

# TOWARDS THE VISION:

Third  
Annual  
Report  
on

# Indicators of Progress





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Town of Aurora



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Regional Councillor  
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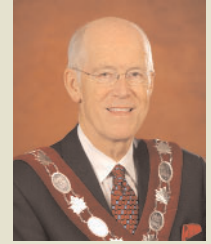
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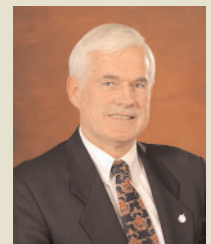
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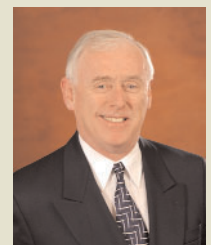
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## Message from York Regional Council

York Regional Council is pleased to present Towards the Vision: Third Annual Report on Indicators of Progress for 2004.

Launched in 2001, Vision 2026 is the strategic plan of the Regional Municipality of York for the next quarter century. The plan reflects the kind of community our citizens told us they wanted York Region to become both now and in the future - strong, caring and safe.

How are we progressing? Our population has increased annually by 37,000 people on average for the past several years. Now surpassing 890,000 people, York Region is projected to grow to 1.28 million by 2026.

As our labour force, employment opportunities and the ethnic diversity of our population keep on expanding, it is important that we have a strong, shared vision of our future, and that we continue to measure our progress, improve on our plans and inform our citizens of progress along the way.

When making decisions, Regional Council continues to reference Vision 2026 so we can achieve the priorities expressed by the residents of our Region. We encourage you to read about our progress reported here, and share your comments.

Thank you for your continued efforts in working together on these vital initiatives that will help to ensure York Region remains a great place to live, work and play.

# Are we making progress?

Over the last three years, York region has made major headway on a number of Vision 2026's Goals. This progress has helped us move forward on action areas that speak to quality of life, environment, economy, growth management, and creating strong caring communities.

Some of the highlights from areas of progress in this third year of reporting include:

- York Region Transit served approximately 13.8 million trips in 2004, which is a 14.3% increase over 2003.
- Launch of Viva, York Region's 3 phase rapid transit program.
- Council approval of ROPA 43, Centres and Corridors Growth Management Strategy.
- Moving towards a target of 50%, the Region has maintained an average diversion rate of 25% and has made major strides in putting programs in place to increase this rate to a projected 29% in 2005.
- York Regional Police increased overall levels of service including response times, visibility in our neighbourhoods, traffic enforcement and support to youth, to increase overall safety and presence in the community.
- Achieved a broader range of housing mix in 2004 72.8% single family and 27.2% multiple units (semi's, rows and apartments) compared to 74% single family and 26% multiple units in 2003. York Region has set a long-term target of achieving a 40% multiple unit supply.
- Increased Long Term Care beds from 200 to 232 providing 84,680 facility program days
- Opened 26 additional, accessible ACL Supportive Housing Units at the Newmarket Health Centre
- Opened 32 additional long-term care beds at the Newmarket Health Centre
- Significant steps towards addressing homelessness including, but not limited to the York Region Street Outreach program, Homelessness Prevention Program, continued support to four Out of the Cold sites, expanded the Community Housing Support Worker Program to help homeless find permanent housing, and the release of "Preventing Homelessness In York Region: Taking the Next Steps".
- 580 acres of greenlands have been secured since 2001.
- Released "The Road to Inclusivity: An Action Plan for York Region" draft report and held an Inclusivity Summit.
- Implementation of initiatives to enhance accessibility to people with disabilities to regional services, programs and facilities.
- In 2004 71% of citizens were satisfied with Regional Government from a satisfaction level of 70% in 2003 and 66% in 2002.
- Continued high quality of life (91% approval rating by residents).
- Decreased smoking rates 17% down from 18% in 2003 and 23% in 2002.

However, there is a need to improve our performance in areas where we have influence.

Residents have told us some of the major concerns include congestion, growth management and environment and that they support the Region's efforts in areas like rapid transit and compact urban growth to address these issues. Employers in York Region have told us that supports to new Canadians and youth, diversity, mix and affordability of housing are important for continued economic growth and employment.

In 2005/06, York Region has an ambitious program to address these concerns through effective and timely services to our citizens. Key initiatives include significant public transit improvements, a pro-active roads program to provide better road capacity, more affordable housing options, exploring options to increase the Region's live/work ratio through better job matching, increased diversion of waste away from landfill, and a greener and healthier York Region.

# VISION STATEMENT

*Creating Strong, Caring and Safe Communities*

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# Guiding Principles

York Region residents identified key principles that should shape future decisions and actions.

These Guiding Principles are found in the Vision 2026 document.

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

**Business-Friendly Environment:** Fostering an environment that invites and encourages businesses to locate, stay and grow in York Region.

**Character:** Living in a Region where everyone works together to ensure that families are strong, homes and streets are safe, education is effective, business is productive, neighbours care about one another and citizens are free to make wise choices for their lives and families.

**Customer-Centred Service:** Supporting service that is accessible, timely, knowledgeable, competent, courteous, caring and fair.

**Dignity, Compassion and Fairness:** Recognizing the rights and dignity of all of York Region's citizens through respect, compassion and fair treatment for those of all races, faiths, genders, ages, beliefs, incomes and abilities.

**Diversity:** Respecting, valuing and responding to the evolving cultural diversity of the municipalities, communities and groups that make up York Region.

**Equality:** Enabling residents of York Region to participate in programs and services regardless of location, ability to pay, or ethnicity.

**Fiscal Responsibility:** Ensuring fiscal responsibility through sustainable and accountable government.

**Health and Wellness:** Supporting healthy lifestyles and the social and emotional well-being of York residents.

**Leadership:** Ensuring best-quality government through continual assessment and improvement and effective management of change.

**Open Communication:** Being accessible to citizens and partners and listening to their needs. Reporting regularly on progress.

**Partnerships:** Co-ordinating, supporting and enhancing services through partnerships with area municipalities, other governments, community agencies and the private sector.

**Quality:** Delivering leading-edge, effective, timely services to meet the needs of York Region's residents and businesses.

**Safety:** Ensuring that people feel safe in their neighbourhoods, communities and places of work.

**Stewardship:** Recognizing that it is everyone's duty to protect the legacy of York Region's natural environment and heritage.

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

The Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 (ODA) is a Provincial Act that requires the Provincial Government, regional and local municipalities as well as hospitals, school boards, colleges and universities to prepare annual accessibility plans. The ODA exists to improve opportunities for persons with disabilities in Ontario through the identification, removal and prevention of physical and other barriers.

**Understanding Barriers: York Region's First Annual Accessibility Plan** builds on Vision 2026 and covers the 15 month period from October 2003 until December 31, 2004. The implementation of activities included in Understanding Barriers enhanced accessibility for people with disabilities in many of the programs, services, policies and facilities administered by the Region.

The benefits of enhanced accessibility for people with disabilities to our communities will continue for years to come. The work underway in the Region to enhance accessibility provides a strong foundation to meet the requirements of the proposed Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act which is expected to come into force in 2005.

Using Vision 2026 as the broad framework, the Region has developed a strategic response to the ODA and taken steps to ensure that its accessibility planning reflects the Region's vision and meets the needs and realities of residents.

# Quality Communities for a Diverse Population

## VISION GOAL STATEMENT:

In 2026, York Region residents will live, work, play and learn in healthy, accessible and safe neighbourhoods that are vibrant, exciting and people-friendly. Residents will continue to enjoy the high quality of life that attracted them to York and will have a strong sense of belonging and commitment to their communities.

# GOAL 1

## VISION 2026 ACTION AREAS:

### Celebrating Our Diversity

- Recognizing our multicultural population
- Responding to our diversity with innovative service delivery options
- Being responsive to the needs of vulnerable residents
- Planning for the current and future needs of seniors, including their accessibility needs
- Benefiting from the knowledge and experience of seniors
- Responding to children in need
- Involving and investing in our youth

### Creating Vibrant Urban and Rural Communities

- Fostering a strong sense of community, identity and place
- Encouraging the development of a range of activities, recreational opportunities and exciting community places
- Promoting liveable, sustainable and safe communities
- Revitalizing and promoting compact community cores
- Promoting high-quality urban design
- Encouraging pedestrian-friendly and transit-oriented neighbourhoods
- Valuing our countryside and rural lifestyle as well as the distinctiveness of our towns and villages
- Addressing the challenge of demands for urban service levels in rural communities

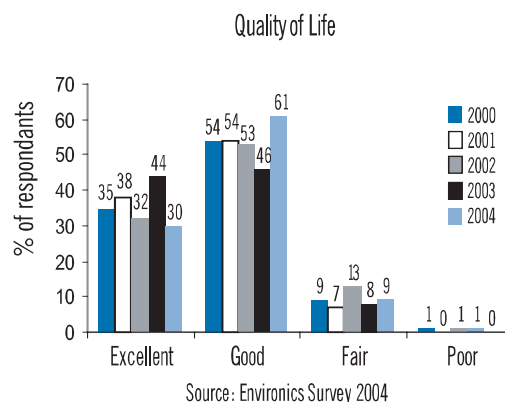
# Quality Communities for a Diverse Population

## Ensuring Quality of Life

- 30% of residents surveyed rated quality of life in the Region excellent and 61% rated it good, an overall 91% approval rating (2004).
- As of 2001, 53.8% of residents worked in York Region (note, this number is updated every 5 years, the next update will be in 2006/07).
- The Region's LTC Centres achieved an overall facility rating of 100% in the combined good and excellent categories in the annual client satisfaction quality of care survey.

## Promoting Liveable, Sustainable Safe Communities

- York Regional Police increased their number of foot patrol hours from 7,847 in 2003 to 9,734 in 2004.
- York Regional Police decreased their average response time to calls for service by 5.3% from 2003 to 2004.



