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JOB HIRING INDEX COMPARATIVE RESULTS: 2007 TO 2011

The Planning and Economic Development Committee recommends the adoption of the recommendation contained in the following report dated February 10, 2012, from the Executive Director, Corporate and Strategic Planning.

1. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that:

1. The Economic Strategy Branch circulate copies of this report to the local Economic Development Offices, Chambers of Commerce and Board of Trade, and interested stakeholders including the COSTI Immigrant Services, Seneca College, the York Region District School Board, the York Catholic School Board and the Workforce Planning Board of York Region and Bradford West Gwillimbury.

2. PURPOSE

This report updates Council on the 2011 Job Hiring Index Comparative results and hiring trends in York Region from 2007 to 2011.

3. BACKGROUND

Job creation is critical to the Region's economic prosperity and requires monitoring

Job creation has been identified as a key strategic objective of the corporation in the 2011 to 2015 Strategic Plan. Both the quantity and quality of jobs are important for the Region. Not only must the Region satisfy the job targets established in the Places to Grow legislation now enshrined in the Region's Official Plan, there is a strong desire to also see growth in high value added jobs in strategic growth sectors to support a sustainable economy and an enviable lifestyle. It is therefore important to track data and trends in job hiring that allows for the development of appropriate economic supportive programs.

The Job Hiring Index identifies trends in labour force recruitment and employer demand

To better understand the hiring demands of businesses, the consulting firm IT Challenger was retained starting in 2007 to develop a Job Hiring Index to collect data on job postings and monitor the trends in the quantity and types of labour demanded in the Region.

Information is collected on a monthly basis, and is used by Economic Strategy staff to help identify businesses and sectors that are emerging, growing or declining, for possible intervention and program development.

Customized advanced data collection technology is utilized

IT Challenger developed advanced customized data collection technology for York Region which provides job hiring trend analysis and reporting capability including:

- Automated capture of all advertised jobs from print and online sources including newspapers, online job boards and company websites.
- Identification of the job type, employer (if identified), location, and industry.
- Quality control to eliminate duplication of reported jobs.

The technology is not capable of distinguishing between job postings for new hiring versus replacement hiring.

4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

The rise in job hiring activity indicates economic recovery is continuing

The Job Hiring Index measures the total number of job postings for all types of jobs in the Region. There has been a continued increase in job postings since the economic downturn in late 2008, as shown in *Chart 1*, with a significant (17%) increase in the number of job postings in 2011 over 2010. While the Region has not yet returned to pre-downturn activity levels, the data supports the assertion that the economy is continuing to recover and strengthen.

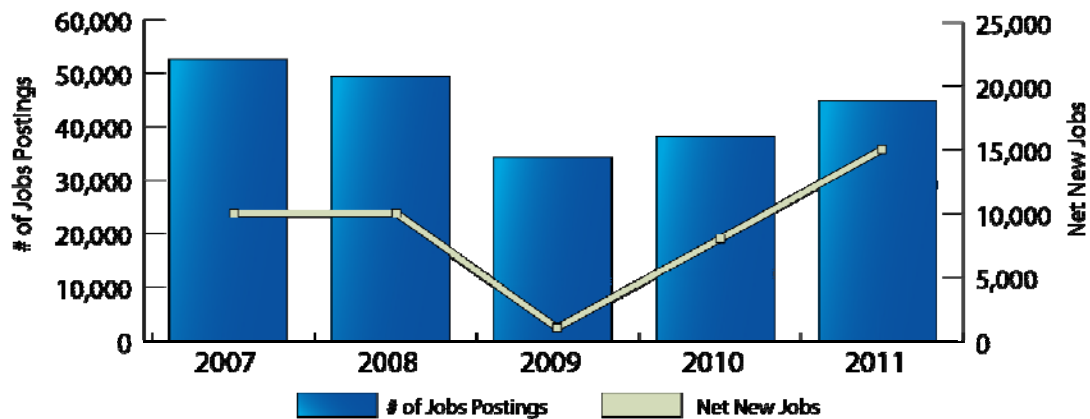
The positive job hiring trend mirrors net new job creation

The five year trend in job postings is plotted in *Chart 1* against the actual net new jobs created in the Region over the same time period. The job hiring activity has been increasing in a similar way to the actual new job creation trend, reinforcing the positive message about recovery in York Region.

This mirroring of the trend also suggests the job postings data can act as an indicator and predictor of the direction of job growth. Staff will examine using this data to help monitor job creation patterns.

