

## **4**

### **VISION 2051**

**The Planning and Economic Development Committee recommends:**

- 1. Receipt of the presentation from Karen Antonio-Hadcock, Head, Strategic Initiatives; and**
- 2. Adoption of the recommendations contained in the following report dated April 25, 2012, from the Executive Director, Corporate and Strategic Planning.**

#### **1. RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that:

1. The final *Vision 2051*, included as *Council Attachment 1* to this report be endorsed as York Region's new 40 year vision for the future.
2. *Vision 2051* be circulated widely to all local municipalities, community partners and stakeholders.

#### **2. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this report is to approve *Vision 2051: Strong, Caring, Safe Communities* as York Region's new long term vision for the future.

#### **3. BACKGROUND**

In November 2011, Council endorsed the draft of *Vision 2051* for circulation and comment. The draft document was circulated widely for review and comment. A number of comments were received from the community, Regional partners, stakeholders and staff and have been incorporated into the final *Vision 2051*.

**Vision 2051 updates Vision 2026 as the Region's primary long range plan with a continued goal of creating Strong, Caring, and Safe Communities**

In 1993, York Regional Council approved its first strategic plan, *York Region 2021: A Vision* (known as *Vision 2021*), as an expression of its long term goals for York Region.

In 2002, *Vision 2026: Creating Strong, Caring, Safe Communities* was prepared to update *Vision 2021*. Since 2002, *Vision 2026* has been the blueprint for York Region. *Vision 2051* represents an updated vision for York Region, and will continue the legacy of long term visioning that informs collective action to a preferred future for the region. *Vision 2051* will inspire successes, and enable a dialogue with existing and new partners about who the Region wants to be and how to work with others to get there.

As Figure 1 illustrates, *Vision 2051*, the *Sustainability Strategy*, and the *Regional Official Plan*, represents the Corporation's 'foundation documents' that inform all Council decisions. The Region's *Strategic Plan*, departmental plans and budgets, and individual performance plans implement these strategic documents on a more detailed and specific basis.

*Vision 2051* establishes the long term (40) year overall vision for the Region's future articulated in goals and actions which inform all other strategies and initiatives and establishes the context for more detailed short-term plans which take us in the direction of the Vision.

The *Sustainability Strategy* establishes a framework and actions to embed sustainability thinking into *Regional* programs and operations.

The *Regional Official Plan* is legislated by the *Planning Act*, and establishes a 25 year plan for growth, community and employment lands development, infrastructure needs, natural environment protection, using a triple bottom line approach of sustainable natural environment, healthy communities, and vibrant economy.

The 2011-2015 *Strategic Plan* is a four-year operational and administrative plan that align *Regional* departments with Council's goals by establishing a hierarchy of planning processes that direct department plans and budgets, as well as individual performance plans and establishes clear, measurable vital actions.

Departmental Plans such as the *Community and Health Services Multi-year Plan* provide a department-specific focus on initiatives that are connected to the corporate long term vision and often provide targets and deliverables over a short term time frame.

Individual Performance Plans are established annually to align individual performance with the corporate and departmental objectives.

**Figure 1: Strategic Plan Hierarchy**



## **Vision update was linked to the creation of a 4-year strategic Plan**

The *Vision 2051* process was closely co-ordinated with the development of the Strategic Plan. The Strategic Plan was approved by Regional Council in October 2011 and will be updated every four years to coincide with the terms of Regional Council. *Vision 2051* defines the desired future state for York Region; the Strategic Plan provides the critical path necessary to reach the vision.

## **4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS**

The final version of *Vision 2051*, included as *Council Attachment 1* to this report was developed throughout 2011 with the input of the community, stakeholders and partners. This vision is about the people of York Region, the places they live, and the systems and services that support and sustain them, the economy and the environment. *Vision 2051* has maintained the legacy established in *Vision 2026* with a continued goal of creating strong, caring, and safe communities.

### **The vision for 2051 is articulated in eight goal areas and corresponding actions tied to the Region's key priorities**

*Vision 2051* contains eight goal areas, goal statements, and corresponding action areas, and specific actions which come together to articulate the vision for 2051 in York Region as outlined in Table 1 below.

**Table 1: Vision 2051 Goal and Action Areas**

| <b>Goal Area</b>                                      | <b>Goal Statement</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | <b>Action Areas</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|-------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| A Place Where Everyone Can Thrive                     | <i>In 2051, York Region's diverse population can thrive in an environment that fosters healthy living; is safe, accessible, inclusive and supportive.</i>                                                                                                                                                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ A Place Where People Achieve Optimal Health</li><li>■ An Integrated Network of Community Support</li><li>■ Celebrating our Culture, Heritage and Diversity</li><li>■ An Accessible Region</li><li>■ Safe and Secure Communities</li></ul> |
| Liveable Cities and Complete Communities              | <i>In 2051, York Region's diverse urban form provides a variety of interesting and exciting places to live, work, and play. Communities are people-first and designed for healthy and active living, social inclusion, and are the heart of business, culture and arts, community life and services.</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ A Vibrant City-Region</li><li>■ Complete Communities</li><li>■ An Integrated Urban System</li><li>■ A Living City</li></ul>                                                                                                               |
| A Resilient Natural Environment & Agricultural System | <i>In 2051, York Region's natural systems are connected, protected and enhanced through communities; provide opportunities for</i>                                                                                                                                                                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ A Protected, Connected and Enhanced Regional Greenlands System</li></ul>                                                                                                                                                                  |