## COUNCIL INITIATIVES - 2004

- Provincial Early Learning and Child Care funding for child care fee assistance, special needs, and child care wage subsidy
- Community Development and Investment Funding (CDIF) Strategy
- Successful implementation of Understanding Barriers: York Region's First Annual Accessibility Plan
- Endorsed "Call to Action: Creating a Healthy School Nutrition Environment" report
- Property Tax Relief for Seniors

## SUCCESSES/INNOVATIONS - 2004

- Increased the number of languages available through the Child Care Language Line
- Supported the Women's Support Network of York Region
- Early Learning and Child Care Service Plan
- Provided Early Intervention Services to 1,328 children with special needs
- Launched P.L.A.Y. a year-round recreation program for low-income children
- Our Children - A Preliminary Status Report on York Region's Children - 2004"
- Residential summer camp for youth living in York Region housing

- Pilot Leadership summer program for adolescents
- Supported the Markham Tamil Youth Drop in Centre
- Expanded Focus on Fathers
- York Regional Police Youth Coordinator positions serving every police district
- York Regional Police Youth Strategy
- Child Care Fee Assistance provided to 4,022 children of eligible parents.
- Road to Safety Car Seat Awareness Program
- EMS participated in 120 Community Awareness Initiatives
- G.I.V.E. "Get Involved, Volunteer in Education" collaborative pilot project
- "You've got what it takes" - Breastfeeding media campaign
- Long Term Care and Seniors Branch received a three year Accreditation award from the Canadian Council on Health Services
- Expansion of the Roots of Empathy Program
- Created a single point access to information about child care and services for children with special needs
- Enhanced parenting and child development services for young parents on social assistance
- HSPC champions and initiates ethno-cultural Inclusivity Action Plan
- York Region pilot site for Careerbridge internship program for internationally trained professionals

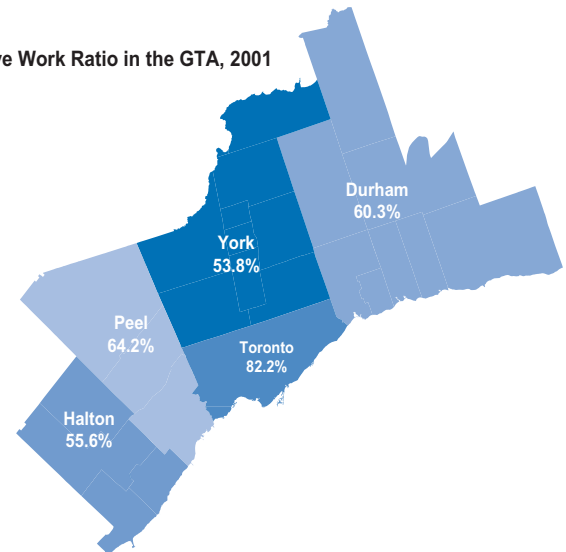


## "Overall, how would you rate the quality of life in York Region?"

Between 1991 and 2001, the proportion of York Region's residents that live and work in the Region increased from 50.6% to 53.8%. Despite this, York Region's live work ratio remains the lowest in the GTA.

One of the quality of life considerations we've heard a lot about is the amount of time people spend in their cars commuting. As people continue to commute between their places of work and residence, the resulting traffic congestion and increasing commute times can negatively impact the health, well being and quality of life of York Region's residents and workers. A better match between the skills of York Region's residents and the jobs avail-

Live Work Ratio in the GTA, 2001

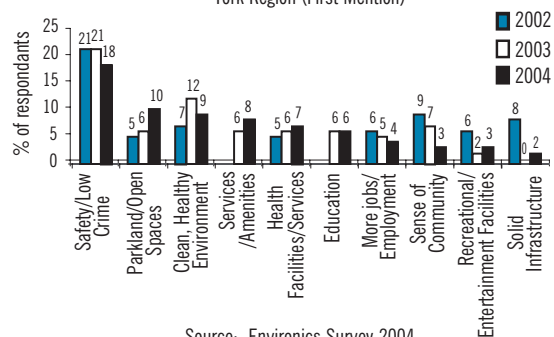


able in the Region, as well as between jobs and housing available for the workforce, will increase our live/work ratio. For more information on the Region's housing, see Goal 5.

## Being Responsive to the Needs of Vulnerable Residents

- York Region supported the Women's Support Network of York Region in delivering culturally appropriate services to South Asian women affected by violence. The program also focuses on recruiting and training volunteers from the South Asian community.
- York Region in collaboration with community partners developed a new Mental Health Resource Model that links social assistance recipients with diagnosed or suspected mental health issues to community resources.

Factors That Make for a Good Quality of Life in York Region (First Mention)



Source: Environics Survey 2004

## Responding to the Needs of a Diverse Population

York Region Council approved the disbursement of \$2.7 million to community agencies under its Community Development and Investment Funding (CDIF) Strategy for 39 community service projects. Projects range from \$10,000 for a healthy breakfast program for children in a family social setting to \$225,000 for basic needs, counselling, employment services and community resource referrals for at-risk and homeless youth.

## Responding to Our Diversity with Innovative Service Delivery Options

Since 2001, York Regional Police has increased its proportion of diverse officers from 6 percent to almost 11 percent. Close to 30 percent of all new recruits are visible minorities, consistent with the overall demographics of York Region.

Our Recruit Insight Program initiative, in partnership with cultural and social support organizations in York Region, allows new police

recruits to immerse themselves into a culture for a period of time, attending community gatherings, meetings and events to learn about the culture, religion and history of the group. They return to share this experience with their classmates. In this way, all recruits receive a small portrait of a variety of cultures, allowing them to serve them better as they continue their careers. The program's partners include Pride York, the Jaffari Islamic Centre, Adapt and the Hindu Temple Society of Canada, as well as a number of Chinese, Jewish and Black community organizations.



# Enhanced Environment, Heritage and Culture

## VISION GOAL STATEMENT:

In 2026, York Region residents will continue to value and embrace the Region's unique natural heritage (land, air, water) and cultural heritage (sites and buildings important to our history, faiths and cultures).

### VISION 2026 ACTION AREAS:

#### Securing a Green York Region

- Protecting sensitive features such as forests, watersheds, the Oak Ridges Moraine and Lake Simcoe
- Promoting a permanent linked greenlands system
- Continuing to develop and build on strategies for a green region, such as the York Region Forest and Land Securement Strategy

#### Ensuring Clean Water and Air

- Protecting the quality and quantity of groundwater, surface water and streams
- Enhancing awareness of the importance of groundwater
- Complying with and maintaining high standards for drinking-water quality
- Promoting clean air policies and initiatives
- Promoting alternative transportation methods that improve air quality, such as public transit and cycling

#### Promoting Conservation

- Encouraging water conservation
- Using energy more efficiently in operations of the regional government
- Investigating and promoting alternative energy sources
- Living and encouraging the three Rs: reduce, reuse, recycle
- Anticipating and responding to climate change

#### Building Pride in Our Heritage and Culture

- Celebrating historic towns and village cores
- Appreciating our unique cultural sites
- Encouraging and promoting our arts and culture
- Encouraging the preservation of historic buildings, heritage homes and significant historic areas
- Embracing our evolving cultural and faith communities

#### Sustaining Our Agricultural Base

- Recognizing the role of the agricultural industry and landscape in our heritage and economy
- Protecting high-quality agricultural land, including local food sources such as the Holland Marsh
- Protecting agricultural areas from incompatible or potentially harmful uses

# GOAL 2

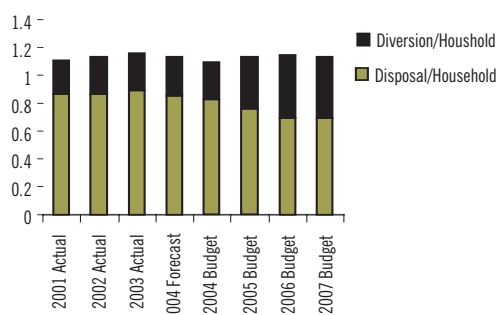
# Enhanced Environment, Heritage and Culture

## Enhanced Environment

- In 2003 York Region had 6 (up from 5 in 2003) air quality advisories affecting a total of 14 days (up from 12 days in 2003).
- Currently, York Region has approximately 40,000 hectares of forests, which represents about 22.5% of the land base (18% of the entire Region, which includes much of Lake Simcoe).
- The percentage of waste diverted by the Region in 2001 was 25% in 2001, 26% in 2002, 24 % in 2003, 24% in 2004 and with projected rate of 29% in 2005.
- The percentage of waste diverted per household was 0.27 tonnes in 2003 and is projected to be 0.28 in 2004, 0.37 in 2005 and 0.46 in 2006.

These indicators represent just some of the ways we're monitoring our environmental quality and protection efforts.

Tonnes of Waste Per Household



Source: York Region Transportation and Works Department

## COUNCIL INITIATIVES - 2004

- 5th annual Smog Summit on energy efficiency and Greening Initiatives
- Litter Prevention Strategy
- Solid Waste Management promotion and education plan
- Stewardship Ontario and Waste Diversion Ontario funding for blue box and recycling
- Provincial funding to promote private well water safety
- Grant Agreements with the Federation of Canadian Municipal Green Municipal Enabling Fund and the Office of Energy Efficiency Energy Innovators Initiative.
- Resolution to include small scale renewable energy sources in plans
- Corporate Clean Air Task Force

## SUCCESSES/INNOVATIONS - 2004

- GTA Clean Air Council
- Setting up Clean Air Committee of Council
- York Region Sustainable Communities Forum
- York Children's Water Festival
- Earth Week - "Small Efforts Equal Big Results"
- Hybrid Bus Demonstration project
- Joint Composter Sales Program
- Significant Woodlands Study
- Building Energy Feasibility Study (BEFS) completed for the Regional Administrative Centre
- 20/20 The Way to Clean Air Open House
- Put it to the Test 3 Times a Year" - Private Well-Water Outreach Program
- Beach Monitoring/ Recreational Beach Monitoring Program
- Continuing to phase-in implementation of the Pesticide reduction guidelines
- Draft Groundwater Management Strategy

### Promoting Clean Air Policies and Initiatives

York Region supported the GTA Clean Air Council (CAC) joint actions to improve air quality, announced at the fifth annual Smog Summit. York Region has been a member of the GTA CAC since 2001, supporting its aim to tackle smog and greenhouse gas emissions in the GTA.

The theme of the 2004 Smog Summit was the natural and built environment with an emphasis on energy efficiency. The following initiatives highlight some of the actions York Region is committed to including:

- The Energy and Environmental Management System
- The GTA Smart Commute Initiative
- The Greening Strategy
- The Clean Air Committee.

### Protecting Sensitive Features: Forests

**York Region wins award for combating AsianLong-horned Beetle**  
York Region received the 2004 Ontario Federal Council Leadership Through Collaboration Award from the Government of Canada for its efforts in combating the Asian Long-horned Beetle (ALHB) infestation in the City of Vaughan. York Region received the award jointly with a number of agencies and jurisdictions who worked together to stop the spread of the ALHB and Emerald Ash Borer infestation.



## Salt Management Plan

In an effort to reduce the amount of salt used for winter road maintenance, Regional Council has endorsed a Salt Management Plan.

