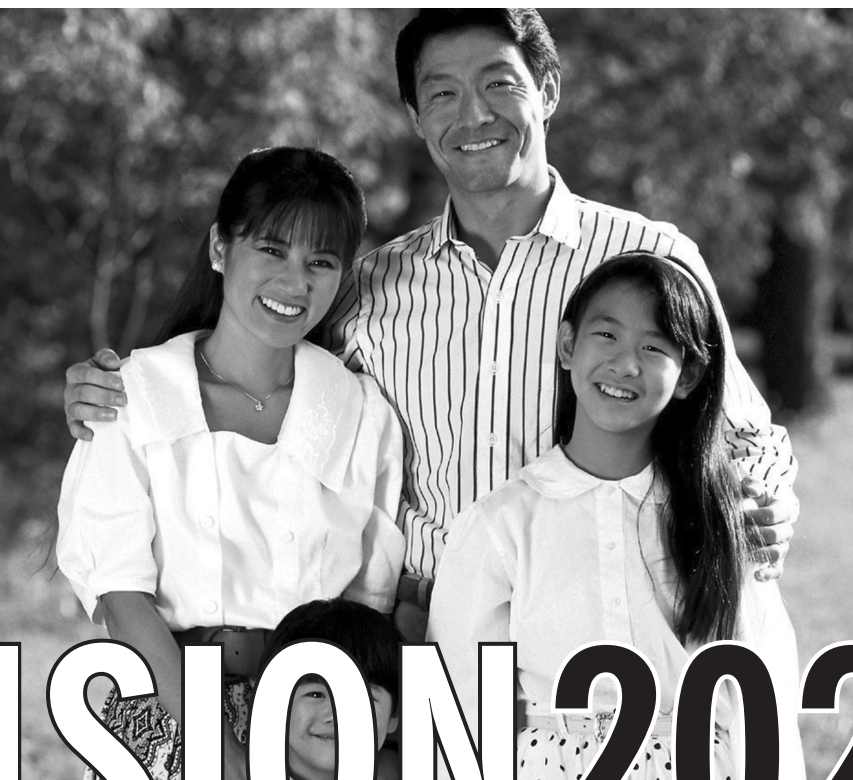


Ontario's Rising Star
York Region

Markham • Vaughan • Richmond Hill • Newmarket • Aurora
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2026 Vision
Vision



VISION 2026

TOWARDS A SUSTAINABLE REGION

Fifth Annual Report on Indicators of Progress

2006

We'd Like To Hear From You

Tell us what you thought of this year's *Vision 2026: Towards a Sustainable Region* or simply let us know if you'd like more information on anything you've read in this report:

Mail or in Person: **Planning and Development Services
Regional Municipality of York
17250 Yonge Street, 4th Floor
Newmarket, Ontario L3Y 6Z1**

Phone: **(905) 830-4444 x1588
Toll Free: 1-866-258-2026**

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For more information on anything listed in this report, please contact us or visit our Web site at:

www.york.ca

Message from York Regional Council

York Regional Council is pleased to present *Vision 2026: Towards a Sustainable Region, the Fifth Annual Report on Indicators of Progress, for the Year 2006*. This report highlights our progress in addressing *Vision 2026*, the strategic plan of The Regional Municipality of York for the next 20 years.

A key highlight of 2006 was the development of a draft of the first York Region Sustainability Strategy, which provides a municipal decision-making model that integrates the values of sustainable natural environment, healthy communities and economic vitality. Copies of the draft Sustainability Strategy are available from the Region and we encourage you to review this document and provide us with comments.

York Region also received the following awards in 2006:

- Recycling Council of Ontario Gold award for York Region's Yes! Blue Box Campaign
- Recycling Council of Ontario Bronze award for York Region's Waste Management Centre
- Canadian Institute of Planners Planning Excellence award for York Region's State of the Environment Report
- CMHC award for Armitage Gardens in the category of "Best Practices in Affordable Housing"
- Microsoft Technology Innovation award for York Regional Police Project ShARE (Sharing and Administering Resources Electronically)

Another highlight of 2006 was York Region being named one of the top 100 companies to work for in Canada and one of the top 50 in the GTA for 2007. This recognition means that York Region has an increased ability to recruit quality employees and retain staff. This achievement successfully addresses *Vision 2026's* Goal 8, being responsive by building high-performance teams.

We encourage you to read this annual report and we invite your feedback. By working together on these vital initiatives, we will ensure York Region continues to build strong, caring and safe communities that reflect the kind of community our residents want, both now and in the future.

Towards a Sustainable Region

Vision 2026 Indicators of Progress: “Towards a Sustainable Region”

“Sustainability means doing things better – not doing without”

- David Suzuki, Foreword to Sustainability Within a Generation, 2004

Vision 2026 is York Region’s strategic plan for the next quarter century and was created in partnership with our community. At the heart of *Vision 2026* and its *Annual Report on Indicators of Progress* are their commitment to forging a legacy of sustainability that is based a sustainable natural environment, healthy communities and economic vitality. These values are also at the crux of the *York Region Sustainability Strategy: Towards a Sustainable Region* which is scheduled to be released in the summer of 2007.

The purpose of the Sustainability Strategy is to provide a long-term framework for making smarter decisions about growth management, and municipal responsibilities that better integrate the economy, environment and community. As our population is expected to increase to 1.5 million residents by 2031, the Region will face a number of important issues. These decisions will address how we manage our growth, protect and enhance our natural heritage, and foster a strong and diverse economy. In addition, the Region will be affected by global trends related to changing demographics, increasing diversity, energy concerns, social cohesion, the quality of our air, water and soil, and such public health issues as obesity and cardiovascular disease.

To address these issues, the Region has made significant advances to build a more sustainable Region. These include:

- Energy Efficient Affordable Housing Project: Tom Taylor Place
- Minimum LEED Silver Standard for Regional Facilities
- An integrated and coordinated approach to the *Regional Official Plan* and Infrastructure Master Plan Updates.
- 20/20 The Way to Clean Air Program Partnership with York Region School Boards
- Smart Commute Initiative
- Human Services Inclusivity Action Plan

Vision 2026 will play an increasingly important role as the major monitoring document for the Sustainability Strategy with respect to addressing the way we engage our public, implement our policies, monitor our progress and improve on our successes.

The Sustainability Strategy will enable the Region to translate the concept of sustainability into practical action and coordinate current initiatives and identify gaps. We will also be able to address the expectations and values of our public, stakeholders and employees. In essence, sustainability makes good business sense and increases our competitive advantage for the future, energizing our employees and increasing efficiency and productivity.

Sustainability means *leaving our communities, our Region, our World in a healthy state for our children and grandchildren.*

Sustainability means *evaluating the community, environmental and economic effects of our actions.*

Sustainability means *thinking differently, being more innovative and collaborative.*

Sustainability means *making smarter decisions about our lifestyle, community design, infrastructure and financial decisions.*



York Region:
Creating Strong Caring 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.



Award Winning Stewardship: Spotlight on St. John Sideroad/McKenzie Wetland Improvements Project

The St. John's Sideroad/McKenzie Wetland Improvements project was completed in June of 2006. It not only included roadworks, sewers, watermain, street lighting and traffic signals, but also involved the construction of retaining walls, railway crossing, timber boardwalks, bicycle trails, landscaping and work adjacent to the sensitive and Provincially Significant McKenzie Wetland and Holland River. Through a context sensitive solutions approach and constructive public engagement, York Region was able to not only protect the sensitive natural environment, but enhance it by designing

and constructing the infrastructure to address natural and social environmental issues and opportunities. Overall, the road widening and habitat enhancement have served to create an area where local residents and wildlife can safely co-exist side by side.

York Region received the Ontario Public Works Association's Project of the Year Award for this undertaking, as well as being selected to present a case study on this project at the 2006 American Public Works Association International Public Works Congress and Exposition.

Goal 1: Quality Communities for a Diverse Population

Vision 2026 Indicators:

Ensuring Quality of Life

- 28% (down from 39%) of residents surveyed rated quality of life in the Region as excellent and 57% rated it good, an overall 85% approval rating.
- In 2001, Statistics Canada reported that 53.8% of residents worked in York Region*.
- The Region's LTC Facilities achieved an overall facility rating of 96% in the combined good and excellent categories in the Annual Client Satisfaction Quality Survey.
- The Alternative Community Living Program and YR Adult Day Program Client Satisfaction Surveys achieved an overall Program satisfaction rating of 100%, in the combined good and excellent categories.

Responding to Children in Need

- In December 2006, there were over 1,900 children on the wait list for child care fee assistance.
- In 2006 child care fee assistance was provided to a monthly average of 3,263 children, an increase of 505 children over the monthly average of 2,758 children in 2005, as a result of new funding provided through the provincial Best Start Strategy.

Promoting Liveable, Sustainable Safe Communities

- York Regional Police continued to increase their presence in York Region communities, conducting over 8,500 hours of foot patrol increasing the number of bike patrol days to 142 from 119 days.
- Despite rapid development and population growth across York Region, emergency Response times for York Regional Police held steady at 7.9 minutes.
- York Regional Police increased the use of Drug Recognition Experts to detect drivers operating motor vehicles under the influence of drugs. There were 32 requests for their services, up from 8 last year.
- The proportion of commuters walking or cycling in 2001 was 2.4%, comparable to 2.6% in 1996.*

Responding to our Diversity with Innovative Service Delivery Options

- Continuing to be more representative of the communities we serve, York Regional Police conducted 118 Recruiting Outreach initiatives in 2006. Our complement of visible minority officers has increased from 6% in 2001 to more than double that at 13.4% in 2006, up from 12.8% in 2005.

