

COUNCIL ATTACHMENT 2

Ontario's Rising Star

York Region

Markham • Vaughan • Richmond Hill • Newmarket • Aurora
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What is

VISION 2026

TOWARDS A SUSTAINABLE REGION

A growing number of communities have strategic plans that help set priorities for decision-makers.

Vision 2026 is York Region's strategic plan. It is integrated into all our strategic initiatives, our business planning, and our individual performance processes. In addition, it establishes the overall vision and direction for York Regional Council and our employees.

Vision 2026 is based on consultation with members of Regional Council, the Region's employees and the community, including organizations, individual citizens and councillors and staff of area municipalities.

Vision 2026 includes a vision statement, eight goals, and action areas within each goal that describe what people have said they want the Region to be. Although it is recognized that the Region currently addresses many of these goals, Vision 2026 demonstrates our commitment to continue and improve on our successes.

2026 Vision

The Importance of Implementing Vision 2026

As our overarching strategic plan, Vision 2026 is our roadmap to where we want to be in the next 25 years and will help us build on the enviable quality of life we now enjoy.

Vision 2026 will also assist elected officials and staff in making policy, budgeting, and program decisions on a daily basis. These decisions will help us achieve our goals.

Figure 1 illustrates how performance measures at different levels within the Regional municipality are related to a Vision 2026 measure, and in turn, how the Vision 2026 measure will help guide the corporation to achieve its long term goals.

Figure 1: Vision 2026
Measuring Regional Performance in
Forest Conservation and Management

Vision 2026: Towards a Sustainable Region

In 1987, the United Nations, through the Brundtland Commission, defined sustainable development as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."

The goal of sustainable development is to integrate the three elements of environmental protection, economic growth and social equity. The basis of sustainable development theory is about legacy in which we strive to answer the question: "what type of world do we want to leave for our children and grand-children?"

Vision 2026: Towards a Sustainable Region reflects the Region's integration of sustainable development and the concept of Triple Bottom Line Sustainability into the Region's major initiatives.

Vision 2026: Towards a Sustainable Region meets the promise of York Regional Council to our citizens and staff to report regularly on our implementation of Vision 2026.

Indicators used in this report are primarily community wide and show where we have been successful in achieving our goals, and where we must work harder in the days and months ahead.

More information on this initiative will be provided on the Region's website and through future updates of Vision's annual report.

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The Triple Bottom Line

Figure 2: York Region Official Plan Themes
Sustainable Development

An Example of Triple Bottom Line Sustainability in Rapid Transit

Environmental Benefit:
Rapid transit reduces greenhouse gas emissions attributed to carbon dioxide from automobile usage.

Social Benefit:
Rapid transit ensures that all segments of the population and labour force have access to efficient, affordable and quality transportation.

Economic Benefit:
Rapid Transit ensures a more efficient movement of goods and people by reducing automobile congestion.

Source: York Region State of the Environment Report 2005

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HOW ARE YOU IMPLEMENTING VISION 2026?

EXAMPLES FROM AROUND YORK REGION

Vision's Guiding Principles:

Accessibility: providing programs, services and facilities that are available to all, regardless of location or personal mobility.

Vision 2026 provides the foundation for accessibility planning in York Region and helps ensure that we achieve "made for York Region" accessibility solutions. The Region's three accessibility plans: Understanding Barriers, Moving Forward and Removing Barriers are developed and implemented annually under the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 (ODA) and a Regional Council approved Framework for Accessibility Planning. The Plans include initiatives that each of York Region's departments have implemented and will undertake to identify, remove and prevent barriers for people with different types of disabilities. York Region's Plans and accessibility planning process continue to receive province-wide recognition. These Plans are strategically geared towards fulfilling a number of the goals stated in Vision 2026.



The Region's accessibility plans are filled with creative ideas and solutions to remove different types of barriers through more training, more accessible transit

services, retrofits to regional buildings, housing and long-term care facilities, as well as improvements to our Web site.

Many people contribute to these Plans including the York Region Accessibility Advisory Committee, residents, members of the ODA Staff Committee and many other Regional staff who provide assistance along the way.

Goal 2: Enhanced Environment: protecting forests, promoting a permanent linked greenlands system, taking a leadership role in developing and implementing environmental strategies and conservation activities.



The York Regional Forest has been greening our communities for over 75 years. Through careful management, the York Regional Forest is an attractive public resource for the

enjoyment of all the residents of the Region and a leading example of forest regeneration and management.

Regional Forest Greening activities have grown to include 20 properties and over 2,200 hectares of natural landscapes. The diversity of our forests, including plantations, native woodlands, treed swamps and other environmental features provides a variety of recreational experiences that are enjoyed by the public, as well as presenting a unique location for our environmental education programs and monthly Forest Festivals and Events.

Much of the forest was planted decades ago to rehabilitate lands left bare by early farming practices. Through its Greening programs, York Region continues to acquire new properties and plant more trees to ensure our green legacy continues to grow. In 2001, the York Regional Forest was the first public forest to be Internationally certified by Smartwood under the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certification program which demonstrates York's forests are being sustainably managed for present and future generations.

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Goal 8: Engaged Communities and a Responsive Region: proactively meeting the needs of customers, being fiscally responsible and being accountable.

The Financial Services Branch provides financial services including the maintenance of financial records, payroll, accounts payable, accounts receivable and financial reporting including the preparation of the annual financial statements and Financial Information Return.

Our objective is to provide enhanced access to financial reporting information by our client departments to enable them to make sound business decisions. In keeping with the Finance Department's mandate, we will continue to focus on providing effective fiscal management and strategic financial management to support the corporation in achieving future objectives in support of the Fiscal Responsibility guiding principle of Vision 2026.

As an example, for eight consecutive years the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada (GFOA) has conferred a Canadian Award for Financial Reporting to York Region for its annual financial report. Such reports go beyond the minimum requirements of generally accepted accounting standards and demonstrate an effort to clearly communicate the municipal government's financial picture and enhance the public's understanding of financial reporting by municipalities.



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Goal 8: Being a Region that Involves its Citizens, Big or Small: Community Safety Village

On May 14, 2005, York Regional Police officially opened the Community Safety Village at Bruce's Mill Conservation Area in Stouffville.



Since our Grand Opening, over 15,000 students from across York Region have visited. Over 2,100 Grade 1 students have participated in the Traffic Safety program since May 2005, while over 1,000 Grade 3 students have participated in the Bicycle Safety program.

The Safety Village has worked with both the Public and Separate School Boards to develop educational programs with great success. The Safety Village has also hosted safety programs for a variety of students, including those with Special Needs and Visual Impairments. Our officers also partnered with OMNI TV to produce a Traffic Safety lesson in Cantonese.

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Send your story to:
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You can also find Vision 2026 at
www.york.ca