In 2001, Environment Canada identified road salt as a risk to wildlife, local ecosystems and groundwater. The Federal Government has asked municipalities to initiate salt management plans to reduce its use on roadways.

In 2002, the Region launched a pilot project to apply a salt-brine solution to roads before snowstorms. The use of salt-brine has shown to reduce reliance on salt, while maintaining high road safety standards. It was adopted as part of the winter maintenance program in 2003.

As part of its Winter Maintenance program, the Region has also adopted:

- A Road Weather Information System (RWIS), consisting of five weather stations in key parts of the Region, to update temperature, pavement condition, salt concentration and precipitation.
- A Global Positioning System (GPS) to monitor road coverage by vehicles and track the application rate of both salt and sand.
- Drive-through salt and sand storage sheds to reduce environmental exposure.
- Spreader controls on vehicles to more precisely spread both sand and salt.

## Investigating and Promoting Alternative Energy Sources

### York Region secures funding for Energy Feasibility studies

York Region Council entered into Grant Agreements with the Federation of Canadian Municipalities' Green Municipal Enabling Fund (GMEF) and the Office of Energy Efficiency Energy Innovators Initiative (EII). Under the combined grants the Region will be able to access up to \$700,000, leveraging up to 100% of costs for Building Energy Feasibility Studies (BEFS).

This will allow York Region to investigate ways to lower its energy costs and reduce greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to climate change and support a large number of technical and environmental studies and pilot projects.

Building Energy Feasibility Studies (BEFS) will help the Region make informed decisions about the integration of high performance building technologies as well as maximize the implementation of energy and environmental measures. Council will receive reports at the end of each calendar year between 2004 and 2006, outlining actual feasibility cost-avoidance and energy savings.

## Using Energy More Efficiently in Operations of the Regional Government

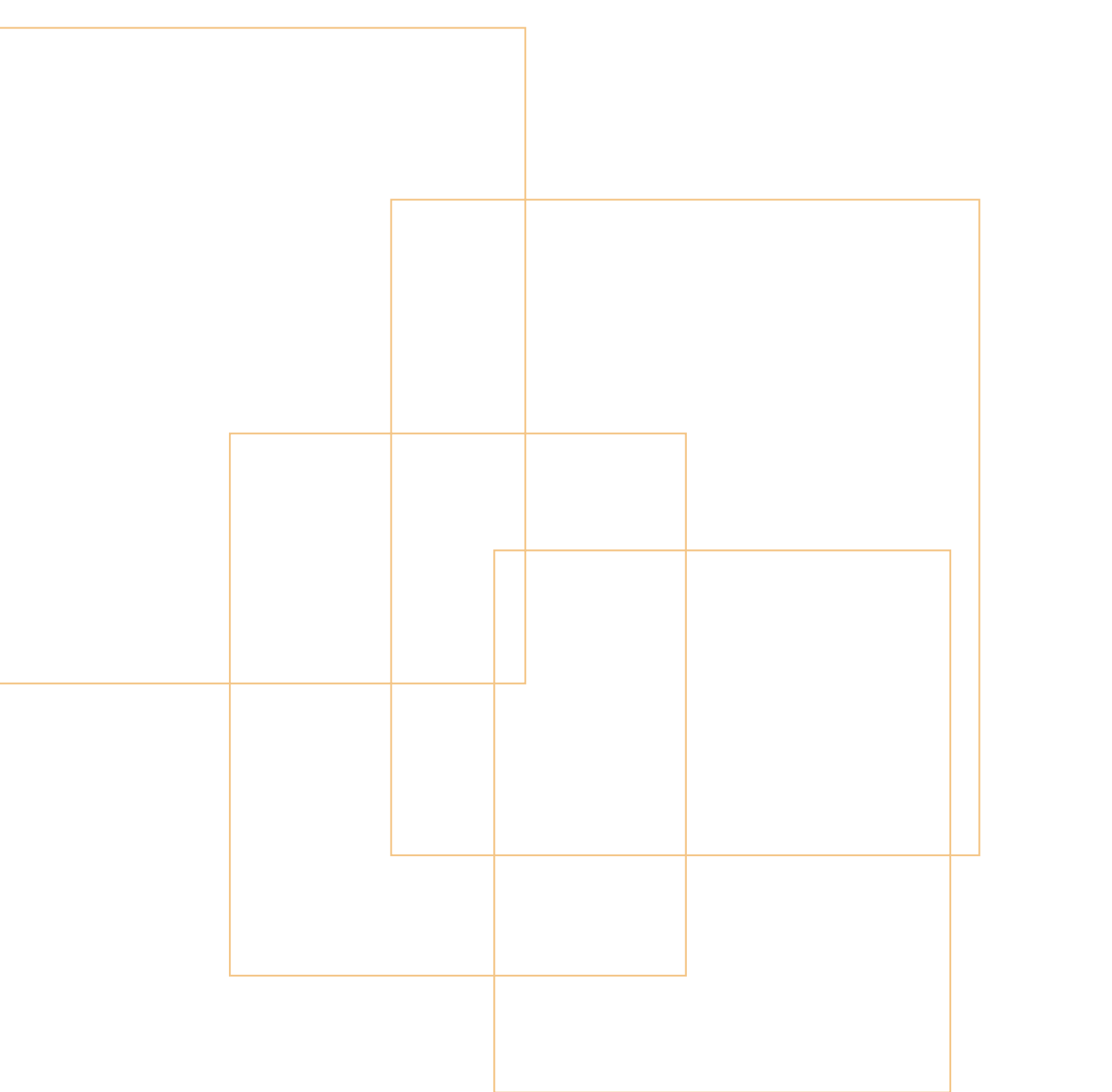
### Energy Conservation

A Building Energy Feasibility Study (BEFS) was completed for the Regional Administrative Centre and will result in significant savings in utility costs. The program will be expanded to other regional buildings in 2005.

All new Regional buildings will include energy efficient designs and "green" technologies will be used where feasible.

Federal and Provincial funding will help to offset these energy projects. Energy projects include:

- BEFS implementation for Administrative Centre
- Wind Energy Pre-Feasibility Studies
- Water and Waste Water Energy Feasibility Studies



## VISION GOAL STATEMENT:

In 2026, York Region will be renowned for its advanced technology, innovative businesses, supportive business infrastructure and highly skilled resident workforce.

# GOAL 3

### VISION 2026 ACTION AREAS:

#### Attracting and Supporting Businesses

- Supporting business start-ups, and the incubation, expansion and diversification of business
- Encouraging the revitalization of established business areas
- Partnering with area municipalities and our neighbours in the GTA to seek and promote economic development opportunities
- Promoting our tourism strengths, including forests, historic villages, parks and artistic and cultural activities
- Fostering networking between businesses, both regionally and locally, and between business and other major sectors (such as health, education and government)
- Increasing businesses' awareness of the Region's services
- Supporting the efficient movement of people and goods in the Region through transportation enhancements
- Building more global awareness of our strengths as a destination to live, work, play and learn

#### Encouraging Continual Learning

- Encouraging the development of lifelong learning opportunities and a broad range of learning options for residents
- Encouraging the development of more accessible post-secondary educational opportunities for residents
- Identifying workforce and educational needs together with key business and education partners
- Developing more public awareness programs, such as "Water for Tomorrow"

#### Promoting and Supporting Innovation

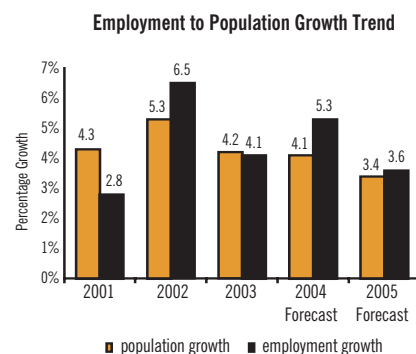
- Promoting enhanced technology infrastructure
- Facilitating job creation in designated employment areas, through targeted expansion of services such as transit
- Encouraging access to technology at community sites such as libraries, hospitals and schools business and education partners

**Attracting and Supporting Businesses:**

- In 2004, approximately 93.5% of York Region's labour force was employed, down from 94.3% in 2003 and from 95.5% in 2002.
- Annual job creation: 10,000 - 20,000 per year for past 5 years, there were 430,000 jobs in the Region as of December 31, 2004 up from 415,000 in 2003.
- Tourism: 2.5 million people visited York Region 2003 spending \$184 million. The SARS epidemic, economic slow down and world events factor in the decline from 2002 (2.8 million) but visitor spending in 2003 increased 7% from \$172 million in 2002.
- There are 40 private sector firms employing over 500 employees in the Region, up from 36 in 2003 and 18 in 1998.

**Employment to Population Growth**

The annual rate of employment growth versus the annual rate of population growth in York Region has stabilized somewhat with a slight increase in employment projected.



Source: York Region Planning and Economic Development Department

**COUNCIL INITIATIVES - 2004**

- York Region Export Development Initiative
- York Region Small Business Enterprise Centre
- 2004 York Region Business Directory
- GeoConnection grant
- York Region Tourism Advisory Group
- York Region Tourism's 2004 Marketing Plan

**SUCCESSES/INNOVATIONS - 2004**

- Economic Strategy Forum
- Draft Economic Strategy
- The Economy of York Region Report
- Employment and Industry Survey Results
- Economic and Development Review Report
- Assisted over 3,600 small businesses
- Export Market Diversification Seminar Series
- Placed 1,147 participants on Ontario Works into volunteer opportunities with over 260 community organizations
- Partnered with local agencies to deliver skills training, including a Call Centre Training program for Ontario Works participants
- 4th Annual Workplace Wellness Program Conference

**Did You Know?**

- York Region combined with York Regional police provided approximately 3950 jobs, on average, in 2004. The Region continues to be one of the major employers in York Region, growing approximately 4.5% in 2004 with York Regional Police growing by 10.3% in the same year.
- Sixty-one percent of York Region and York Regional Police employees live in York Region, thus maximizing the concept "live, work and play in York Region" as well as limiting commuting distances.
- York Region recognized 112 food establishments for excellence in food safety, nutrition and non-smoking seating through Eat Smart! Ontario's Healthy Restaurant and Cafeteria program.



## Supporting Business Start-ups and the Incubation Expansion and Diversification of Business

Winner of the 2004 Ontario Chamber of Commerce Community Export Development Award

The Export Development Initiative works with government and private sector organizations to assist companies to explore global business opportunities through education and information, assessment of export readiness, and research market intelligence through consultation, seminars and workshops.

In 2003, York Region exported \$12.5 billion worth of products, representing 6.6% of Ontario's exports. Since inception of the program, over 3,500 companies have been assisted in exploring global opportunities. This number keeps growing with the assistance of the Export Development Initiative.