*numbers based on Statistics Canada Census 2001, the next update will be available in 2007/08.

Council Initiatives – 2006

- Third Annual York Region Character Community Conference
- York Region's 2006 Accessibility Plan
- Swim to Survive Program
- Support for the Ontario Farmland Trust's conservation initiative

Successes/Innovations- 2006

- York Region Chinese Health Information South Asian Health Fair
- Veterans Day complimentary transit services
- Prenatal Classes in Chinese
- Joint York Region Health and Police Methamphetamine Strategy and Educational Summit
- Fourth Annual York Region Farm Fresh Guide 2006
- Parenting programs Just For You and Your Baby and Nobody's Perfect offered in Chinese
- Falls Prevention CD for the visually impaired and frail seniors

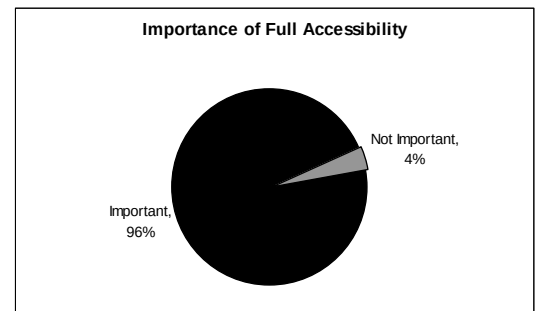
- Pedestrian safety pamphlet in Hebrew, French, Chinese, Italian, Hindi and Russian distributed to 19 different multi-cultural communities
- New Health Connection TTY telephone service for the hearing impaired
- Best Start Infrastructure Plan implementation to increase child care spaces by 1,006
- Launched pilot Sport and Recreation Initiative programs for children in social housing
- Increased service levels by 10% in Early Intervention Services for children with special needs.
- Language Line supports applicants for child care fee assistance whose first language is not English
- Partnered with community agencies on AOK Early Child Development and Parenting Programs

Removing Barriers: York Region's 2006 Accessibility Plan

York Region's 2006 Accessibility Plan, approved by Council, is a comprehensive plan of actions that York Region will take to identify, remove and prevent barriers for people with disabilities in Regional programs, services, facilities, by-laws, policies and procedures. Removing Barriers includes 71 initiatives aimed at enhancing accessibility in every Regional department, as well as in York Regional Police and York Region Transit. The plan was developed with advice from the York Region Accessibility Advisory Committee and builds on the work established in the Region's two previous accessibility plans, Understanding Barriers (2004) and Moving Forward (2005).

Accessibility to our programs and services has been enhanced right across the Region include:

- Our buses, bus stops and crosswalks are more accessible and include features such as electronic signs and audible stop announcements, curbs to allow for mobility devices, and audible crossing technology.
- Our website is continually monitored to allow more access for persons with low vision;
- Renovating our buildings and long term care facilities entrances, accessible washrooms, walkways and signage allowing more persons with disabilities to access our buildings;
- Guidelines for planning meetings that are accessible and for producing information in accessible formats, allowing more people to participate in Regional Government; and more accessible procurement practices
- Corporate sensitivity and inclusivity training program.
- York Regional Police have established a Mental Health Support Team to assist officers in responding to calls or incidents involving people with mental health disabilities.



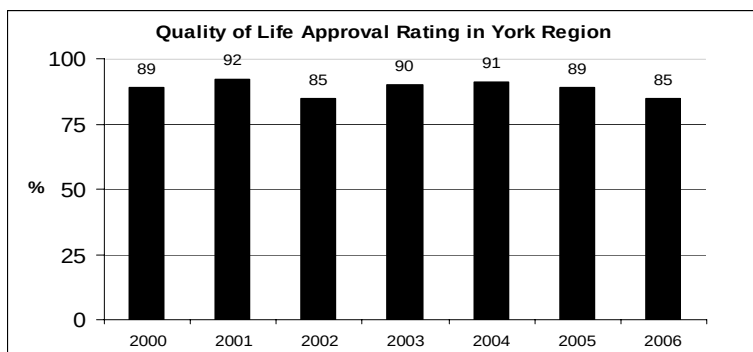
York Region was selected for the 2006 Ontario Mainstreet Accessibility Award for our "Outstanding leadership and vision for improving accessibility within diverse communities."

The majority of residents (96 – 97%) surveyed in the past three years feel it is important for programs, services and facilities in York Region to be fully accessible to residents with disabilities.

Source: Environics Survey Fall 2006

“Overall, how would you rate the quality of life in York Region?”

When York Region residents were asked to rate the quality of life in York Region, 57% rated the quality of life as good and an additional 28% rated the quality of life as excellent for an overall approval rating of 85%. Only 14% of polled residents rated the quality of life in York Region as fair, and no respondents rated it as poor.



The most often first mentioned quality of life factors in York Region were; safety and a low rate of crime, clean healthy environment, and parkland and open space.

Responding to Our Diversity with Innovative Service Delivery Options

In May 2006 a report entitled “Community Snapshots: Recent Immigrants Living in York Region” was officially launched. The report, prepared in consultation with York Regional Police, the school boards, the United Way of York Region and other community groups, provides a socio-economic profile of recent immigrants and is being used to assist in service planning and advocacy initiatives for immigrant services and funding.

Between 1991 and 2001, recent immigrants accounted for 42% of the population growth in York Region.

Involving and Investing in Our Youth

The 1st Annual York Regional Police Youth Leadership Camp was held at the Community Safety Village in the summer of 2006. It was attended by 92 students from grades 5 & 6 throughout the Region.

The York Region Community Safety Village was visited by almost 26,000 school children and other citizens in 2006 to take part in education and safety lessons.

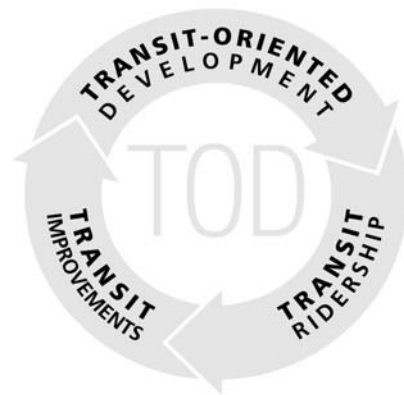
York Regional Police also established Youth Assisting Youth, a joint Police/Youth mentorship program, as well as Families and Schools Together program (FAST) which targeted youths at risk and brought schools, police and programs together to assist families.

“What do you feel are the key issues facing new immigrants in York Region?”

Twenty-five percent (25%) of respondents to an Environics survey felt that employment issues such as job placement and training were key issues facing new immigrants, and 23% felt that language barriers such as access to ESL classes were key issues. Other mentions include affordable housing (19%) and cultural differences or barriers (11%).

Encouraging Pedestrian Friendly and Transit-Oriented Neighbourhoods

York Region, in partnership with its nine local municipalities, received Council endorsement of the final version of the Regional Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Guidelines. These guidelines are designed to make the Region more pedestrian-focused through a variety of initiatives, including getting people out of cars and onto transit and using alternative modes of transportation such as car pooling, creating better streetscapes for cyclists and walkers and strengthening linkages between residential areas and commercial centres.



Promoting Liveable, Sustainable and Safe Communities

In 2006, York Regional Police were involved in numerous community initiatives. Some examples include:

- **Citizenship Ceremony** for over 100 new Canadians who were sworn in as citizens.
- **Operation Stay Focused** to educate drivers on the dangers of distractions on driving.
- **Operation Improve** identifies and targets high-accident intersections.
- **Avian Pandemic Flu Operational Response Plan** was completed.

- **Stop Hate Crimes Project** partnership to educate and support victims of hate crimes.
- **Traffic Complaint visits** increased by 76.9% in response to public complaints.
- **Elementary school visits by the** Community Services Bureau to strengthen ties with the youth.
- **Marijuana grow operations** continue to be dismantled through aggressive enforcement.
- **Air Support Unit** continued effective patrol support operations, with 1,602 calls and an average response time of 1.7 minutes.
- **Be Net Aware** program launched to teach children and parents about internet dangers and safe use.
- **Guns & Gangs Strategy** developed with the community.
- **Organized Crime Strategy** developed to detect, disrupt and dismantle organized crime.
- **Methamphetamine Strategy** developed with Health Services to address the use and production of methamphetamine.
- **Police/School Protocol** to solidify the partnership between police and both school boards to maintain a safe school environment for our children.



GOAL 2: Enhanced Environment, Heritage and Culture

Vision 2026 Indicators:

Securing a Green Region

- York Region's forest cover is 40,025 hectares or 22.5% of total land area as measured in 2005. The Regional Official Plan target is 25%.
- Regional Greenlands System included 60,174 hectares of land or 34% of the total land area of York Region, a 29% increase in this system between 2001 and 2005.
- A total of 504 ha (1246 ac) of greenlands have been protected since 2001 through the Greenlands Property Securement Strategy. In 2006, 228ha (563ac) were secured.
- Since 1996, York Region has planted almost 20,000 street trees along regional roads. In 2006 approximately 3,000 street trees and 40,000 trees and shrubs were planted through Greening Strategy naturalization partnerships.

