



Resources, People, Knowledge

The Greening Strategy is an innovative program in York Region that provides a context for regional decision-making that affects our natural environment. The Greening Strategy includes environmental management and strategic on-the-ground action. This is accomplished through protection and rehabilitation, community education, stewardship, land securement and more. The projects and programs developed and implemented through the Strategy include a range of partnerships which make the best possible use of resources, people, knowledge and expertise in the Region. Through the Greening Strategy we are protecting, linking, and restoring York Region's natural heritage for present and future generations.



Strategic Direction

The need for the Greening Strategy was first established when the Region was considering adopting a Tree By-law in the early 1990s. It was further emphasized during the Regional Official Plan Report Card process in 1998, when the public said they "supported the Region's environmental policies but felt that we weren't doing enough to implement them". In response, Regional Council adopted the Greening Strategy in 2001. The Strategy provides opportunities to turn policies into direct action. The Strategy recognizes the functional interconnectedness of our air, land and water resources when planning a healthy natural heritage system, an approach consistent with regional objectives set out in Vision 2026.

The Greening Strategy functions as the Region's strategic and co-ordinated one window platform to coordinate and promote our environmental initiatives.

Leading by Example

York Region is committed to looking at our own operations through a Greening Strategy lens. Street tree planting and maintenance are significant programs as part of the Region's streetscaping initiative. Pesticide Reduction and Road Salt Management Guidelines are other ways in which we are managing our own operations to protect the environment. Corporate facilities are subject to continual energy use audits and retrofits. The Region's Water For Tomorrow Program has significantly reduced water usage not only within York Region facilities but also by our residents through an ambitious public education and outreach campaign.



Programs for Groups

The Greening Strategy offers a number of opportunities for conservation minded groups and those interested in learning more about the environment to get involved. New Greening Strategy programs and partnerships are developed on a regular basis. Some opportunities include rehabilitating streams and tree planting within Regional Road rights of way through the Adopt-A-Stream Crossing program or outdoor education in the York Regional Forest through the Region's Nature's Classroom forest education program. Other opportunities include assisting with Regional clean-up initiatives, earth day events and community tree planting. For more information about how you can get involved, see the contact information on the back of this brochure.

Programs for Private Landowners

Through the Greening Strategy, York Region partners with other organizations to provide support programs for private landowners wishing to ecologically enhance or improve the environmental management of their lands. Programs include financial subsidies for tree planting on larger properties, native tree kits for urban residents and assistance to landowners in preparing forest management plans. For more information about current programs please see the contact information on the back of this brochure.



Making a Difference



Since inception of the Greening Strategy, York Region has been recognized as a leader in proactive environmental protection and enhancement by the Province, other municipalities and stakeholders. A number of regions, municipalities, conservation authorities and organizations have followed in the footsteps of York and developed their own strategies.

In the first 4 years of implementation, York Region's Greening Strategy contributed to many significant achievements including:

- Over half a million trees and shrubs planted through naturalization initiatives and urban tree planting programs.
- Adoption of York Region's Land Securement Strategy with a financial commitment of \$1.4 million dollars annually.
- York Regional Forest Environmental education provided to over 5000 participants of Nature's Classroom programs.
- 235 hectares (580 acres) of land secured through donation, conservation easements, purchases and other opportunities.
- International Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certification by Smartwood and the Rainforest Alliance of the York Regional Forest. The York Regional Forest was the first publicly owned forest in Canada to be FSC certified.
- Development of a Forest Conservation By-law released in 2005 to protect forests on private land throughout the Region.
- Raised public awareness of the Region's environmental achievements and challenges through promotion of programs, projects, events, brochures and web site development.

The York Regional Forest

York Region has over 2200 hectares (5000 acres) of publicly accessible Regional Forest in 18 properties. In 2001, York Region was recognized internationally for our environment first management of the York Regional Forest. The Regional Forest was certified as sustainably managed by Smartwood in accordance with Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) standards. The York Regional Forest was the first publicly owned Forest to receive FSC certification. Through the Greening Strategy, York Region continues to look for strategic opportunities to expand and enhance the Regional Forest for all residents.

York Region's Major Strategic Directions

In addition to the Region's significant actions on the ground, it is of paramount importance that the Region remain strategic when considering healthy communities and natural spaces into the future. York Region is working in a number of areas including:

Long Range Planning - With initiatives such as Centres and Corridors, Towards A Sustainable Region and Planning for Tomorrow, York Region is working with the public and experts to ensure that the sustainable growth of York Region is an appropriate balance of healthy communities, natural environment and economic vitality.

State of the Environment Reporting - York Region released State of the Environment Reports in 2000, 2005 and will continue to on 5 year intervals in the future. These reports document the condition of York Region's Air, Land and Water as we monitor the Region's progress protecting and rehabilitating valuable and essential environmental features and functions.

Regional Securement Criteria - The York Regional Forest, and other lands protected in the public interest, is a significant amenity to the public and diverse wildlife. York Region Strategic Securement Criteria, adopted in 2004, directs Regional Securement resources to areas that have the most benefit in protecting and linking a healthy natural heritage system.

Corporate Clean Air Initiatives - Protecting clean air is vital to the health of the Region, its people and the natural environment. The Region is actively monitoring and reducing emissions to improve air quality. Further, a Corporate Clean Air Task Force has been established to oversee current initiatives and to continually explore new opportunities.



The following is a list of websites that provide valuable "Greening" information.

York Region

www.york.ca

Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority

www.lsrca.on.ca

Toronto and Region Conservation Authority

www.trca.on.ca

Oak Ridges Moraine Foundation

www.ormf.com

Environmental Earth Angels

www.earthangels.ca

Evergreen

www.evergreen.ca

Ontario Nature

www.ontarionature.org



Want to become involved? Learn **more?**

Contact

The Regional Municipality of York
Transportation and Works Department
Natural Heritage and Forestry Services Section
The Regional Greening Co-ordinator

On-line at www.york.ca

Phone (905) 830-4444, Extension 5274

Toll Free 1 (877) 464-9675, Extension 5274

Fax: (905) 895-3047

Email: Greening@york.ca



Look for the Greening Strategy logo identifying York Region's environmental initiatives



Mixed Sources

Product group from well-managed forests, controlled sources and recycled wood or fiber
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Working Together...

York Region's Greening Strategy.