### Supporting a Vibrant Economy Draft Economic Development Strategy

The Draft Economic Strategy is York Region's response to a changing economy. It is a blueprint for action that will define the Region's role to help maintain economic competitiveness, and build long term partnerships with local municipalities, business and other stakeholders to achieve the Vibrant Economy goals that are set out in Vision 2026.

The draft Economic Strategy sets out five strategic directions:

- Create an environment to share information and ideas
- Sustain a high quality workforce
- Strengthen entrepreneurship and industry clusters
- Promote York Region
- Encourage the efficient movement of goods and people

The draft Economic Strategy will be distributed for comment to Regional and local municipalities; Chambers of Commerce and Boards of Trade; the Government of Canada; the Government of Ontario; business owners, managers and executives as well as other interested stakeholders.

The final draft will come back to Regional Council for approval in spring 2005.

### Congratulations to York Region

In 2004, York Region received an Investing in Abilities Award from Future Abilities and Creative Employment (F.A.C. E.), a non-profit organization that champions on behalf of persons with disabilities who are entering or returning to the workforce in York Region and Bradford West Gwillimbury.

York Region received an award due to its ongoing efforts to removing barriers for people with a range of disabilities. The award recognizes the Region's work through its first accessibility plan and its commitment both as an employer and as a promoter of accessibility to give people with disabilities more opportunities in York Region as a whole.

### Encouraging Continual Learning

From 1999 to 2004 the Learning, Earning and Parenting (LEAP) program has assisted approximately 360 young parents (aged 16 to 21) on social assistance to work towards their high school diploma, learn about child development, increase parenting skills and develop employment skills.

## Building More Global Awareness of our Strengths as a Destination to Live, Work and Play

York Region publishes a number of documents aimed at increasing not only our understanding of the Region's economy, but also identifies ways to remain competitive by attracting and supporting businesses and a diversely skilled labour force. These reports and guides include:

- Housing and Our Economy, Remaining Competitive, 2004
- Employers Opinion Survey, 2004
- A Profile of York Region's Low Income Population
- Opportunities for Investment
- Economic and Development Review
- Employment and Industry
- York Region Business Directory
- Vacant Employment Land Inventory 2002
- York Region Annual Report
- Discover York Region
- Arts and Culture Spotlight
- Farm Fresh Guide

## Promoting Enhanced Technology Infrastructure

Regional Council accepted \$100,000 from the Federal government's GeoConnection grant program to improve and advance YorkExplorer, an IT program that provides geospatial information and maps to the public through the Region's Web site.

In 2003, YorkExplorer had more than 6,000 visitors and 48,930 maps were downloaded. Enhancements to YorkExplorer are ongoing to create access to more geospatial information and maps, while improving business processes to internal clients, partners and public access.

The Advancing YorkExplorer Project will enable new ways of information discovery and access, leveraging the value of geographic information held by the Region and its YorkInfo partners, of which the nine area municipalities are members.

## Supporting Business Start-ups and the Incubation, Expansion and Diversification of Business

The York Region Small Business Enterprise Centre is part of a network of offices that serve Ontario's small business community. Here to help you with your business start-up, we also work with enterprises that have been in existence for less than 5 years.

The Centre is administered by an experienced Small Business Consultant and is supported by York Region's Economic Development and Planning staff. Services offered include:

- Free consultations, by appointment, to review your ideas or business needs
- A wide range of business information
- Research stations and internet connections
- An extensive collection of resource materials for research purposes
- Affordable seminars that provide useful information and tools for operating your business
- Networking opportunities
- Referrals to business programs, financial providers, professional services and associations
- Youth initiatives - Summer company, My Company, Business Plan Competition

Advice and most of the services are provided free of charge.

# Responding to the Needs of Our Residents

## VISION GOAL STATEMENT:

In 2026, York Region's human services will support a safe, caring and healthy community and maintain and promote a high quality of life. A broad range of organizations will work and plan together, including police forces, schools, businesses, housing providers, hospitals, social service providers, public health agencies, recreation facilities and non-profit, voluntary and business groups.

# GOAL 4

### VISION 2026 ACTION AREAS:

#### Meeting People's Basic Needs

- Addressing the need for shelter
- Facilitating access to job opportunities
- Supporting access to safe and ample food
- Enabling access to services that aid in early child development
- Informing people about available services
- Ensuring mobility through accessible and affordable transportation

#### Supporting Safe and Secure Communities

- Providing superior-quality policing
- Addressing the safety needs of vulnerable groups
- Building strong alliances between police and communities
- Continuing to provide and support high-quality, co-ordinated emergency services

#### Promoting Wellness

- Supporting health care needs at all stages of life
- Encouraging healthy lifestyles through information, education and prevention
- Promoting social and emotional well-being

#### Enhancing Our Human Resources and Partnerships

- Attracting trained health, education and social service professionals
- Recruiting and training volunteers to enhance service delivery
- Partnering with community agencies to provide more and better services
- Building relationships with public-sector and private-sector partners to provide services
- Empowering our community to assume shared responsibility

# 4

## Responding to the Needs of Our Residents

### VISION 2026 INDICATORS

#### Supporting Safe and Secure Communities

- The 5 year trend for the crime rate (Criminal Code violations per 100,000 persons) in York Region has shown an increase of 4.2% (1999-2003), but is still the third lowest regional crime rate in the Province (Source: 2003 Statistics Canada).
- York Regional Police received over 257,292 requests for service in 2004, with only 124 complaints.
- York Regional Police increased commercial motor vehicle inspections from 393 in 2003 to 2,116 in 2004.
- York Region Health Protection Division completed 13,317 food premise inspections.
- York Regional Police increased R.I.D.E. program operation days from 116 in 2003 to 139 in 2004.
- York Regional Police increased the total amount of radar hours 13.6% from 7,361 in 2003 to 8,360 in 2004.

#### Promoting Wellness

- Life Expectancy: 81.6 years, higher than the provincial average (79.7 years) (2001).
- 17% of adult survey respondents 18+ were current smokers, down from 18% in 2003.
- Low birth weights (single births less than 2,500 grams): 3.7% for York Region compared to 4.3% for Ontario (2001).

#### Health Fact:

- 90% of York Region residents ages 18+ reported their health as being excellent, very good or good (Jan-Nov 2004). 9% reported their health as fair or poor (Jan-Nov 2004)

Source: Rapid Risk Factor Surveillance System, YRHS 2005

#### COUNCIL INITIATIVES - 2004

- Successful implementation of Understanding Barriers: York Region's First Annual Accessibility Plan
- Approval and implementation of National Immunization Strategy
- Skin Cancer Prevention Sun Safety Calendar
- Implementation of final phase of the No-Smoking By-law
- Phase III of the No-Smoking By-law
- York Region Corporate Breastfeeding Policy
- Call to Action: Creating a Healthy School Nutrition Environment
- Community Development Investment Fund Strategy funded 39 community projects
- Early Learning and Child Care Initiative
- Allocation of provincial funding for child care health and safety and expansion
- West Nile virus control activities
- YorkLink: A Community Services Directory 2004
- Official launch of the Regional Heart Alive Program

#### SUCCESSES/INNOVATIONS - 2004

- The Road to Inclusivity: An Action Plan for York Region Draft Report
- Developing pandemic influenza plan
- Diabetes Prevention Program - "Take Action Now" developed, implemented and evaluated.
- Healthy Measures, a comprehensive workplace nutrition program launched
- Falls Intervention Study
- Supported expanded Wrap Around York Program
- Sun Awareness Week
- 5th annual Party in the Right Spirit campaign
- Antibiotic Resistant Organism (ARO) surveillance introduced
- "Turn off the Screens" campaign in York Region schools.
- G.I.V.E. "Get Involved, Volunteer in Education" collaborative pilot project
- Supported York Region Food for Learning
- Infection Control: The Bugs Stop Here 2004 Annual Education Day: Infection Control in Long Term Care Facilities
- Fitness Ambassador program launched
- York Regional Police Organized Crime Strategy
- Community Resources Centre
- HSPC report "New Model for Social Services Funding"
- Pilot program for Senior Management - Managing Substance Use in the Workplace



## Building Strong Alliances Between Police and Communities

In June 2004, York Regional Police reached out to the residents of York Region for feedback on policing and crime in their neighbourhoods. The 2004 Community Needs Survey was randomly distributed to 6,000 households in English, Chinese and Italian. The survey consisted of questions on police performance, policing priorities and perception of crime. The top community issues are:

- Traffic Safety
- Youth Issues
- Police Visibility
- Communication
- Violent Crime

York Region residents expressed a strong degree of satisfaction with our overall police services. The highest degree of satisfaction was with the initial contact with police, police professionalism and timeliness, crime investigations and traffic law enforcement.

- Almost 80 percent of survey respondents said they were very satisfied and satisfied with the overall quality of police service in York Region.
- 91 percent found the switchboard operator very helpful when they contacted York Regional Police.
- 84 percent found their call for service was responded to in a professional and timely manner.
- Only 11 percent of respondents were dissatisfied with police promptness in responding to calls for service (31 percent said they don't know - possibly because they did not require police services).
- Only 10 percent were not satisfied with the way York Regional Police handles local problems (34 percent said they don't know).

York Regional Police also distributed a survey to numerous businesses and community organizations including large employers, municipalities, boards of education, boards of trade, faith groups, ethno-cultural organizations, utilities, health services and other human service providers. Their top priorities are:

- Violent Crime
- Crime Prevention
- Youth
- Police Visibility
- Hate Crime
- Response Times

## Supporting Safe and Secure Communities

### Community Safety Village of York Region

Supported by funding from community and corporate donations, the Community Safety Village Board of Directors, York Regional Police, Emergency Services and municipal Fire Departments have joined forces to develop and build the Community Safety Village of York Region at Bruce's Mill Conservation Area. The Safety Village provides fire, traffic, and home safety education through programs for children, youth, parents and seniors. Approximately 25,000 visits per year are anticipated when the Village opens in early 2005.

## Safe, Caring and Healthy Communities - the Numbers Add Up

- 26 influenza immunization clinics
- Provided dental screening to 66,590 children
- 7,700 home visits through Healthy Babies, Healthy Children
- 10,377 Healthy Babies/Healthy Children inquiries responded to by Health Connection
- Road to Safety Program offered to over 80 York Region daycares
- EMS responded to 97,000 911 calls
- Sexual Health Hotline responded to 4107 inquiries
- 1048 York Region residents accessed the services of the Sexual Health Clinic

## Encouraging Healthy Lifestyles Through Information, Education and Prevention

The Falls Intervention Team (FIT) Pilot Project examined modifiable risk factors in the frail elderly. Clients were assessed through home visits by a public health nurse and/or a community-based physiotherapist, as well as being instructed in the Home Support Exercise Program (HSEP).