Clean Air

- In 2006, 5 smog advisories were issued for the York-Durham forecast region affecting a total of 11 days. This compares to 14 in 2005 affecting a total of 48 days; 6 advisories over 14 days in 2004, and 5 over 12 days in 2003. (note: Provincial air quality measurement methods changed between 2004 and 2005). Air quality advisories are highly dependant on temperature and weather patterns. Warmer, dryer summers tend to produce more poor air quality days because smog is created by both air pollutants and their chemical reactions in sunlight. Trends of individual pollutants can vary, with certain contaminant levels increasing and others decreasing. Particulate matter has recently been included in the Province's Air Quality Index calculations, where trends are not yet established.

Encouraging Water Conservation

- York Region residents used an average of 241 litres per person per day in 2005, up slightly from 236 litres of water a day in 2004 and down significantly from 385 litres in 1997. The Region's Water for Tomorrow Program has substantially helped decrease water use, but year to year fluctuations may happen due to changes in the weather.

Using Energy More Efficiently in Regional Government Operations

- In 2006, the Region used 99,673,105KWH of electricity per year in its operations and facilities, down from 103,546,158KWH in 2005 despite new electrical services being added. The Region has set an aggressive 35% energy reduction target.

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

Council Initiatives – 2006

- Endorsed habitat wetlands construction in decommissioned wastewater lagoons
- Participation in the GTA Clean Air Council
- Co-coordinated York Region's Clean Air Commitments for the 2006 Intergovernmental Declaration on Clean Air at the 7th annual Smog Summit
- York Region Earth Week Promotions for elementary students
- Corporate Clean Air Task Force activities to reduce emissions from regional energy use, purchasing practices, transportation fleets, transportation and land use, planning and greening initiatives

Successes/Innovations- 2006

- Election sign recycling
- Recycling Council of Ontario Gold Award for York Region's Yes! Blue Box Campaign
- Recycling Council of Ontario Bronze Award for York Region's Waste Management Centre
- Canadian Institute of Planners Award for Planning Excellence for York Region's State of the Environment Report
- York Region Natural Heritage Workshop
- Wind Energy Pre-feasibility study
- Wind Monitoring Station at the Sutton Water Pollution Control Plant
- Partners in the Power Stream Energy Education Project

- Partnered with GTA Health Units to deliver 20/20 The Way to Clean Air Ecoschools program
- Participation in Windfall Ecology Centre's Eco-Festival
- Participation on the Markham Cycling and Pedestrian Advisory Committee
- State of the Environment Map on line
- Natural Heritage Mapping
- Maintenance/Enhancement of Land Securement Website
- Interactive Environmental/State of the Environment views on the website
- Street Trees Management System including geocoding and attribute collection of street trees
- Online Take a Hike Guide – maps most downloaded indicate key interest in outdoor healthy activity

Using Energy More Efficiently in the the Operations of Regional Government - York Region Administrative Centre Reduces Electricity Demand

As a result of its environmental retrofit program, the Regional Municipality of York's Administrative Centre has experienced a 13.2 per cent reduction in electricity demand and a 14.2 per cent reduction in electricity consumption based on an average monthly comparison from 2005 to 2006.

As a part of this energy retrofit, the York Region Administrative Centre in Newmarket has been equipped with technologies to help control lighting, temperature, ventilation and water throughout the building. New technologies include:

- Sensors that control lighting of work spaces based on occupancy (e.g. specific lights will turn off when offices and rooms are not in use)
- Lighting re-design in work areas to match the functionality of the space and improve overall lighting performance e.g. fixtures that take into consideration natural sunlight sources and in return reduce overall lighting output and increasing efficiency
- Various high efficiency cooling, ventilation and heating measures.

It's estimated that over \$200,000 in facility operating costs will be saved annually through the energy-saving retrofit of the Administrative Centre,

Anticipating and Responding to Climate Change - York Region LEED Silver Building Standards

In the spring of 2006, York Regional Council approved Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Silver as a minimum sustainable design and construction standard for new Regional facilities being built. This new benchmark allows York Region to provide a positive example and commitment to the environment.

A LEED Silver standard will ensure that Regionally-owned facilities are designed, developed and operated to demonstrate leadership in sustainability for the benefit of the environment and the residents of York Region. The new LEED Silver standard will be applicable to all new Regional facilities with floor area over 500 square metres (5,382 square feet).

LEED Silver designation is a component of the Sustainable Development Initiative for York Region approved by Regional Council in 2005, which set out a work plan with the objective of moving the Corporation toward a more sustainable Region.

LEED is a management tool used for measuring sustainable building performance. LEED certification is obtained through the Canada Green Building Council. In order to meet a specific level of LEED certification, projects accumulate credits for specific categories of sustainability, including sustainable sites, water efficiency, energy and atmosphere, material and resources and indoor environmental quality.

Based on current cost studies, it is estimated that construction of a LEED Silver building results in an incremental capital budget allowance of 2.5 to 3.5 per cent. However, the benefits of this investment include lowered operating and maintenance costs, reduced energy and water consumption, a healthier and more productive workplace and a decrease in materials going to landfill sites.

Securing a Green Region

York Region's strong commitment to the protection of woodlands and forest cover continues with the Significant Woodlands Study – a valuable tool that will help protect greenspaces. The study has verified that 22.5 percent of York Region's land base has forest cover and that 97 percent of woodland cover is Regionally significant. While the Region's growing population has led to more development over the past number of years, the amount of significant forest cover has remained virtually unchanged due in part to reforestation efforts of the Region and other environmental organizations.

Investigating and Promoting Alternative Energy Sources - Solar Panel Bus Shelter Pilot

In 2006, York Region Transit performed an investigation to see what efficient and effective solutions are available for bus stop lighting. From the investigation, a solar light pilot project was implemented. In December 2006 ten solar light kits were installed on existing shelters throughout York Region. These kits contain eight high-intensity LED (Light Emitting Diode) lights. A full battery charge retains enough energy to power the lights for ten nights. The performance of these units will be monitored throughout 2007 and upon favorable performance, a solar light program will be implemented on a larger scale in 2008.

Providing Programs, Services and Facilities that are available to all, regardless of location or personal mobility

York Region co-hosted a workshop with the Ontario Historical Society to assist heritage sites, museums and historical society to reduce barriers and increase accessibility.



GOAL 3: A Vibrant Economy

Vision 2026 Indicators:

Attracting and Supporting Businesses

- In 2006, approximately 95.0% of York Region's labour force was employed, consistent with previous years.
- Annual job creation: 10,000 – 20,000 per year for past 6 years, there were 460,000 jobs in the Region as of December 31, 2006, up from 450,000 in 2005 and 430,000 in 2004.
- Number of business enterprises increased from 55,537 in 1999 to 86,101 in 2005.
- York Region welcomed 2.975 million visitors in 2004, an increase of 19% compared to 2003. Total tourism spending of \$209.3 million represents an increase of 13.75% over a year ago.
- There are 50 private sector firms employing over 500 employees in the Region, consistent with 2005 but up considerably from 18 in 1998.

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

- York Region Small Business Enterprise Centre convened 12 seminars, handled over 6,370 general enquiries and conducted 257 consultations with entrepreneurs and small business owners.

Encouraging Continual Learning

- Percentage of population 15 + with less than grade 9 education was 7.6% in 2001 and 9.3% in 1991 (Statistics Canada, Census 1991, 2001).*
- Post secondary education attainment of people aged 25-34 as a measure of labour market capacity: in 2001, 80.7% of 25-34 year olds have some level of post-secondary education (including Trade certificate or diploma, University degree, or some post-secondary with no degree) in York Region. (Statistics Canada, Census 2001) *

*numbers based on census data, the next update will be available in 2007/08.

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.

Council Initiatives – 2006

- 2007 Tourism Marketing Program
- York Region Business Directory 2006
- An Economic Profile of York Region in web and brochure formats
- Export Development Initiative
- York Region Small Business Enterprise Centre
- Industry Cluster Analysis Phase 1
- Support for the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville's Business Retention and Expansion program
- Premier Ranked Tourist Destination Project
- Discover York Region: 2006 enhanced Visitor's Guide
- Continued funding to summer camp programs for over 500 children of Ontario Works participants and social housing residents enabling parents to access employment, training and jobs while promoting child development

Successes/Innovations- 2006

- Economic Development Review Report 2005
- York Region Online Business Directory
- Premier Ranked Tourist Destination Project
- Employment and Industry Report 2005
- Enhanced 2006 York Region Visitors Guide
- The Keynote: York Region's Conference and Meeting Planner
- Industry Canada Community Investment Support Program (CISP) funding to enhance the Economic Development web presence
- Wisdom Exchange program CEO interviews on issues facing businesses in the Region

- Investment Tour of northern 6 municipalities for realtors, consulate trade officials, and government investment officers
- Partnered with YORKbiotech on Science in Action bus tour for high school students
- Grants and sponsorship funding for York Region Small Business Enterprise Centre
- Small Business Enterprise Centre client survey
- Bridges to Better Business Conference
- Tourism Toronto - Four year funding for York Region's tourism program
- Tourism Industry Educational Development seminars
- 4 Export Seminars in partnership with York Export Alliance and Canada Ontario Export Forum
- Update of Vacant Land Inventory and interactive web views down to the parcel level

Supporting Business - York Region Online Business Directory

York Region launched a new and enhanced Online Business Directory to support local businesses and improve customer access to business products and services in York Region. To improve the online experience for businesses and consumers alike, the newly-improved directory features expanded search capabilities, self-initiated business updates and enhanced site features. York Region businesses can take advantage of free, York Region sponsored listings and the ability to update their business information at any time.

Encouraging Continual Learning

From 1998 to 2006 the Learning, Earning and Parenting (LEAP) program has assisted over 475 young parents (aged 16-21) on Ontario Works to learn about child development, parenting skills, engage in employment supports planning and to work towards their high school diploma.

