. Municipalities will play an important role in determining how the new waste management system operates in Ontario. York Region continues to collaborate with local municipalities to prepare for an effective transition to the new framework while ensuring York Region's SM4RT Living Plan aligns with goals and principles of the new provincial waste management framework.

Court Services brings enhancements to order

York Regional Council received the Court Services Annual Report, highlighting key accomplishments in 2016 and initiatives for 2017.

In 2016, Court Services continued to use technology and partner with stakeholders to improve service. Highlights include:

- Filed 152,730 charges
- Provided almost 170,000 in-person and telephone services to court users
- Implemented a fine collection strategy to maximize default collection efforts and increase fine revenue
- Implemented case load management software to improve prosecution processing

In 2017, Court Services is continuing to create efficiencies, including:

- Expanding electronic ticket process to Red Light Camera offences
 - Expanding the collection strategy to further maximize collection of defaulted fines and increase fine revenue
 - Introducing enhancements to improve access to court information and documents
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Provincial and Federal budget updates

York Regional Council received an update on the recent provincial and federal budgets and how they affect York Region. Key areas of federal budget investment will include infrastructure, public transit and housing initiatives. Through the provincial budget, investments will include improving social assistance, commitment to construction of Mackenzie Vaughan Hospital, Highway 400 rehabilitation and Highway 404 widening.

Updates to four Provincial Plans

York Regional Council received information on updates to Provincial Plans directly affecting York Region including: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, Greenbelt Plan and the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan.

York Region is well on its way to addressing new provincial requirements through initiatives such as:

- York Region Local Municipal Housing Working Group
- The internal Climate Change Working Group
- Resuming the Municipal Comprehensive Review
- Infrastructure management planning, including Asset Management planning and risk assessment

Strong partnership with York Region Arts Council promotes economic vitality

York Region's partnership with the York Region Arts Council provides all nine local cities and towns with access to a vibrant arts and cultural scene within our communities.

Programs fostered through this partnership include:

- Artepreneur Program: Designed to equip independent artists, arts administrators and creative entrepreneurs with vital business skills needed for success across all arts disciplines and industries
- yorkscene.com: York Region's online resource to find tourism, arts, culture, entertainment and outdoor activities
- Farm Fresh Map: A resource to encourage residents and visitors to explore and enjoy Region-grown fresh food

Fall Committee and Council updates

A variety of schedule updates and new committee and board appointments will be effective September 2017:

- Town of Georgina Regional Councillor Naomi Davison will join the Audit Committee
- City of Markham Regional Councillor Joe Li will serve as Chair of Planning and Economic Development
- Town of Aurora Mayor Geoffrey Dawe will serve as Vice-Chair of Planning and Economic Development
- Town of Richmond Hill Regional Councillor Brenda Hogg will serve as a member on the Toronto Region Conservation Authority Board

In addition, the following meeting updates will be in effect:

- September 7: Committee of the Whole 1 and 2 at 9 a.m. followed by Housing York Inc. Board at 1 p.m.\
- September 21: York Regional Council at 9 a.m. followed by York Region Rapid Transit Corporation Board at 11 a.m.
- October and November: Housing York Inc. Board will follow Committee of the Whole 1 at 1 p.m.
- October and November: York Region Rapid Transit Corporation Board will follow Committee of the Whole 2 at 1 p.m.

Detailed agendas and live audio streaming are available on york.ca

Next regular meeting of York Regional Council

York Regional Council will meet on Thursday, September 21 at 9 a.m. in the York Region Administrative Centre Council Chambers, located at 17250 Yonge Street in the Town of Newmarket.

The Regional Municipality of York consists of nine local cities and towns, and provides a variety of programs and services to 1.2 million residents, 50,000 businesses and 595,000 employees. More information about the Region's key service areas is available at york.ca/regional services

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Printed: July 26, 2017