The study found an 87.5% reduction in the number of falls by participants over a 9 month period. Clients reported improved confidence and involvement in activities that they hadn't been able to do before, such as walking outdoors, and getting into a car more easily. The study also found a reduction in falls as compared to pre-admission in the program.

This best practice model has the potential to guide future standards of care in falls prevention for seniors. Key partners continue to explore options for the expansion and the long-term sustainability of the program. The FIT Team consisted of members from Baycrest Centre for Geriatric Care, Toronto Public Health, York Region Health Services and Joseph E. and Minnie Wagman Centre. This project was funded by Health Canada/Veteran's Affairs Canada.

## Working for You

G.I.V.E. "Get Involved, Volunteer in Education" is a collaborative pilot project between Community Services and Housing, Health Services, and the York Region District School Board that provides an opportunity for participants on Ontario Works and parents in the community to gain volunteer experience.

# Housing Choices for Our Residents

## VISION GOAL STATEMENT:

In 2026, York Region residents will have access to a variety of housing options that are safe, affordable and responsive to their diverse and changing needs.

# GOAL 5

## VISION 2026 ACTION AREAS:

### Providing Appropriate Housing Mix and Supply

- Encouraging a wide variety of housing types, to increase the choices available to residents
- Encouraging the production of housing that residents can afford to rent or buy
- Responding to the need for specialized housing, such as housing for people with physical disabilities and seniors living on their own

### Planning for Strong Live, Work, Play and Learn Connections

- Achieving better connections between where residents live, work, play and learn
- Working to match the needs of employees with housing options
- Encouraging the development of public and private services close to where people live

### Creating Well-Designed and Liveable Communities

- Encouraging quality urban planning and design that emphasizes the needs of people
- Enhancing residential streetscapes
- Encouraging the development of compact communities where people can walk to services
- Encouraging the integration of nature into development
- Encouraging and implementing architectural design controls in new developments

### Addressing Key Housing Needs

- Addressing homelessness and developing homelessness prevention programs
- Developing policies and programs to meet a variety of housing needs, including shelter for vulnerable residents and affordable ownership options
- Encouraging productive partnerships with the private and non-profit sectors, as well as other governments, to produce mixed-income communities
- Advocating for increased funding for housing from senior levels of government

# Housing Choices for Our Residents

## Providing Appropriate Housing Mix and Supply:

- In 2004 there were 10,221 residential housing starts in York Region, down slightly from 11,049 in 2003 and from 11,941 in 2002.
- As of December 31, 2004, the housing mix was 72.8% single family and 27.2% multiple units (semi's, rows and apartments) compared to 74% single family and 26% multiple units in 2003. York Region has set a long-term target of achieving a 40% multiple unit supply.
- Increased Long Term Care beds from 200 to 232 providing 84,680 facility program days.
- Opened 26 additional, accessible ACL Supportive Housing Units at the Newmarket Health Centre.
- Opened 32 additional long-term care beds at the Newmarket Health Centre.

## Waiting Lists

- In December 2004, there were nearly 5,800 applicants on the Region's subsidized housing waiting list, up from 5,500 in December 2003.

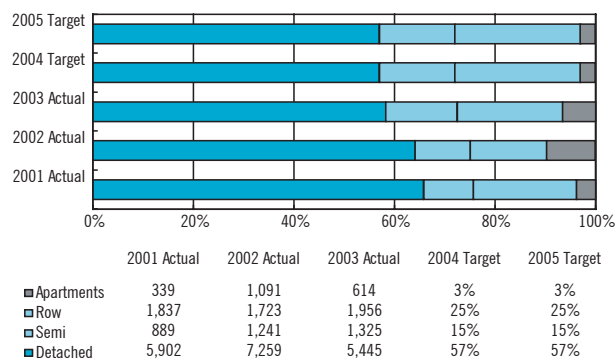
## Housing Mix

The completion of multiple units (semis, rows and apartments) has increased slightly in 2004. York Region's long term housing mix target is to have 40% of new housing supply as multi-unit completions to provide a range of housing types to address housing affordability for residents. Offering a diverse mix of housing choices for people with different income levels allows for more opportunity to live close to work thereby cutting down on road congestion.

In the 1996-2003 period, the average resale price of a single detached unit in York Region increased by approximately 62%, including a 7.7% increase from \$351,148 in 2002 to \$378,073 in 2003. By mid 2004, the average resale price of a single-family detached dwelling in the Region had reached \$405,392.

- Long Term Care and Seniors Program's Alternative Community Living Program housing waiting list - 340 clients (December 2004) up from 262 in December 2003.
- Long Term Care Facility waitlist reduced from 221 to 155 as a result of opening new beds at the Newmarket Health Centre.

Housing Mix - Registration Stage



Source: York Region Planning and Economic Development Department

## COUNCIL INITIATIVES - 2004

- Continued to partner with the City of Vaughan to develop a mixed use seniors facility including 60 senior's residences
- Continued to partner with the Town of Georgina to develop a multi-service centre for youth in Sutton
- Joined the Provincial Rent Bank Program which will provided funding for homelessness prevention
- Allocated \$2.0 million towards homelessness prevention and services to the homeless
- Released Preventing Homelessness In York Region: Taking the Next Steps
- Approved funding from Government of Canada's Supporting Community Partnerships Initiative (SCPI) for homeless

## SUCCESSES/INNOVATIONS - 2004

- Expanded the Community Housing Support Worker Program to help homeless find permanent housing
- Provided funding to support launch of Newmarket's Inn from the Cold program
- Continued support to four Out of the Cold sites
- Residential Intensification Study
- Completed 2004 Housing York Business Plan
- Funded the York Region Street Outreach program
- On 60 occasions the staff on the Outreach van arranged for transport or to shelter for homeless and street involved people
- Provided rent supplement to 395 households at the end of 2004, and increase of 66 units during the year
- 284 households served by the Region's Homelessness Prevention Program



## Addressing Homelessness and Developing Homelessness Prevention Program

York Region Council approved the use of \$1.3 million in funding from the Government of Canada's Supporting Community Partnerships Initiative (SCPI) for eight projects that will directly benefit homeless people in York Region including:

- Capital funding for new youth emergency shelter beds and transitional housing units in Georgina.
- Seed funding for a 16-bed transitional housing facility for homeless youth and a permanent location for the Home Base Youth Drop-in Centre in Richmond Hill.
- Increased poverty relief and support such as food, clothing and replacement identification for homeless and at-risk residents.

## Planning for Strong Live, Work, Play and Learn Connections

### Residential Intensification Study

Based on initial findings, the percentage of intensification in York Region between 1990 and 2003 was 16.9%, below the 20% minimum target set in the Region's current Official Plan. However, the rate of intensification is increasing. Based on the inventory of compact development under construction and assuming that total housing growth over the next three years will continue at the historical rate, the Region's intensification would equate to a figure of 30 to 35%. This is in keeping with Regional Official Plan Amendment (ROPA) 43 which proposes a 30% minimum target. The Province of Ontario's discussion paper, Places to Grow - A Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe proposes that a minimum of 40% of the expected growth in the Region occur through intensification in existing developed areas over the next 30 years.

### Addressing Key Housing Needs

Housing Supply Strategy 2004/2005 Work Plan  
Regional Council has endorsed a 2004/2005 work plan that will further implement its Housing Supply Strategy. Many of the steps outlined in the Strategy have been implemented. This groundwork, combined with steps that will be taken in 2004/2005 and future years, will encourage and support the supply of affordable housing and provide more housing choices for the residents of York Region.

The work plan will continue and enhance those successes already achieved in the following areas:

- Direct delivery of new affordable housing
- Partnerships in the development of new affordable housing
- Affordable home ownership
- Community awareness
- Advocating Federal and Provincial Governments roles
- Growth management
- Homelessness
- Monitoring progress

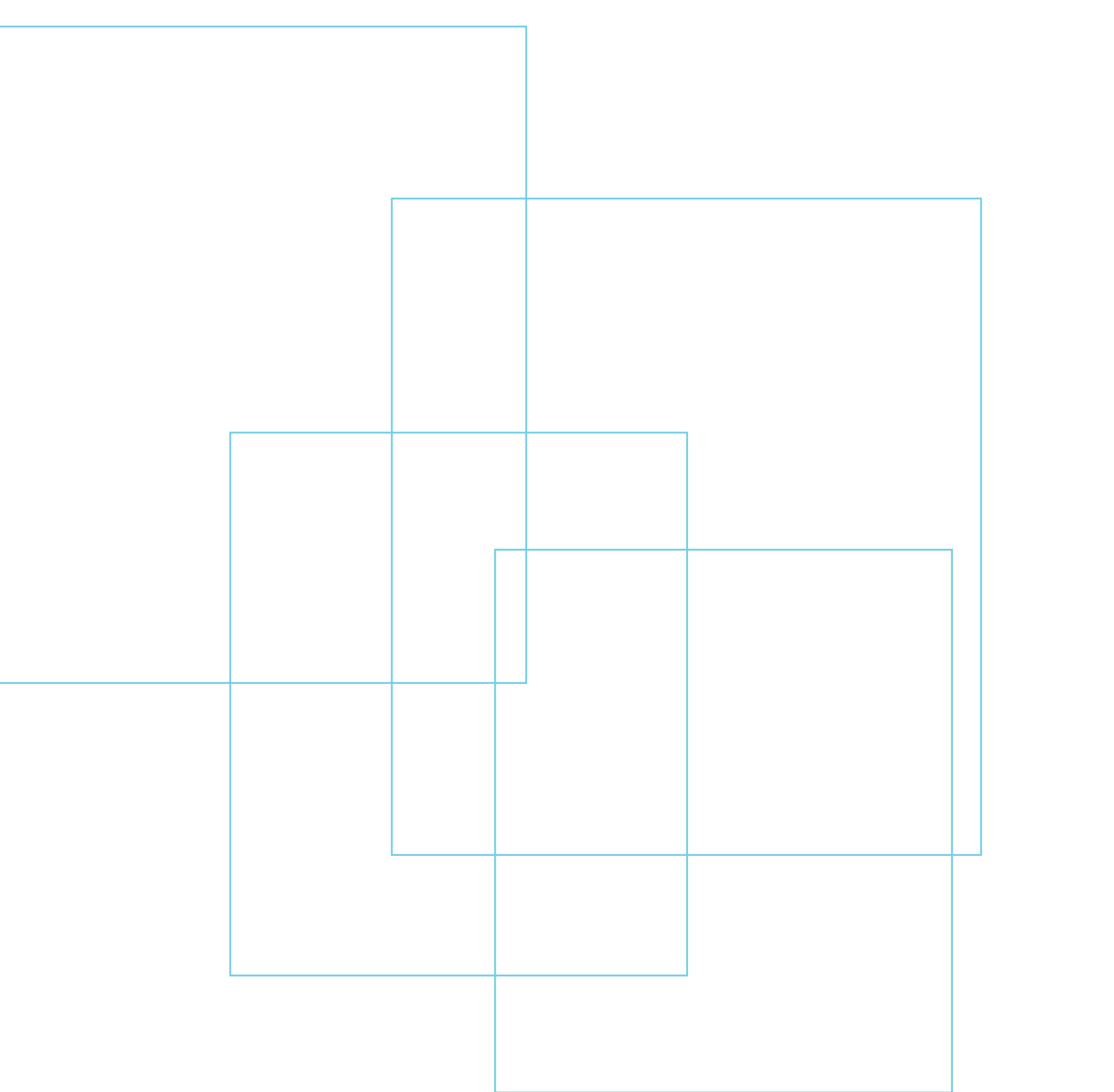
### Providing Appropriate Housing Mix and Supply

The Board of Directors of Housing York Inc., the Region's housing company, adopted a Statement of Principles that will guide the development of a performance monitoring framework and management policies for its operations.