Working for You

G.I.V.E. "Get Involved, Volunteer in Education" is a collaborative program involving Ontario Works, the Family and Children's Services Branch, the Health Services Department and the York Region District School Board. This program provides employment, health, safety and parenting training to individuals wishing to volunteer in schools.

Did You Know?

York Region, in collaboration with the Provincial Government, successfully implemented a new Outcome Based Employment Planning and Funding Model to support Ontario Works participants with their return to work goals.

Identifying Workforce and Educational Needs Together with Key Business and Education Partners

In 2006, York Region's Employment and Financial Support Branch partnered with community agencies and employers to promote job opportunities for Ontario Works participants, supporting approximately 1,400 individuals to exit Ontario Works for employment.

During the period from 1999-2006 York Region's Ontario Works program assisted approximately 7,600 participants to leave Ontario Works for employment.

Investing in Employment Supports

The Region's Community Development and Investment Fund (CDIF) includes Employment Supports as one of three priority areas for funding. The Region recognizes the importance of assisting low income families, including recent immigrants and families on social assistance in accessing and maintaining employment. Employment supports promote economic stability through training and employment opportunities that assist families and individuals in attaining financial independence and an enriched quality of life. In 2006, CDIF purchased services from local community agencies to provide employment assistance and job search skills to low income and foreign-trained residents.

A Vibrant Economy: Achieving Our Goals

Regional Economic Development has identified the following priorities in achieving the Vibrant Economy goal:

- Marketing and Communications to promote York Region's attributes.
- Investment Attraction to encourage the creation of new businesses enterprises.
- Workforce Development to align the needs of employers with training programs.
- Research and Analysis on economic trends
- A Long Range Tourism Strategy to increase tourist visits.
- Facilitate Growth of Existing Businesses through support programs such as Small Business Enterprise Centre,
- Export Development Initiative and Wisdom Exchange.



York Region is one of the most diverse regions in all of Canada, in industry and business, in landscape and in a multicultural population. It has a well-developed transportation network, and is within one day's drive to 140 million people in Canada and the north-eastern United States. The Region has a highly skilled and education workforce, with approximately 66% of the workforce having post secondary education. The major industry clusters in the Region include Automotive Parts Manufacturing, Building Construction and Services, Information Technology, Business Services, Materials (rubber, plastics, non-metallic), Furniture Manufacturing, Food Manufacturing. Corporate Head Offices located in the Region include AMD (formerly ATI Technologies), Dynatec, IBM Canada Ltd., Levi Strauss Canada, Magna International, Mazda

Canada, MDS Sciex, Motorola, Philips Canada, Sanyo Canada, Con Drain, Apple, St. Joseph's Printing, State Farm Insurance, Sun Microsystems, Suzuki Canada, and Toshiba.

The Community Development and Investment Fund Strategy

The Community Development and Investment Fund Strategy (CDIF) is a Regional Council approved community funding initiative. Through this strategy, over \$2.5 M was allocated to 42 community service projects in 2006, which respond to the needs of York Region's diverse population and vulnerable residents. Projects included after-school, mentoring and specialised programs for at risk youth; family strengthening programs; initiatives that supported homeless residents and those at risk of becoming homeless and employment support services.

GOAL 4: Responding to the Needs of Our Residents

Vision 2026 Indicators:

Supporting Safe and Secure Communities

- York Regional Police had the lowest crime rate when compared to other Regional police services in Ontario in 2005, up from having the third lowest ranking in 2004 (Statistics Canada).
- York Regional Police received 224,992 demands for service in 2006, with only 116 public complaints.
- York Regional Police inspected 2,451 Commercial Motor Vehicles, an increase of 2.4% from 2005. Of those vehicles inspected, 928 charges were laid and 757 vehicles were taken out of service.
- York Regional Police's overall Clearance Rate for Criminal Occurrences increased by 6.6% in 2005. This represented the second highest clearance rate when compared to other Provincial police services (Statistics Canada).
- York Regional Police stopped 111,457 vehicles during our year-round RIDE campaign, an increase of 53.1% from 2005. RIDE spot checks were conducted a total of 164 days in 2006 and 1,735 roadside tests were administered (an increase of 88%). A total of 81 drivers were charged with impaired operation, which is 25% more than in 2005.
- Radar hours in 2006 were approximately 18,000, up significantly from 11,112 hours in 2005.
- Responding to community concerns over crime in the community, members of York Regional Police Community Services Bureau conducted 385 Crime Prevention presentations and forums across York Region in 2006.
- York Region Health Protection Division completed 13,942 food inspections, up from 13,704 in 2005.
- Outbreak Investigation: Infectious Disease Control Division investigated 125 outbreaks, 63.7% of which were enteric and 36.3% were respiratory (January-December 2006, iPHIS).

Promoting Wellness

- Life Expectancy: 82.3 years, higher than the Ontario average of 79.7 years (2001-03).*
- 16% of adult respondents 18+ were current smokers (Rapid Risk Factor Surveillance System January-November 2006), down from 18% in 2005.
- Low birth weights (single births less than 2,500 grams): 4.3% for York Region compared to 4.5% for Ontario (2003).
- 90% of York Region residents (18 years+) reported their general health as excellent/very good/good (RRFSS January-November 2006).

Enhancing Our Human Resources and Partnerships

- Volunteerism rate – in 1997 the Region's volunteerism rate was 32.9% and in 2000 – 21.6%. (National Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participating, 1997, 2000).

*numbers based on census data, the next update will be available in 2007/08.

Council Initiatives – 2006

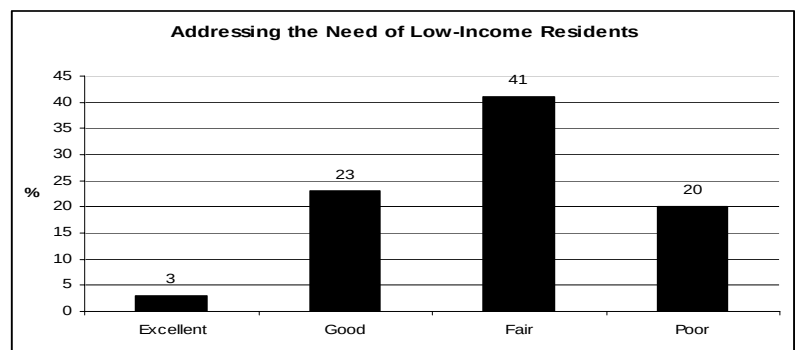
- Community Snapshots: Recent Immigrants Living in York Region
- York Link: A Community Service Directory, 2006
- Georgina Mobility Transit
- Road Watch Program
- Human Services Planning Coalition Strategic Plan
- Core funding to the AIDS Committee of York Region
- Implementation of the Smoke Free Ontario Act
- Expanded Preventive Dental Program for Seniors to retirement homes, Alternative Community Living Centres and York Region Long Term Care Day programs
- Implementation of the Smoke Free Ontario Act
- Successful implementation of Removing Barriers York Region's Third Annual Accessibility Plan
- The Community Development and Investment Fund (CDIF) invested in 42 community projects to provide important supports for over 30,000 children, families, and individuals across York Region

Successes/Innovations- 2006

- Operation Flu Ready emergency training exercise
- Sixth annual York Region Workplace Wellness Annual Conference
- York Region Community Character Week
- 2006 West Nile Virus Control Program
- Door to door survey of 5,044 residential properties to audit and educate on stagnant water
- Operation Cross Smart
- Community Social Data Strategy
- Implemented provincial standards of care for domiciliary hostels
- Restructured Early Intervention Services for children with special needs
- Individual Preventive (dental) Program (IPP) for Children
- York Region Infectious Diseases Surveillance Unit (IDSU) established
- Sentinel School Surveillance Initiative
- Routine Universal Comprehensive Screening for Woman Abuse
- Provided prenatal education to approximately 700 first time expectant couples
- Breastfeeding Support pilot group
- Home Safety Kits to high risk and teen mother families
- Car seat safety gift project to families in need
- Keeping YorkKids Safe Partners Committee "Report Cards for Safety"
- FIT Pilot Project Phase II for seniors
- "Pandemic Planning: Introduction for Funeral Services" session
- Safe Summer Fun Workplace Wellness Newsletter
- Safe Winter Fun Workplace Wellness Newsletter
- Infection Control Week - Prevent illness: Put Germs out of Business
- York Regional Police Empowered Student Partnerships (ESP) Program expanded Region-wide
- Project Lifesaver launched by York Regional Police to assist in locating missing persons
- York Regional Police's Community Alert Program introduced
- York Regional Police's Enhanced Quality Service Standards established
- Provided information to child care operators planning to locate businesses in York Region
- Strengthening Our Partnerships Initiative converted the Ontario Child Care Management System to a fully web-enabled system
- Provided specialized occupational and job skills training to Ontario Works participants
- Delivered specialized employment workshops, supports and foreign language workshops to foreign trained Ontario Works participants
- Provided specialized employment supports to ODSP participants

"How would you rate your municipality on addressing the need of low-income residents?"

In a fall 2006 Environics survey, only 3% of York Region respondents would rate their municipality as "excellent" on addressing the need of low-income residents. Twenty-three percent (23%) gave a rating of good and 41% a rating of fair. Twenty-percent (20%) feel their municipality is doing a poor job addressing low-income residents' needs.