Chart 1

Annual Number of Job Postings vs Net New Jobs Created
2007-2011



Source: York Region, Economic Strategy
Source: York Region, Long Range Strategic Planning

The Region is experiencing job growth in a wide range of sectors, indicating the diversity of the regional economy

The Job Hiring Index tracks postings by industry, for postings in which the industry sector can be identified. The top five industry sectors for job hiring in 2011 are identified in *Table 1* and represent a broad range. Retail continues to dominate the job postings, a result of large turnover and significant seasonal hiring within this sector. The Health Care and Social Assistance sector has experienced the largest percentage increase over 2010, reflecting the anticipated trend as the aging population impacts service delivery needs while creating new business opportunities. The list is rounded out by strong performance in the Professional, Scientific, Technical Services and Manufacturing sectors, reflecting a wide range of activities in the top categories.

Table 1
Top Five Industry Sectors for Job Hiring, 2007 - 2011

Industry Sector	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2010-2011 Change
Retail Trade	9,666	10,665	3,885	7,796	8,804	13%
Health Care and Social Assistance	5,800	4,968	3,947	4,385	6,634	31%
Professional, Scientific, Technical Services	7,955	6,528	2,995	4,458	5,580	20%
Manufacturing	6,017	4,857	3,912	3,566	4,439	20%
Wholesale Trade	3,593	2,272	3,130	2,518	2,478	-2%
TOTAL TOP 5	33,031	29,290	14,739	22,723	27,935	19%

Source: York Region Economic Strategy

The Job Hiring Index results suggest the Region is attracting high value technical jobs

The 2011 results in *Table 1* also indicate Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services jobs are on the rise, now commanding the third largest share of postings by sector. The strong performance in the Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services category is reinforced by the fact that the hiring is distributed across many companies, another positive sign for the direction toward creating high value jobs.

There has been a dramatic rise in job postings for Engineers and Architects positions

The Job Hiring Index also tracks postings by type of job. The top five job postings by job type are shown in *Table 2*. The most significant change in the 2011 data is the dramatic rise in the number of postings for Engineers and Architects. Engineers and Architects job postings grew by more than 40% from 2010 to 2011, well above the 17% increase in total postings over the same period. The knowledge intensive Engineering and Architects occupational category is also a positive indicator of the creation of high value jobs in the region.

Table 2
Top Five Job Postings by Job Type, 2007 - 2011

Rank		Job Type	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
2011	2010						
1	1	Management of Companies	5,433	5,341	3,885	4,770	5,558
2	5	Engineers, Architects	4,337	3,370	2,488	3,565	5,015
3	2	Administrative and Legal	7,504	6,860	3,912	4,336	4,994
4	3	Retail and Services	5,762	5,609	2,995	4,122	4,722
5	4	Business, Finance, Accounting	5,493	5,303	3,947	3,693	4,236
TOTAL TOP FIVE			28,529	26,483	17,227	20,486	24,525

Source: York Region Economic Strategy

Regional stakeholders utilize the Job Hiring Index data to develop workforce development programs, supporting economic growth

The aggregated information is also provided to workforce stakeholders in the Region on an annual basis for their use and analysis in relation to their programs. Workforce stakeholders include Economic Development Offices, Chambers of Commerce and Board of Trade, COSTI Immigrant Services, Seneca College, the York Region District School Board, the York Catholic School Board, Ontario Works employment program and the Workforce Planning Board of York Region and Bradford West Gwillimbury. Many of these agencies use the data to develop targeted curriculum, courses and programs for training and apprenticeships, and for directing clients to develop career paths to align with hiring sectors.

Link to Key Council-approved Plans

The Job Hiring Index provides data that supports efforts to increase employment opportunities in the Region, a strategic objective under the Increasing the Economic Vitality of the Region section of the 2011 to 2015 Strategic Plan.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The cost for the Job Hiring Index is fully funded in the 2012 Economic Strategy budget.

6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

A local community's workforce is critical to its economic success. The Job Hiring Index provides an analytical tool for use by each municipality to identify and address employment trends. The Region provides data by municipality to all the local economic development offices.

7. CONCLUSION

Employment and hiring trends are an important indicator of future economic activity and job growth. The Job Hiring Index assists in identifying trends in labour force recruitment and employer demand, and is an indicator of likely job growth direction. Information is collected on a monthly basis, and is accessible to staff for regular monitoring of results. The aggregated information is provided to workforce stakeholders on an annual basis to support their work in developing job creation and training programs.

The 2011 Job Hiring Index results indicate a continued increase in job postings since the economic downturn in late 2008, supporting the assertion that the economy is continuing to recover and strengthen. The Index results also identify significant growth in the Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services industry sector, and in Engineering and Architects job postings. These are both positive indicators that the Region's economy is growing in high value sectors.

The Job Hiring Index information is also provided to workforce stakeholders in the Region on an annual basis for their use and analysis in developing employment growth supportive programs.

For more information on this report, please contact Doug Lindeblom, Director of Economic Strategy at (905) 830-4444, Ext. 1503.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.