Housing York Inc, whose motto is "Building Strong Communities" will do this by:

- Providing the right service, at the right time, in the right place, at the right cost
- Being known for leadership in property management practices
- Recognizing and responding to the diversity of our residents, our communities and our partners
- Appreciating the abilities and vulnerabilities of our residents
- Innovative growth options and development of mixed income housing

A cross-disciplinary group of staff, including management, technical and frontline workers who provide services to Housing York Inc. developed the Statement of Principles.



# Managed and Balanced Growth

## VISION GOAL STATEMENT:

In 2026, York Region will have grown at a pace that supports healthy communities, economic vitality, sustainable natural environment and effective human services.

### VISION 2026 ACTION AREAS:

#### Taking a Strategic Approach to Growth Management

- Co-ordinating the location of job growth and population growth
- Using land, infrastructure and services efficiently in urban areas
- Co-ordinating the timing of infrastructure and service development (such as schools, community facilities, all utilities and roads) with the development of new growth areas

#### Balancing Growth with the Environment

- Taking a leadership role in environmental strategies and conservation

#### Financing Growth

- Securing adequate funding for future needs
- Focusing attention on long-term capital plans
- Co-ordinating efforts with local municipalities
- Partnering with federal and provincial governments and the private sector to develop innovative funding methods

#### Planning for Human Services

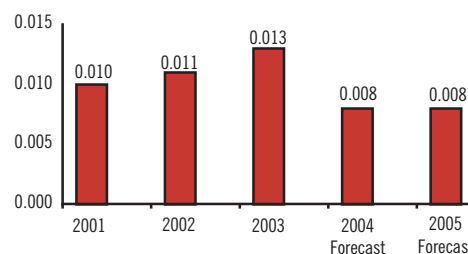
- Anticipating and responding to the human service needs of a growing and changing population
- Supporting cross-sectoral human services planning and programming through groups, such as the Human Services Planning Coalition

# GOAL 6

**Managed and Balanced Growth:**

- The Average length of trip to work for York Region Residents: 16.5 kilometres. (note, this number is updated every 5 years, the next update will be in 2006/07; source 2001 TTS).
- # Acres of greenlands secured: 580 since 2001.
- As of 2001, 53.8% of residents worked in York Region (note, this number is updated every 5 years, the next update will be in 2006/07).
- York Region's labour force of 387,700 closely matches the 430,000 jobs available in the Region. By 2011 York Region's employment is expected to increase to 540,000 jobs and to 696,000 jobs in 2026.

**Land Absorption Rate**  
(hectares of new land development per new resident)



Source: York Region Planning and Economic Development Department

**LAND ABSORPTION TO POPULATION GROWTH**

The decrease in the rate of land absorption shows the Region is accommodating more residents with less land. This indicates a more compact urban form that supports transit investments and makes efficient use of Regional infrastructure.

**GROWTH IN YORK REGION**

York Region has been growing at a rate of over 37,000 people per year for the past 5 years. Managing and balancing the needs of a growing population for housing, transit, and human services like health, education, etc., must be balanced with the need to protect the environment in which we live. York Region's Official Plan and the Centres and Corridors Growth Management Strategy provide direction to help ensure this balance by setting boundaries for where growth can occur. In the past 10 years, growth has occurred at twice the density it did before and is limited to areas designated for this growth.

**COUNCIL INITIATIVES - 2004**

- Council commits financial support for Phase 2 of Viva - York Rapid Transit
- ROPA 43 - Regional Centres and Corridors
- ROPA 41 - The Oak Ridges Moraine Conformity Amendment
- Lead partner in the Smart Commute Initiative for the GTA
- York Region Transit (YRT) Volume Incentive Pass (VIP) Program
- Four-year work program for completion of Oak Ridges Moraine watershed planning studies
- Smart Commute Initiative

**SUCCESSES/INNOVATIONS - 2004**

- Successful application to Community Sport Opportunity Fund
- Compiled "Our Children - A Preliminary Status Report on York Region's Children - 2004"
- Partnered with Markham & Richmond Hill in establishing Smart Commute 404-7 Association
- 2004 Traffic Safety Improvement Program
- Regional Official Plan Office Consolidation

**Taking a Strategic Approach to Growth Management**

Regional Council approved a recommendation that staff proceed with a work plan related to the ongoing regional and provincial initiatives dealing with growth management and urban development.

The work plan will include a number of separate tasks in determining the amount of growth the Region will accommodate over the next 27 years, and where and how this growth will occur over the next 25 years.



## Supporting Cross-Sectoral Human Services

Human Services are the programs and services that support a safe, healthy community. The Human Services sector operates as an interdependent system. The Human Services Planning Coalition (HSPC) was established in recognition of the need to respond to growth in a way that creates long-term, sustainable integrated planning and funding of human services. The HSPC has recognized that one of the most significant changes in York Region was rapid growth and the increase in diversity.

In 2001, the number of immigrants in York Region was 283,800 or 39% of the total population, up from 97,325 or 28% of the population in 1986. This rapid growth in immigration brings assets in terms of skilled professionals, cultural diversity and economic prosperity. However it also challenges human service providers in responding to the needs of immigrants and ensuring that all residents of York Region, regardless of ethnicity, are able to access needed services.

The HSPC initiated an action plan process in early 2004 by reviewing reports and initiatives from over 20 years and consulted with the community for direction on what initiatives would be most important to make York Region more ethno-culturally inclusive. A proposed action plan was drafted and sent to 1500 human service provider organizations, key leaders, ethno-cultural groups, faith leaders, and other interested stakeholders.

An Inclusivity Summit took place on January 20, 2005 with over 180 participants from 95 human service organizations representing a range of sectors including healthcare, education, police, children and youth, social services, voluntary, recreation, housing, seniors, immigrant/settlement, planning/development, faith groups and government. Summit participants exchanged information about how their organizations can provide services that are more accessible and inclusive to all ethno-cultural communities they serve.

### Final Action Plan

The outcome of the Summit was the endorsement of a made-in-York Region Action Plan and the beginning of the implementation process. The final actions are to:

1. Establish a York Region Welcome/Resource Centre/Function
2. Increase ESL Programs
3. Organize a Campaign to Human Service Providers
4. Create Learning Opportunities for Children
5. Encourage Volunteer and Leadership Development
6. Build Organizational Development Capacity

The establishment of an Inclusivity Action Steering Committee and six Working Groups is currently underway.

## ROPA 43 - REGIONAL CENTRES AND CORRIDORS

On June 24, 2004, York Region Council endorsed the York Region Centres and Corridors Strategy, Making it Happen! The purpose of the Strategy is to promote the development of a planned urban structure of centres and corridors and strengthen the relationship between land use, transportation and transit.

Regional centres are vibrant, higher density, mixed use precincts that serve as the Region's "downtown". York Region has designated and prepared detailed plans for four Regional centres. They include Markham Centre, Newmarket Centre, Bayview Glen in Richmond Hill and the Vaughan Corporate Centre.

Regional centres are linked by the Regional corridors of Yonge Street and Highway 7, which have the greatest opportunity to add new housing units, employment and services in a mixed-use form that is supportive of higher order transit services.

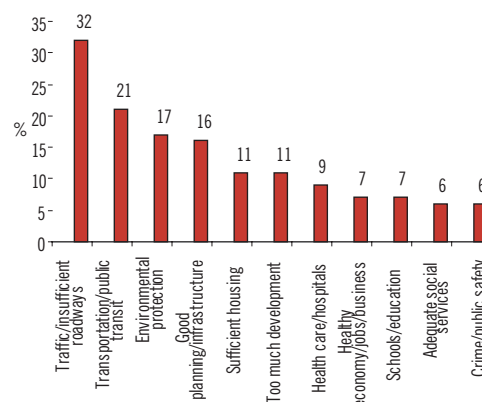
**"York Region has been growing at a rapid rate over the past few years and because of its attractiveness and location is expected to continue to grow. What do you feel are the key issues around continued growth in York Region?"**

York Region residents were asked what they feel the key top of mind issues are around continued growth in York Region.

Traffic and insufficient roadways topped the list at 32%, followed by transportation and public transit (21%), environmental protection (17%), good planning and adequate infrastructure (16%), sufficient housing (11%) and too much development (11%).

Other issues included health care and hospitals (9%), healthy economy, lots of jobs and businesses (7%), schools and education (7%), adequate social services (6%), crime and public safety (6%) and population growth and "people moving from the big city" (6%).

**Key Growth Issues**

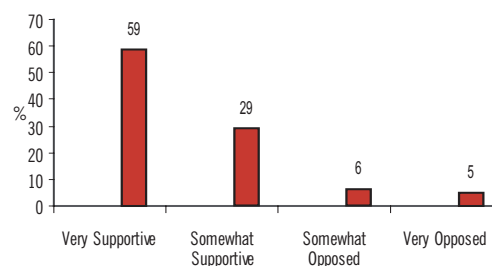


Source: Enviro-nics Survey 2004

**"In order to protect greenspaces and agricultural lands in York Region, additional growth will need to be more compact and be located in existing urbanized areas. Do you support or oppose this approach of managing additional growth to preserve natural and agricultural areas?"**

The majority of residents surveyed (88%) supported a growth management approach where additional growth will be more compact and located in existing urban areas in order to preserve natural and agricultural areas. Of these respondents, 59% were very supportive and 29% were somewhat supportive.