Promoting Wellness

Did you know that on October 23, 2006, York Region Emergency Management hosted "Operation Flu-Ready", an interactive workshop/simulated exercise surrounding an Influenza Pandemic to assess emergency preparedness. It was attended by 175 participants with representation from all 9 local municipalities, provincial and federal agencies as well as members of the public and private sector. The interactive workshop/simulated exercise represents one of the many initiatives within York Region's Emergency Management Program.

Promoting Social and Emotional Well Being

To support participants with mental health issues, the Ontario Works Mental Health Resource Model continues to work with community mental health agencies to assist individuals to access needed resources and enhance their quality of life.

Ensuring Accessible and Affordable Transportation AND Supporting Access to Safe and Ample Food

Child and Family Health Division funded transportation by bus, gas coupons and taxis for families to enable access to prenatal and parenting programs, physician's appointments, more than 1200 one-way trips! In addition, more than 800 Food Vouchers were provided to families in need to enable them to access ample, nutritious food.

Providing Superior Quality Policing

York Regional Police and its members received **international recognition** for their service and policing programs, including:

- o **Minister of Justice National Youth Justice Policing Award** which recognizes excellence and innovation by police officers who, in dealing with youth that may come into conflict with the law, work to create a safer Canadian society.
- o **International Association of Chief's of Police Homeland Security Recognition Award** for Project Ready, a coordinated strategy to improve our emergency preparedness by identifying vulnerable areas within York Region and increasing police visibility, sensitivity and appropriate response to calls for service.
- o **American Society for the Industrial Security International, Tech Crimes Award** for significant accomplishments in the area of computer/ technological crime investigation.

York Regional Police have also responded to the needs of the community by developing the following community programs:

Empowered Student Partnerships Program (ESP) was expanded Region-wide this year to a total of 20 Public and Catholic School Boards. This joint program with police, school boards and youth encourages high school students to plan, organize, and execute a year-long safe schools program in their schools. A survey is filled out by all students each year to determine how/where they feel safe/at risk.

Project Lifesaver was launched by York Regional Police and uses an electronic tracking bracelet that allows rescue personnel to quickly locate missing at-risk community members, such as those with Alzheimer's or Autism.

The **Community Alert Program** is a new public notification system that will allow York Regional Police to notify residents and businesses by telephone and email about community safety matters in their area such as a rash of break and enters, vehicle thefts or a missing child. The system will also be used to alert citizens in the event of an emergency.

Project ERASE (Eliminate Racing Activities on Streets Everywhere) is a multi-jurisdictional project run across Southern Ontario throughout the spring and summer every year, strategically targeting illegally modified and unsafe vehicles, speeders, aggressive drivers and street racers. In 2006, this partnership with other police services resulted in the investigation of 2,820 vehicles with 2,031 Provincial Offences Charges and 59 Criminal Charges laid.

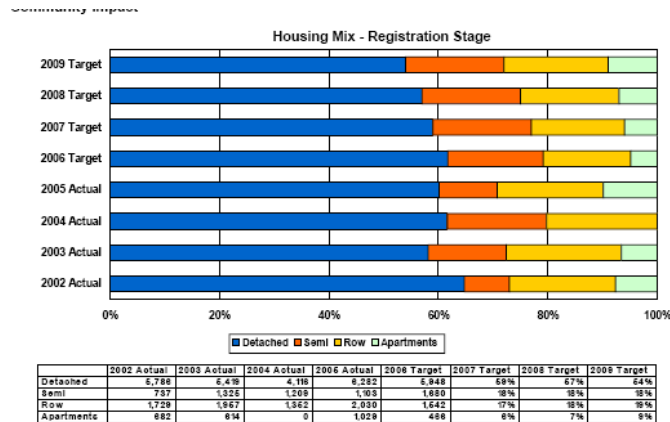


GOAL 5: Housing Choices for Our Residents

Vision 2026 Indicators:

Providing Appropriate Housing Mix and Supply

- In 2006 there were 9,950 residential housing starts in York Region, down slightly from 9,497 in 2005, 10,221 in 2004, 11,049 in 2003 and 11,941 in 2002.
- As of December 31, 2006, the housing mix was 72% single family and 28% 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.



Waiting Lists

- In December 2006, there were over 5,200 applicants on the Region's subsidized housing waiting list.
- Long Term Care and Seniors Program's Alternative Community Living Program housing waiting list – 471 (December 2006) up from 461 in December 2005.
- Long Term Care Facility waitlist was 116 at the Newmarket Health Centre and 78 at the Maple Health Centre (December 2006), an increase from last year.

Council Initiatives – 2006

- Approved participation in Social Housing Services Corporations Green Light Loan Program to fund energy efficient retrofits at two Housing York Inc. buildings
- Received Council approval to initiate development work towards the building of an 85 unit seniors rental apartment building to be located on the Vaughan Civic Centre site
- Participated in the Delivery of the Rental and Supportive Housing Component of the Federal/Provincial Affordable Housing Program
- Completed construction of Blue Willow Terrace, 60 unit Seniors apartment building in Vaughan
- Received Council approval to commence construction of Tom Taylor Place, 50 unit family, senior, single building in Newmarket

Successes/Innovations- 2006

- Armitage Gardens CMHC Best Practices in Affordable Housing Award
- Launched pilot Sport and Recreation Initiative programs for children in social housing
- Family Strengthening Programs
- Issued RFP and prequalified five non-profit housing developers under the Federal-Provincial Affordable Housing Program
- 60 households moved into a new affordable rental accommodations in Vaughan
- Partnered with Canadian Hearing Society to create 7 accessible apartment units for deaf, deafened, and hard of hearing residents
- Completed pre-development study and received Council approval to issue an RFP for architectural services for the development of an 85 unit seniors rental apartment building to be located on the Vaughan Civic Centre site
- Through the Council- approved Community Development and Investment Fund Strategy (CDIF) in 2006 approximately \$1.3M was allocated to 18 projects that addressed homelessness and related issues

Providing Appropriate Housing Mix and Supply

The Tom Taylor Place housing development offers the Region an outstanding opportunity to partner with the Town of Newmarket and the federal and provincial governments to provide much needed affordable rental housing.

The \$10 million project, including \$3.5 million from the Canada-Ontario Affordable Housing Program (AHP), is an L-shaped, three-storey, 50 unit building of 51,500 square feet which takes into consideration the adjacent two-storey single family residential character of the planned neighbouring community. It will be managed by York Region's housing company, Housing York Inc.

Three of the units have been designed to meet the needs of people with physical disabilities. Additional modifications will be made to the building systems so that seven households, who are clients of the Canadian Hearing Society, can be accommodated.

The building has been designed to achieve Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification by incorporating sustainable and energy efficient measures into the design. It is the first affordable housing project to be built in the province under the rental housing component of the Canada-Ontario AHP that is aiming to achieve LEED certification.



Advocating for Increased Funding for Housing from Senior Levels of Government – York Region’s CMHC Award for Armitage Gardens

York Region won a CMHC Award for Armitage Gardens in the category of “Best Practices in Affordable Housing”. This award was given for the Region’s success in leveraging financial assistance from four levels of government to convert vacant space to 58 affordable and accessible rental apartments for seniors and adults with disabilities.

Addressing Homelessness and Developing Homelessness Prevention Programs

The Region funds a wide range of programs for those who are homeless or at risk of being homeless, some of these include:

Temporary emergency shelter - The Inn from the Cold and the Mosaic Interfaith Out of the Cold programs provide temporary emergency shelter, food and clothing to the homeless during the winter months.

Housing Support Services – Through agencies such as Pathways for Children, Youth and Families of York Region, Rose of Sharon, Transitional and Supportive Housing Services of York Region and the Salvation Army Sutton Multi- Youth Shelter, housing support workers assist homeless or at risk individuals and families to obtain and maintain housing.

Poverty Relief Services – Women’s Centre of York Region provides poverty relief supports to low-income women and their families.

Street Outreach Services - Loft Community Services in partnership with Community Services & Housing and the Health Services Departments provide mobile outreach services to the homeless across York Region.

Aboriginal Resources - Through the Canadian Mental Health Association of York Region the project Nin-os-kom-tin initiated the formation of an aboriginal resource committee for the off-reserve aboriginal community of York Region.

In 2006, York Region served 400 households through Region's homelessness prevention programs.

Approximately 103 people a month are receiving new or replacement personal ID through seven part-time mobile clinics in the Region run by the Canadian Mental Health Association. The clinics provide personal ID replacement for homeless and at-risk people.

In 2006, the Housing Help Centre served 201 clients of which 176 remained housed for a minimum of three months. The Housing Help Centre provides a free housing registry for both tenants and landlords.

Addressing Key Housing Needs

York Region undertook a comprehensive review of building conditions across the social housing portfolio laying the groundwork for a region-wide asset management strategy and building training and technical support for housing providers in securing the life of these critical public assets over the long term. This will ensure quality/affordable housing for residents.