**Compact Urban Growth To Preserve Agricultural and Natural Areas**



Source: Enviro-nics Survey 2004

# Infrastructure for a Growing Region

## VISION GOAL STATEMENT:

In 2026, York Region will have effective, efficient and environmentally sensitive transportation, waste management and water systems.

### VISION 2026 ACTION AREAS:

#### Developing An Integrated Transportation Network

- Developing an Integrated Transportation Network
- Exploring and implementing innovations and technologies to reduce congestion
- Planning our road system to work efficiently with provincial and interregional infrastructure
- Ensuring that our transportation network co-ordinates with development
- Providing for alternative forms of transportation such as walking and cycling
- Promoting safety on York Region roads through effective policing, education and sensitive design

#### Making Transit Accessible

- Continuing to improve service and infrastructure for successfully integrated transit service
- Enhancing the provision of specialized transit service
- Developing an optimal mix of transit service types
- Promoting transit usage as a practical and wise alternative to private vehicle use
- Planning for high-level transit services to employment areas in the Region
- Investigating alternative fuel technologies to reduce emissions

#### Managing and Minimizing Waste

- Encouraging continued diversion of waste from landfill, including recycling
- Enhancing public awareness programs about recycling
- Pursuing new technologies to reduce and handle waste
- Being a leader in waste reduction

#### Ensuring Water for Our Future

- Ensuring a long-term water source for York Region
- Providing safe and dependable water supply to systems and facilities in area municipalities
- Ensuring stable, cost-effective waste-water treatment
- Building new systems that anticipate growth
- Upgrading water systems to incorporate environmentally sensitive methods

# GOAL 7

# 7

## Infrastructure for a Growing Region

### VISION 2026 INDICATORS

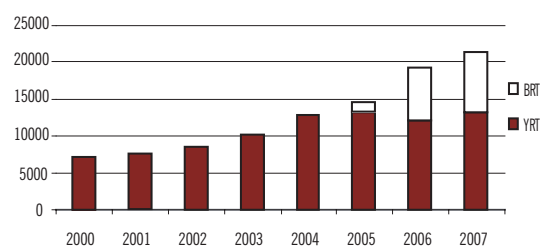
- York Region Transit served approximately 13.8 million trips in 2004, which is a 14.3% increase over 2003.
- Scheduled transit revenue vehicle hours increased by 11.6% over 2003 for a total of 620,040.
- Modal split: 79% automobile, 8% public transit, 7% walking and cycling and 5% school bus in 2001 (note, this information is updated every 5 years, the next update will be in 2006/07).
- The Region saves 22.4 million litres per day through the Water for Tomorrow program up from 13.5 in 2003.
- The percentage of waste diverted by the Region in 2001 was 25% in 2001, 26% in 2002, 24 % in 2003, and 24% in 2004 with projected rate of 29% in 2005.

#### YRT ridership continues to increase

YRT ridership for the period ending September 2004 was up 8.9 per cent from the same period in 2003, to just over 10 million. Comparing ridership for the month of September 2003 and September 2004, YRT registered a 15.9 per cent increase - one of the largest increases since YRT was formed in 2001.

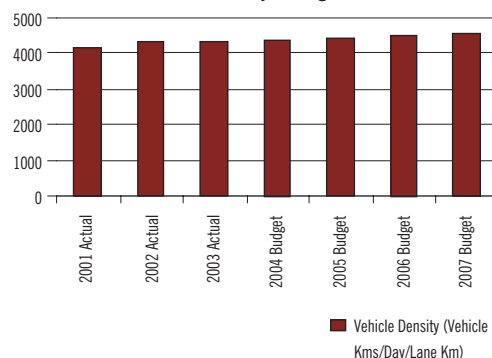
As the population grows in the Region so does the volume of traffic. Increasing congestion is a concern of all residents. York Region has a proactive roads program in place to ensure effective planning for our rapid growth and to provide the road capacity needed for a growing population. This along with the procurement and development of a new Centralized Traffic Control System will assist in addressing congestion on the Regional road system.

Transit Ridership, York Region Transit and Bus Rapid Transit



Source: York Region Transportation and Works Department (in 000's)

Vehicle Density - Congestion



Source: York Region Transportation and Works Department

### COUNCIL INITIATIVES - 2004

- Council commits financial support for Phase 2 of Viva - York Rapid Transit
- Continued advocating for extensions of Highway's 404 and 427 to support approved urban growth.
- Partnered with City of Toronto on Environmental Assessment for extension of Spadina Subway
- York Rapid Transit Plan Ambassador Program
- Standardized York Region Transit Fares
- Traffic Calming policy for transit routes
- Household Hazardous Waste Depot site purchase
- Citation of Merit from Recycling Council of Ontario

### SUCCESSES/INNOVATIONS - 2004

- Completed Phases II, III and IV of the Newmarket Health Centre Redevelopment Project

- OPTimize Works Program
- New Markham Bypass Phase 1 and 2 including the Markham Bypass / Hwy 407 Interchange.
- Opening of Newmarket arterial road Bypass
- Construction begins on Viva - York Rapid Transit (Phase 1)
- Opening of Green Lane GO rail station
- Opening of new Elgin Mills / Hwy 404 interchange
- 103 lane KM of new road constructed
- Computer-based pavement management system for road rehabilitation with 52 lane km rehabilitated.
- Opening of Sutton Water Treatment Plant
- Opening of Georgina Water Treatment Plant
- Noise abatement policy underway
- Completion of \$413 million in capital infrastructure works projects in transit, roads, water, wastewater, and solid waste



## Effective, Efficient and Environmentally Sensitive Transportation

### Hybrid Bus Demonstration project

York Region will be adding four hybrid buses to its fleet to participate in a one-year hybrid bus demonstration project. Acquisition of the buses is expected to take one year.

The buses are battery powered, with a small diesel engine to slow battery discharge. While the bus is operating in battery mode, there are no vehicle emissions.

### York Region adopts Traffic Calming policy for Transit Routes

York Region's Transit policy entitled "Policy for Traffic Calming on Public Transit Routes" will be implemented with the assistance of area municipalities to enable the policy and will strive to:

- Invest in public education to change perceptions, behaviours and attitudes that lead to collisions.
- Provide visible police enforcement where resources permit.
- Address specific traffic problems with intelligent, cost-effective solutions that will not compromise safety or penalize law-abiding citizens.
- Educate the community that instead of turning streets into playgrounds, there is a need to develop recreational grounds and facilities where children can play safely away from traffic.

The policy discourages building obstacles to impede traffic - measures that can damage vehicles and divert traffic to other roads.

### Developing an Integrated Transportation Network

#### Quick Start

In May 2004, York Region announced the signing of formal agreements with the Federal and Provincial governments to collectively invest \$150 million for the initial phase of York's rapid transit network. The three-way funding arrangement will support a number of "Quick Start" initiatives over the next three years, focussing on development of rapid service bus routes. The Quick Start initiatives constitute the first phase of the region's 20-year plan to progressively put into operation a rapid transit network, which would link surrounding urban centers and improve major service corridors to and from Toronto.

### Enhancing Public Awareness Programs about Recycling

#### Solid Waste Management Promotion and Education Plan

As part of York Region's Solid Waste Management Communications Strategy, an education plan to educate residents on the need for waste diversion will be undertaken.

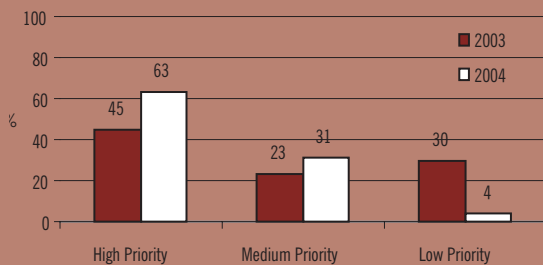
The belief is that informed residents are more likely to fully participate in recycling efforts.

The promotion and education plan includes advertising and community outreach to assist the Region in attaining its goal of 50% waste diversion from landfills.

## "Do you think implementing rapid transit should be a priority for York Region?"

When asked what priority should be given to implementing rapid transit in York Region, most said it should be a high priority (63% up from 45% in 2003), 31% (up from 23% in 2003) a medium priority and 4% (considerably down from 30% in 2003) a low priority.

Priority of Implementing Rapid Transit



Source: Environics Survey, 2004

## Encouraging Continued Diversion of Waste from Landfill

### COMPOSTER PROMOTION A SUCCESS

A joint composter sales program between the Region and the local municipalities has been successful in sales and in helping to divert more organic waste from landfills.

The program subsidizes the cost of backyard composters for sale to residents. The Region has allocated \$50,000 to the project, and has seen nearly 3,500 units sold in five separate events. Of these, a recent event in Vaughan saw the sale of over 1,200 units in just over two hours with more events planned to meet the high demand.

York Region unveiled its Five-Year Litter Prevention strategy in October 2004. The strategy aims to change resident behaviour towards littering through advertising, public education and a number of litter clean-up events and to work with local municipalities to expand on existing anti-litter initiatives.

## VIVA !

Rapid residential and employment growth have made York Region the sixth largest regional municipality in Canada within a very short period of time. As a result, the Region is facing many issues regarding traffic congestion, sustainable economic growth, protection of the environment and quality of life.

York Region is addressing the issues of rapid growth and transportation gridlock with Viva, a rapid transit solution that will help to sustain economic growth, contribute to the health of our environment, and improve quality of life for future generations. Viva will provide a viable alternative to the car for York Region's residents.

Viva is being delivered in a three-phased approach over a 20-year period. By making the right connections, Viva will link the Region's emerging urban centres, expand connections into the Toronto, Peel and Durham Regions, and help to reduce the rate of traffic congestion on our roadways.

In York Region, rapid transit will provide the "missing link" to provide passengers with a fast, comfortable and convenient "family" of transit services. Viva will link Transit Villages along the rapid transit corridors to encourage more efficient land use and improve quality of life.

Viva will bring considerable benefits to York Region and its residents. In addition to providing safe, efficient transportation, Viva supports a strong economy and a healthier environment.

# Engaged Communities and a Responsive Region

## VISION GOAL STATEMENT:

In 2026, York Region will be known for its citizen involvement and will set high standards for transparent policy making and decision making, effective communication, strong partnerships, clear accountability and best-quality service.