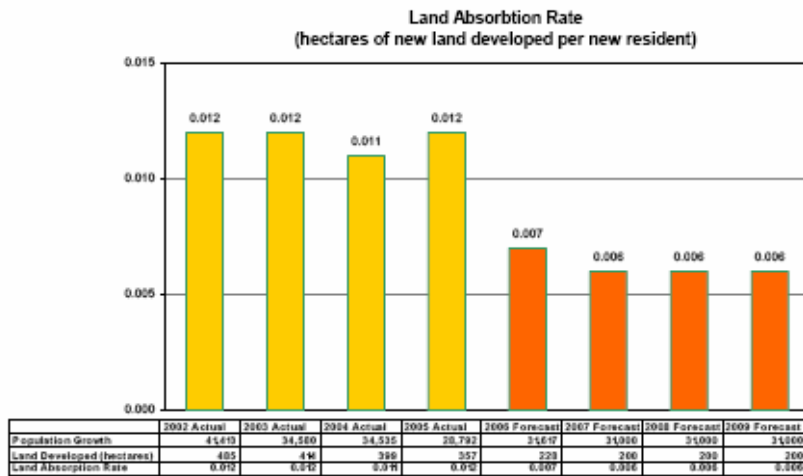


GOAL 6: Managed and Balanced Growth

Vision 2026 Indicators:

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: 1246 since 2001.
- As of 2001, 53.8% of residents worked in York Region. (numbers based on census data, the next update will be available in 2007/08)
- York Region's *employed* labour force of 470,000 closely matches the 460,000 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.



Source: LR&P and Community Planning Branches

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.

Council Initiatives – 2006

- Smart Commute York Region
- York Region Transit launched the 6 Years and 60 Million Riders contest
- Towards a Sustainable Region Symposium
- Towards a Sustainable Region 2005 Annual Report
- Growth Management Strategy Workplan
- Pedestrian and Cycling Municipal Partnership Program
- York Region Pedestrian and Cycling Master Plan study

Successes/Innovations- 2006

- Participation in Transportation for Tomorrow Survey
- Regional Transit Oriented Development Guidelines
- Towards Sustainability in York Region Advisory Group Final Report
- Household Hazardous Waste Campaign
- York Region New Communities Workshop
- Planning for Tomorrow Growth Management Open Houses
- Vacant Employment Land Inventory Update

Vacant Residential Land Inventory Update

- York Region Residential Intensification Opportunities Study
- Association of Municipal Recycling Coordinators 2005 Promotion and Education Awards to York Region for Best Campaign and Best Print Ad and finalist for Tools to Tackle Yard Waste promotion
- 2005 Orthophotography Mosaic online along with interactive views for Growth Management and public view
- Population Maps online – current and projected
- Extensive geospatial information and mapping current and managed to enable operations and Growth Management decisions
- Development of road network, parcel fabric and address point standards with the addition of 590 new roads and 3,900 parcels
- Annual critical infrastructure data and map maintenance
- Collector Road Crossing of 400-series Highways funding policy
- Launched Smart Commute Central York Transportation Management Association in Newmarket and Aurora

Smart Commute York Region

Smart Commute York Region is a group of programs and policies to encourage Regional employees to use alternative modes of transportation instead of driving alone to work. Regional Council approved the Smart Commute which includes the following initiatives:

- The Carpool Zone: web-based carpool ride matching to help employees find matches for carpooling to and from work
- Preferential Parking for those who carpool
- Emergency Ride Home Program for employees who use transit, walk, cycle or carpool to work.
- Bike Racks and incentives for employees who cycle to work.



Groundwater Modelling of the Oak Ridges Moraine Report

Working with the Conservation Authorities Moraine Coalition, York Region joined the Regions of Peel and Durham and the City of Toronto to create a map of the ground structure and distribution of groundwater throughout York Region and much of the Oak Ridges Moraine watershed. The comprehensive study reveals a healthy and sustainable water supply. Among the many findings of the study:

- Overall health of the aquifer is good
- Collective water-taking by municipal and private wells accounts for only six percent of overall water volume
- Water taking levels are sustainable
- Over 90 percent of precipitation that infiltrates the ground enters into local streams and rivers
- Aquifers are constantly being recharged, providing a sustainable water supply for the future.

A copy of the report is available on York Region's website, www.york.ca.

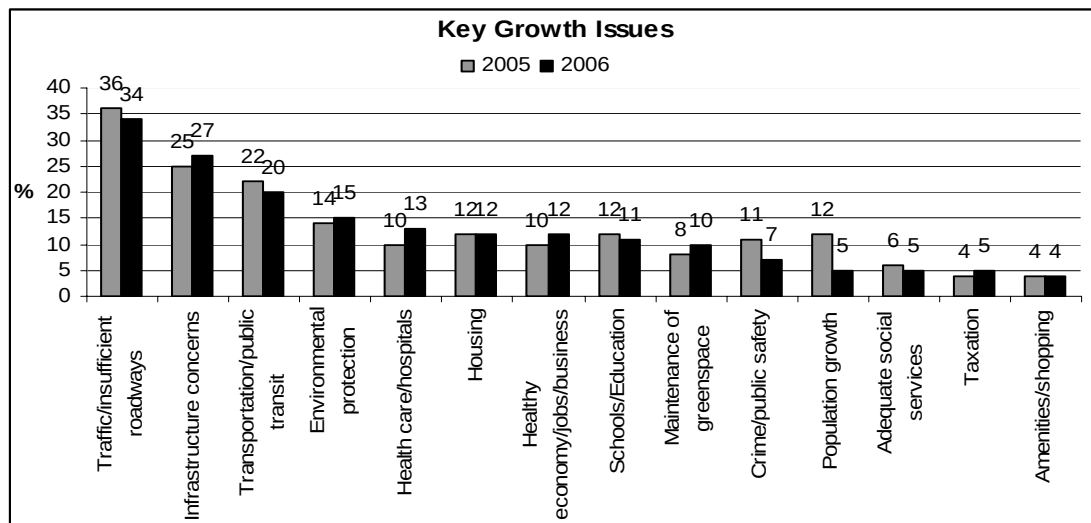
“York Region has been growing at a rapid rate over the past few years and because of its attractiveness and location is expected to continue to grow. What do you feel are the key issues around continued growth in York Region?”

York Region residents were asked what they feel are the key issues around continued growth in York Region. For the most part, 2006 issues were very similar to those mentioned in the same survey in 2005.

Traffic and insufficient roads topped the list of issues, followed by infrastructure, public transit, and environmental protection.

Other issues mentioned included health care and hospitals, housing, health, economy and maintenance of greenspace.

This year, there was decreasing concern with crime and public safety, and population growth.



When queried for level of concern about a number of key growth issues, half of respondents reported that they are very concerned about the preservation of the natural environment and an additional 37% reported that they are somewhat concerned, for a total of 87% of respondents who are concerned with the preservation of the natural environment.

Eighty-three percent (83%) of respondents are concerned with the cost of energy, but only 67% are concerned with the availability of energy.

Additional areas of high concern include pace of growth (77%) and air quality (71%).

Issues that garnered less concern from respondents included affordable housing (61%), and climate change (66%).

Planning for Human Services

York Region was invited to participate in federal/provincial/municipal discussions regarding implementation of the Canada-Ontario Immigration Agreement to help determine priorities for immigrant settlement and integration service funding.

Anticipating and Responding to the Human Service Needs of a Growing and Changing Population

York Region, in partnership with key community organizations in the region, has established a Community Social Data web page which includes research reports, fact sheets, interactive maps and data worksheets. Making social data widely available is intended to:

- Help with program and service planning at the local level
- Help with understanding and assessing community needs
- Facilitate understanding and response to demographic trends
- Improve research and program development.

GOAL 7: Infrastructure for a Growing Region

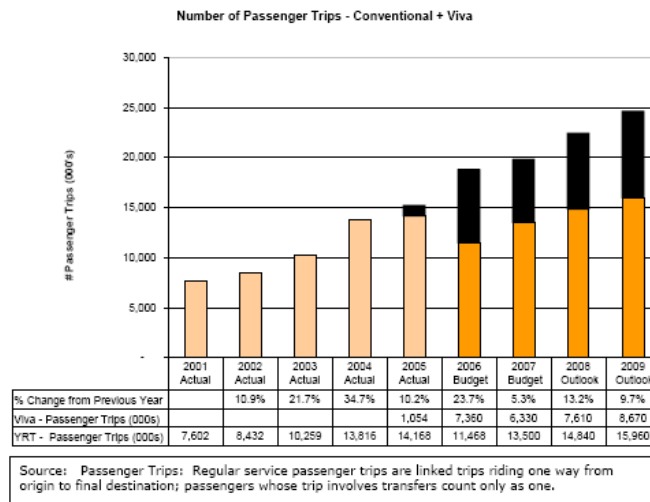
Vision 2026 Indicators:

Promoting Transit as a Practical and Wise Alternative to Private Vehicle Use

- York Region Transit/Viva provided approximately 17.1 million transit trips, an increase of 12.4% over the previous year of almost 2 million more transit trips.
- Transit revenue vehicle hours increased by 35% over the previous year.
- 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).

Making Transit Accessible

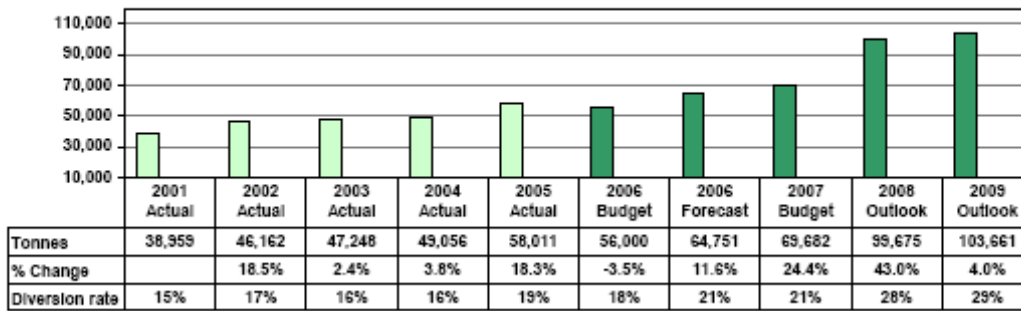
- In 2006, 90% of residential properties and 86% of employment areas were within 500 metres of public transit, up from 2005 where 86% of residential properties and 73% of employment areas were within 500 metres of public transit.
- All VIVA vehicles are fully accessible for persons with disabilities.
- Mobility Plus ridership has increased 36% over four years, from a ridership of 191,402 in 2002 to 260,673 in 2005 and increased a further 10.4% between 2005 and 2006.



Managing and Minimizing Waste

- The percentage of waste diverted by the Region in 2006 was approximately 40%*, 33% in 2005 and 25% in 2001. (*note: official diversion rate is pending official Waste Diversion Ontario verification)
- The percentage of waste diverted per household was 0.3 tonnes in 2003 and 0.36 tonnes in 2005.
- Nineteen tonnes of waste was diverted from landfill through the Regions re-use and drop off events.
- Adopting single stream Blue Box recycling and the start of source separated organics programs resulted in a 7% improvement in diversion rates. As more municipalities adopt source separated organics, waste diversion rates continue to climb toward the goal of 65% diversion in 2010.

Total Tonnes of Recyclable Blue Box Material



Council Initiatives – 2006

- Approval of cost share arrangement with City of Toronto for subway extension
- Spadina Subway Extension (Announced 2006 – Opening date 2014)
- York Region Transportation Master Plan Update
- New 5-Year Transit Service Plan, 2006-2010 approved
- York Region Water and Wastewater Master Plan Update
- Newmarket Community Bus Pilot project
- York/Durham Residual Waste (Energy from Waste) Environmental Assessment
- Source separated organics waste management programs
- Finalised the following Policies:
 - o Noise Mitigation Policy
 - o 400 Series Mid-Block Collector Crossing Policy
 - o Towards Great Regional Streets
 - Six Lane Design Guidelines
 - Municipal Streetscape Partnership Policy
 - Lay By Parking
 - Street Tree Health

Successes/Innovations- 2006

- American Public Transportation Association Award 2006 Innovation Award to Viva
- Viva awarded the Canadian Project Excellence Awards 2006 Environmental Impact Award
- York Region Transit service extended to Mount Albert
- Household Hazardous Waste campaign in partnership with local paint stores, real estate agents, and welcome wagon programs
- Single stream Blue Box recycling program
- GTA Transit Farecard
- CUTA 2006 National Transit Corporate Recognition Award (Corporate Exceptional Performance/Outstanding Achievement) for record breaking ridership and service growth
- Construction completion of:
 - St. John's Sideroad from Yonge Street to Bayview Avenue
 - Bayview Avenue from St. John's Sideroad to Mulock Drive
 - Major Mackenzie Drive from Kennedy road to McCowan Road
 - Markham Bypass Phase 3 from Highway 7 to 16th Avenue
 - Warden Avenue from Highway 407 to Apple Creek
 - Intersection Improvements at Woodbine Avenue and Church Street and at Woodbine Avenue and Old Homestead Road
- Key Construction Projects Started:
 - o Teston Road from Weston Road to Highway 400
 - o Weston Road from Major Mackenzie Drive to Teston Road
 - o Bathurst Street from Wellington Street to Mulock Drive
 - o Teston Road from Dufferin Street to Bathurst Street
 - o Ninth Line from Highway 407 to Markham Bypass
- New Programming exercises completed to reflect Council direction to balance transportation, transit and the environment

Joint Waste Diversion Strategy

York Region's Joint Waste Diversion Strategy is being undertaken in partnership with our nine local municipal councils. Some initiatives identified for immediate implementation include:



- **A source separated organics program** – diversion of household compostable wastes and other items, including fruit and vegetables, coffee grounds, meat, diapers, and other kitchen waste
- **An updated blue box program** – Increasing to weekly collection and more materials
- **Community environmental centres** – Convenient and accessible depots where residents can drop off reusable and recyclable materials
- **Bag limits/financial incentives** – Restrictions on number of garbage bags permitted with potential additional payment for additional bags
- **Diversion of textiles** – working with non-profit organizations to divert clothing and other goods from landfill
- **Advocacy** – lobbying organizations and governments responsible for policy decisions on waste including over packaging.

Pursuing New Technologies to Reduce and Handle Waste – Support for Energy from Waste

The strongest arguments in favour of incineration, according to respondents to a York Region Environics Survey, are the potential to create energy (69%), the diversion of waste from landfills (61%), and the fact that emissions from modern incinerators are quite low (57%).

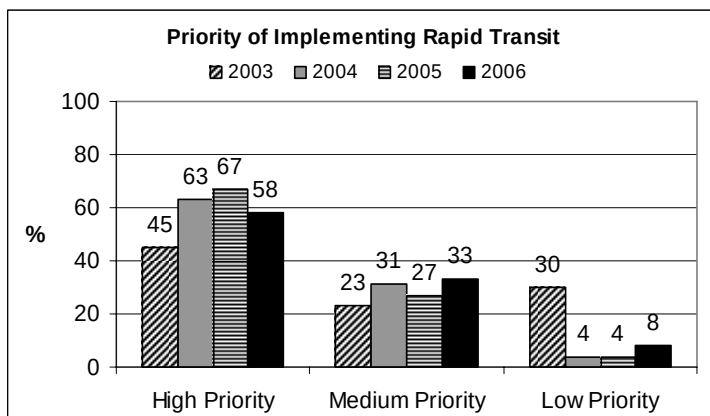
Health risks and proximity to one's home are the dominant factors that decrease support for incineration (49% are more opposed to incineration when each of these factors is considered.)

York Region's Energy from Waste Environmental Assessment, which recommends thermal treatment of waste looked at local solutions, found that:

- Diversion will reduce residual waste to 35% of total waste stream
- Residual waste can be diverted from US Landfills by 2010
- Site selection focusing on maximum benefit from energy produced
- Energy from Waste site will optimize energy delivery and utility.

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

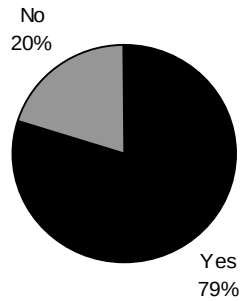
When asked what priority should be given to implementing rapid transit in York Region, 58% said it should be a high priority. Thirty-three percent said it should be a medium priority and 8% a low priority.



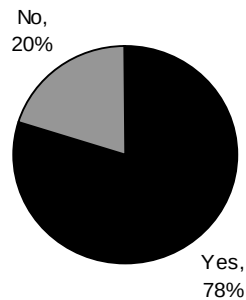
“Are you in favour of building dedicated public transit ways on Regional roads to decrease travel time and increase ridership?”

A noteworthy 79% of respondents are in favour of dedicated public transit ways. Similarly, 78% of respondents feel that immediate long-term funding should come from the provincial and federal governments in support of dedicated public transit ways.

In Favour of Dedicated Public Transit Ways



Federal and Provincial Funding for Dedicated Public Transit Ways

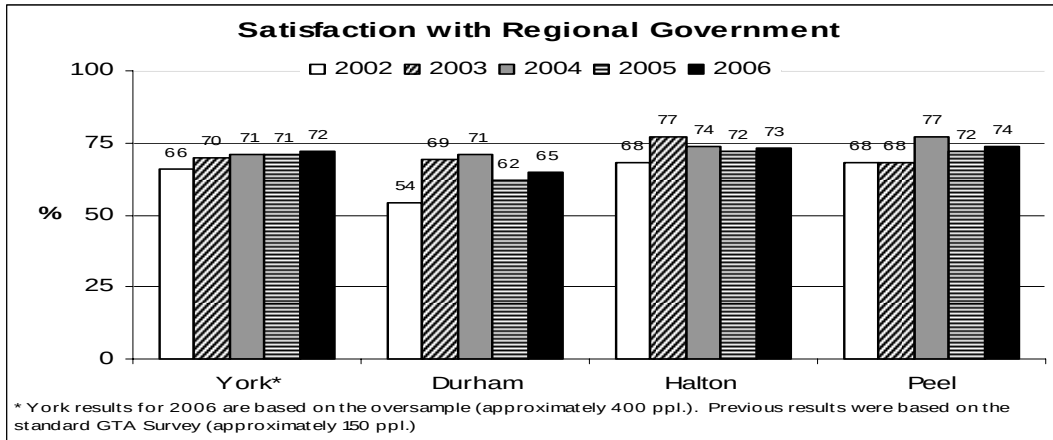


GOAL 8: Engaged Communities and a Responsive Region

Vision 2026 Indicators:

Proactively Meeting the Needs of Our Customers

- In 2006 72% of citizens were satisfied with Regional Government, consistent with previous years, but up from 66% in 2002.
- Effectiveness levels ranged from the highest for providing access to services so that people feel safe in their neighbourhoods (88%), availability of human services (84%), and enhancement of the natural environment (73%) to a low of 57% for providing a range of affordable housing opportunities.



Being Fiscally Responsible

- York Region has maintained an AAA credit rating, the highest possible credit rating, since 1992.