### VISION 2026 ACTION AREAS:

#### Proactively Meeting the Needs of Our Customers

- Setting a high standard for customer service
- Delivering services to our multilingual population
- Meeting service needs at the right time, place and price

#### Building High-Performance Teams

- Attracting and retaining effective staff
- Encouraging continual learning in our organization

#### Partnering in Service Delivery

- Working with federal and provincial government partners
- Enhancing service by co-ordinating governments in area municipalities and neighbouring municipalities
- Fostering effective working relationships with community agencies and organizations
- Engaging the private sector in alternative service delivery strategies

#### Being a Region That Involves Its Citizens

- Engaging our residents in decisions that affect their lives
- Enhancing two-way communication with citizens, including the use of technology to exchange information
- Using meaningful consultation to develop effective solutions together with citizens and neighbourhood groups
- Proactively involving York Region businesses

#### Being Fiscally Responsible

- Investigating service delivery options and funding for them
- Providing cost-effective service
- Pursuing alternative sources of funding

#### Being Accountable

- Evaluating and reporting on our performance
- Seeking feedback from our citizens

# GOAL 8

# 8

## Engaged Communities and a Responsive Region

### VISION 2026 INDICATORS

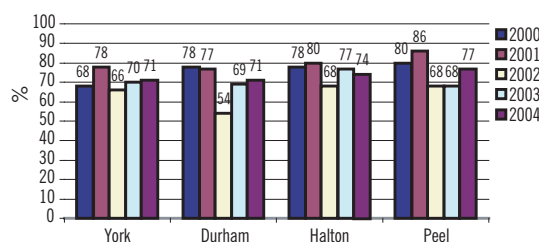
#### Proactively Meeting the Needs of Our Customers

- In 2004 71% of citizens were satisfied with Regional Government from a satisfaction level of 70% in 2003 and 66% in 2002.
- Effectiveness levels ranged from the highest (86%) for providing access to services so that people feel safe in their neighbourhoods, availability of human services (85%), and enhancement of the natural environment (70%) to a low of (51%) for providing a range of affordable housing opportunities.

#### Being Fiscally Responsible

- York Region achieved the highest possible credit rating (AAA, Standard and Poor's) for the 6th year in a row.

Satisfaction with Regional Government



Source: Environics Survey 2004

### COUNCIL INITIATIVES - 2004

- Released Towards the Vision: Second Annual Report on Indicators of Progress
- 2004 Business Plan and Budget
- Achieved the highest possible credit rating (AAA, Standard and Poor's) for the 6th year in a row

### SUCSESSES/INNOVATIONS - 2004

- Successfully piloted a Construction Worker "training-to-work" program which placed social assistance recipients into paid employment
- 2004 YorkLink Community Services Directory published
- All child care brochures and application forms translated into 7 languages
- Public consultation to gather input for the Region's 2005 Accessibility Plan
- Successfully piloted an accessible computer workstation for people with disabilities in the Employment Resource Centre of the Georgina Social Assistance Office.
- The York Region AAC actively provided advice and ideas on how to identify and eliminate barriers to people with disabilities
- Launched Internet access to mapping of child care sites
- Street Index Guide updated for users including EMS, Police and fire departments

#### Did you know....

The Citizens First series of surveys indicates that the telephone is the most frequently used service delivery channel for connecting with the public sector. It also rates low in citizen satisfaction. In response to these findings, "Customer Service: Professional Telephone Etiquette" was created by York Region staff in Human Resources, Information Technology Services and Customer Service. The result was a successful pilot session that has become a regular course offering available to all York Region Staff.

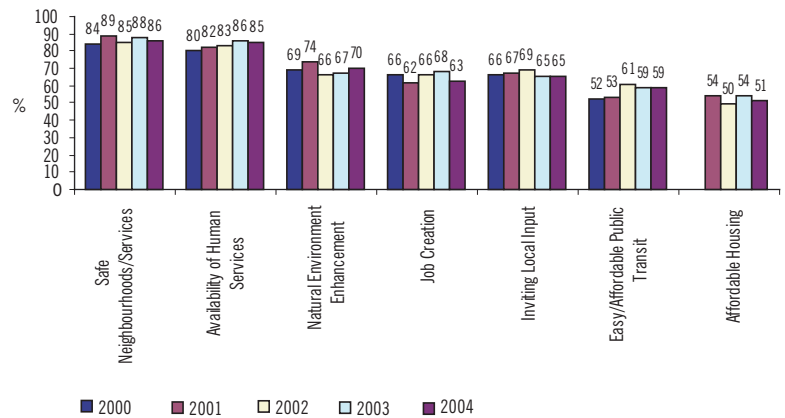


## York Region's Effectiveness

York Region residents were asked to rate the overall effectiveness of the Regional government in addressing key local issues such as safety, human services, natural environment, job creation, inviting public input, providing a transportation system that makes getting around easy and affordable and the provision of a range of affordable housing opportunities.

Effectiveness levels ranged from the highest (86%) for providing access to services so that people feel safe in their neighbourhoods, availability of human services (85%), and enhancement of the natural environment (70%) to a low of (51%) for providing a range of affordable housing opportunities.

Region of York's Effectiveness

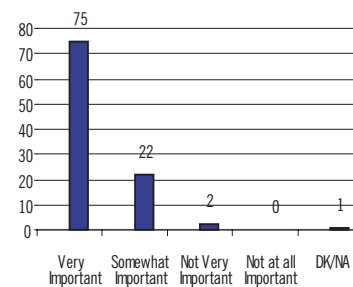


Source: Environics Survey 2004

## "How important do you feel it is for programs, services and facilities in York Region to be fully accessible to all including residents with disabilities?"

A resounding 97% majority of residents feel it is important for programs, services and facilities in York Region to be fully accessible to all residents including those with disabilities. This includes 75% who feel it was very important and 22% who feel it is somewhat important.

Importance of Full Accessibility



Source: Environics Survey 2004

## Meeting Service Needs at the Right Time and Place

The Community Resource Centre (CRC) opened in October 2004 at Hillcrest Mall in Richmond Hill. The facility gives York Region residents the opportunity to self-report property-damage and motor vehicle collisions, providing residents with an efficient, time-saving way to report their collisions, while allowing front-line officers to engage in more proactive policing in their communities.

Residents can also obtain volunteer screening services and clearance letters at the CRC.

York Regional Police is the first in Ontario to offer citizens the option of on-line reporting via the Internet of such crimes as theft or damage under \$10,000, harassing phone calls and lost or stolen property.

## Did you know....

Agendas for Regional Council and its Committees are posted on the Region's web site on the Friday or Saturday before the meeting, with hyperlinks to background reports and information, for the public's convenience.

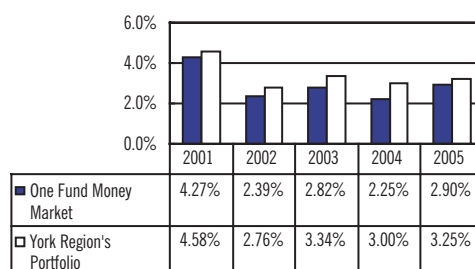
## WORKING FOR YOU

In 2004, York Region partnered with community agencies and employers to promote job opportunities for Social Assistance recipients. In 2004, 878 individuals left Ontario Works for employment. For the period of 1999-2004 York Region's Ontario Works Program assisted over 5,400 participants to leave Social Assistance for employment.

## Rate of Return on Investment

The rate of return earned by the Region's investment portfolio is benchmarked against that earned by the ONE Fund. The ONE Fund is a professionally managed portfolio which is available to municipalities in Ontario that invests only in those securities that are permitted by Provincial regulations. Over the last 4 years York Region's investment returns have consistently exceeded this benchmark by at least 25 basis points. In 2004 the Region successfully initiated a pilot project to enhance its portfolio returns by at least an additional 10 basis points over the previous 25 basis point spread target. Continuing this pilot project will generate at least \$500,000 more revenue annually for the Region's reserves.

## Rate of Return on Investment



Source: York Region Finance Department

## Building High Performance Teams

### York Region EMS receives three-year certification award

York Region Emergency Medical Services (EMS) received a three-year certification standing by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (MOHLTC), based on an Ambulance Service Review conducted last fall.

The Ambulance Service Review determines if operators meet MOHLTC standards and found that York Region EMS was extremely dedicated to achieving excellence and was commended for its hard work and efforts in the following areas:

- Excellent working relationship with the Central Ambulance Communication Centre
- Patient care was rated by the hospital emergency departments as very good to excellent
- Detailed auditing system for Ambulance Call Reports
- Proactive effort towards training and education in the service
- Above average involvement with allied agencies
- Excellent communication skills with patients and families

Currently York Region has:

- 155 Primary care paramedics
- 58 Advance care paramedics
- 32 Emergency vehicles
- 18 paramedic response stations
- And received approximately 92,000 calls in 2004.

### Proactively Meeting the Needs of Our Customers

In 2004 significant enhancements were made to the York Explorer website, such as new map views, enhanced navigation and implementation of a distance measuring tool. Approximately 18,730 internal and external visitors viewed geographic information online and 37,762 maps were downloaded.

## Long Term Care and Services Branch receives three-year accreditation standing

Long Term Care and Services Branch was awarded a full three-year accreditation standing by the Canadian Council on Health Services Accreditation (CCHSA). The Long Term Care (LTC) and Seniors Branch encompasses the Newmarket Health Centre, Maple Health Centre, LTC Supportive Housing/Assisted Community Living (ACL) and LTC Day and Outreach Programs.

Participation in the accreditation program is voluntary, and the highest level of accreditation a health service organization is eligible to receive is three years. A survey of the Branch's programs was conducted in May 2004. During this survey, all programs and services were found to be meeting a very high compliance of CCHSA standards. These standards are client focused and address all aspects of the facility operations, from accounting practices and administration, to dental care and community support programs, to safety and security and volunteer services. The Accreditation report indicated that the LTCSB "is a very progressive and dynamic organization... and is well-recognized as a leader in the community, providing quality care through a wide range of programs." The Surveyors observed that there is a strong resident, client and staff focus. The report also states, "The organization has advanced to a state of excellence and best practices with its continuous quality improvement processes (CQI). CQI has been integrated into all aspects of the facility operation and service."



Regional Municipality of York  
Spring 2005

## **We'd Like to Hear From You**

Tell us what you thought of this year's *Towards the Vision* or simply let us know if you'd like more information on anything you've read in this report:

Mail or in Person:

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For more information on anything listed in this report,  
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**[www.york.ca](http://www.york.ca)**



# 2026



**2026** Vision  
Vision