Council Initiatives – 2006

- 2006 Business Plan and Budget Mid Year Progress Report
- York's 2005 Annual Report Vision, Service Growth
- Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Silver standard for new regional facilities
- York Region named one of Canada's Top 100 Employers (Maclean's) and one of Top 50 GTA Employers
- Participation in National Access Awareness Week (NAAW) to promote an inclusive and barrier-free community for people with disabilities
- The York Region Accessibility Advisory Committee composed of citizens continued to provide sound advice on better access to regional programs, services and facilities

Successes/Innovations- 2006

- Government Finance Officers Association Distinguished Budget Presentation Award for the 2006 York Region Business Plan and Budget
- York Region Street Atlas Launch
- Markham Immunization Office
- Healthy Active Living for Seniors Symposium
- Enhanced York Region Corporate Learning program to include mentoring and career counselling programs for staff
- Long Term Recruitment Strategy
- YorkInfo Partnership
- Municipal GIS Challenge – Silver Award from URISA Ontario Chapter
- Web GIS Challenge – Silver Award from URISA Ontario Chapter
- ESRI Map Gallery Award for the York Region State of the Environment 2005
- Redesigned Street Atlas

Public web access to:

- Interactive views
- Thematic maps
- YDSS infrastructure website
- Locating addresses
- Community consultations on implementation of Best Start, Phase 1
- Inventory of modified social housing units to inform applicants on housing choices
- York Region information session on the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*
- Revenue Recovery Management System recoveries totalling \$1,041,243 (84% related to Ontario Works)
- York Regional Police received a 2006 Microsoft Technology Innovation Award for Project ShARE
- York Regional Police hired additional staff to keep pace with growth and 30 new volunteer Auxiliary Police
- York Regional Police volunteers logged 48,289 volunteer hours in the community in 2006
- York Region EMS deployed 1 additional peak loaded ambulance
- York Region EMS trained 9 Primary Care paramedics to Advanced Care Paramedic level
- York Region EMS established a permanent Paramedic Response Station in Vaughn-Racco Parkway

Attracting and Retaining Effective Staff - The Regional Municipality of York named in Maclean's Magazine as one of Top 100 Employers in Canada and Top 50 in the GTA

The Regional Municipality of York has been named as one of the top 100 companies to work for in Canada and one of the top 50 companies to work for in the Greater Toronto Area by Mediacorp Canada Inc.



The Employee Experience

In 2003, the Region embarked upon an employee satisfaction survey to gauge how staff rated different aspects of their workplace experience and to help identify additional areas for improvement and capitalize upon existing corporate strengths.

Since that time, York Region has introduced several initiatives in response to survey feedback, such as enhanced employee communication and improved employee Intranet site, lunch-and-learn seminars, a CAO newsletter and Coffee-with-the CAO sessions.

Employee Experience Programs introduced in response to the Employee Satisfaction Survey include: Pay Satisfaction, Performance Review, Commissioners' Reference Group, Recognition, Workplace Wellness, Corporate Values, Career Development & Training, Communication, and Workload Flexibility Options.

Viva Rapid Transit receives the Peter J. Marshall Municipal Innovation Award

Viva Rapid Transit received the Peter J. Marshall Municipal Innovation Award from the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) for combining sound planning with new technology to manage future growth and promote better traffic flow.

The award was accepted by York Regional Chair and CEO Bill Fisch, who is also President of the York Region Rapid Transit Corporation, at the 2006 Annual AMO Conference in Ottawa on August 15th.

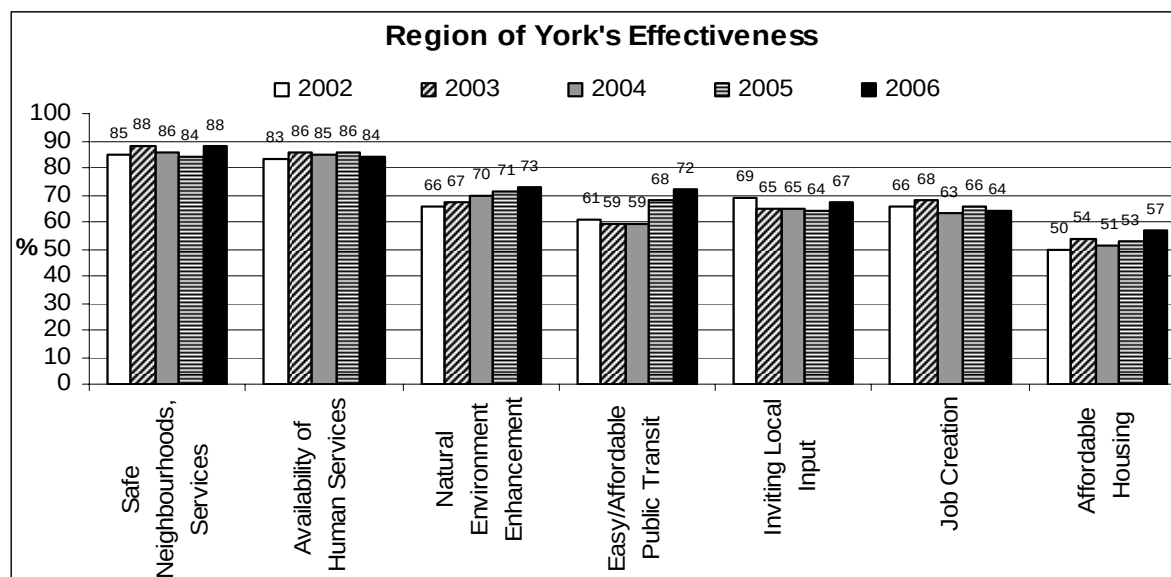
The Award recognizes municipal governments that demonstrate excellence in the use of innovative approaches to improve capital and/or operating efficiency, and are judged on their creativity and success in implementing new, innovative ways of serving the public.

Viva is in its first of three phases in a 20-year transit expansion plan. The first phase was implemented quickly and efficiently, going from vision to reality in three years. Within four months in early 2005, total transit boardings along the Yonge Street corridor were 34% ahead of the previous year. Ridership on both Viva and York Region Transit (YRT) continues to increase steadily and was up 10% in 2006 alone.

In Phase 2, the Region will build dedicated transit lanes separating the Viva vehicles from mixed traffic. If funding is secured and the environmental assessments approved, construction could begin as early as 2007.

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 for providing access to services so that people feel safe in their neighbourhoods, availability of human services, and enhancement of the natural environment. The Region was ranked low in terms of providing a range of affordable housing opportunities.

Of note is an increase in the number of respondents who rated the Region effective in providing easy, affordable public transit.

Setting a High Standard for Customer Service

"Have you used the services of York Region and how satisfied were you with the overall quality of service delivery"

Out of the 400 York Region residents queried, 49% said they had used regional services in the past 12 months. As an upper-tier municipality, many citizens are unaware of the services provided by York Region. Many of our services are indirect, meaning that the resident does not need to actively seek out the service (i.e. water and wastewater, solid waste disposal).

Of these, most felt they had been treated fairly, and many felt that staff were courteous and that the office they dealt with was conveniently located. About half of respondents felt that staff were knowledgeable and competent, that the hours were convenient and that staff had gone the extra mile for them.

The majority of respondents said they got what they needed.

Encouraging Continual Learning in Our Organization

To further enhance Community Services and Housing Department's staff ability to address the needs of participants, training was provided on Concurrent Mental Health Disorders, Diffusing Hostility and Cultural Diversity.

Connecting with the Community

The YorkLink Community Services directory contains up-to-date, comprehensive information on local community services in York Region. It offers a centralized listing of agencies and organizations to inform residents of the services available in York Region and to help agencies in referring their clients to the services that they need. Now in its eighth year of publication, YorkLink contains over 700 listings and is available free of charge in print format or online at www.york.ca.

Being a Region that Involves its Citizens

York Regional Police hosted another successful Police and Community Education Seminars (PACES) session this year. PACES is a community education program designed to foster strong community partnerships by providing the public a working knowledge of York Regional Police. The program is an opportunity for individuals to acquire knowledge on police practices and operations in York Region and to discuss important community safety issues. Members of the public attended a series of 17 sessions and learned about various aspects of policing.

Effective Communication: Health Services

York Region Health Services continued to offer timely and effective health communication messages to residents and the health care community through a wide variety of methods, including several innovative and new channels. A weekly health promotion segment was launched on the Rogers "Daytime" live-to-air talk show, featuring different health messages, from tips about preventing falls in seniors to sun safety to how to pack a healthy lunch. Further, a regular opinion article was offered in the locally distributed *Being Well* magazine, with titles that included "Risky Business: Public health risk can be calculated but the choice is still your own" and "Get the point: Vaccinations shepherd the herd." And the *DocTalks* newsletter was introduced to meet the information needs of York Region's family/community primary care physicians, updating physicians on local public health matters and providing a vehicle of communication between local physicians and public health in York Region.





Towards a Sustainable Region

Over the next 25 years, York Region will experience continued rapid population and employment growth. The Ontario Government forecasts that by 2031, the Region will:

- Add 600,000 people, to bring our population to 1.5 million people
- Add 340,000 jobs, to bring our employment to 780,000

To adequately plan for these increases, York Region faces a number of issues, including:

- Growth
- Environment
- Economy
- Intensification
- Human Services, Quality of Life,
- Culture
- Infrastructure
- Moving York (Goods & People)
- Quality of Place

Challenges we face to deal with growth and issues over the coming years include:

- Significant additional Growth for York Region
- A dramatic shift in housing choices and references required
- Building cities and protecting the countryside
- More compact, mixed use communities required with Centres and Corridors served by transit
- 40% intensification overall by 2015
- Better live-work proximity is essential
- Provincial Infrastructure investment is required

The questions around how much do we want to grow, and how to we grow were posed to residents through a series of public open houses across the Region throughout 2006. For more information on York Region's growth management strategy and to provide your input, visit Planning for Tomorrow at www.york.ca.