| Goal Area                                   | Goal Statement                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Action Areas                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|---------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                             | <i>recreation; and support biodiversity. Agricultural areas are thriving and provide healthy food and resources to a growing population.</i>                                                                                                                                                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ A Healthy Environment for a Healthy Population</li> <li>■ Protecting Vital Water Systems</li> <li>■ Maintaining a Thriving Agricultural Community</li> </ul>                                                                                                           |
| Appropriate Housing for All Ages and Stages | <i>In 2051, York Region has housing to match the needs of its residents and workers. Housing choices are available that support affordable and sustainable living, and address the needs of a diverse and aging population.</i>                                                                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Housing Choices that Match our Needs</li> <li>■ Housing that Supports Health and Sustainability</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                             |
| An Innovation Economy                       | <i>In 2051, York Region's economy is resilient and focuses on creativity and innovation with sufficient infrastructure and resources to support a knowledge economy. York Region's diverse labour force is supported with opportunities for collaboration and continuous learning and development.</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ An Economy that Facilitates Creativity and Fosters Innovation</li> <li>■ Infrastructure and Resources Supporting a Knowledge Economy</li> <li>■ Attracting and Developing a Creative and Skilled Work Force</li> </ul>                                                 |
| Interconnected Systems for Mobility         | <i>In 2051, there is a seamless network for mobility that provides diverse transportation options to people in all communities, promotes active healthy living, safely and efficiently moves people, goods and our economy.</i>                                                                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ A System that Prioritizes People and Reduces the Need for Travel</li> <li>■ Prioritize Alternative Modes of Travel for Active Transportation</li> <li>■ A Variety of Transit Choices</li> <li>■ A Network of Complete Streets</li> <li>■ Moving Our Economy</li> </ul> |
| Living Sustainably                          | <i>In 2051, sustainability can be practiced in everyday life through climate resiliency, innovative water conservation and reuse, water resource protection, waste reduction, energy conservation and greenhouse gas reduction.</i>                                                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Innovative Management of Water Resources</li> <li>■ Integrated Solutions for Waste</li> <li>■ Low-Carbon Local Energy Systems</li> <li>■ Adapting to a New Climate, Mitigating the Change</li> <li>■ Fostering Healthier and More Sustainable Behaviours</li> </ul>    |
| Open & Responsive Governance                | <i>In 2051, while the form of government may change over time, the function and principles of governance – openness, accountability, fiscal responsibility, and engagement of community members in decision making - remain the key focus.</i>                                                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Open Government</li> <li>■ Service Delivery through Collaboration and Partnerships</li> <li>■ Operational Excellence</li> <li>■ Fiscal Responsibility</li> </ul>                                                                                                       |

### **Vision 2051 is a bold vision for the Region's future**

The 40 year vision for the Region's future contains a number of bold and innovative actions that advances the Region's efforts in sustainability, promotes the health and well-being of residents, and the liveability of communities including:

- Moving toward a zero waste society
- Promoting carbon neutral housing, zero carbon buildings
- Encouraging the development of low-carbon local energy systems

- No new water by 2051 by leveraging innovative technology for waste water re-use
- Encouraging initiatives that move toward zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2051
- Preventing homelessness
- Encouraging appropriate housing for all ages and stages
- Planning for a balance of employment and residential opportunities (1:1) in Centres and Corridors
- Providing universal transit access

These bold actions in *Vision 2051* motivate us to find new ways to be innovative and collaborative. This initiative recognizes that government cannot achieve all of the goals and actions of *Vision 2051* alone, but that starting with a collective vision for the future, the Region can engage in dialogues with partners and stakeholders to turn these into action.

**Draft Vision 2051 was circulated widely for review and comment and feedback was incorporated into the final Vision 2051**

The draft of *Vision 2051* was circulated widely for review and comment. A number of comments were received from the community, Regional partners, stakeholders and staff and have been incorporated into the final *Vision 2051*.

In general, the comments on *Vision 2051* were very positive, constructive, and the community was pleased that the Region was voluntarily creating a long term vision for the future. The following is a summary of the comments received on the draft of *Vision 2051*:

- The actions should be clear, specific, strong and direct, ambitious and visionary. In some areas the actions could be more aggressive, and consideration could be given to providing measurable actions
- The goals and actions are bold and in some cases touch areas outside the Region's current jurisdiction and may be costly to implement which will encourage the Region to look for innovative approaches to implementation including partnering with others, collaborative efforts, and developing the capacity in the community
- The current form of Regional government will likely change in the next 40 years, the goals and actions should be broad enough to address this
- Sustainable funding, and cultural shifts will be necessary to ensure the implementation of the vision is successful
- Implementation, monitoring and reporting is key – consider having measurable indicators
- Emphasize the role that technology will play in the future for daily living (communication, mobility), and in the Region's business (intelligent information systems, service delivery)
- Vision needs to be a living document – something that is constantly reviewed. Periodic reviews/updates will be necessary to ensure goals/actions remain applicable

A number of changes were made to the document to address these and other more specific comments on transportation, waste, technology, and agriculture.

**Vision 2051 positions the Region well to address a number of key trends and issues in the coming years**

*Vision 2051* was based on an examination of the trends that impact the Region in the coming years, and provides a pathway to address them. Major trends can influence the services required by residents in the future. In understanding global, national, and local trends, Regional Council can respond effectively to needs with services and programs.

A number of key trends that were considered in the *Vision 2051* process are summarized below.

- York Region's population is growing, aging, and diversifying
- The Region's communities are urbanizing and the Region will transform into an intensified City Region
- Residents are dealing with health issues related to lifestyle; particularly children
- More York Region residents are having difficulty making ends meet
- The cost of housing is continuing to climb
- Agricultural and natural environment lands continue to be highly valued
- York Region's climate is starting to change
- Local, alternative, renewable energy sources will become more important
- Providing infrastructure services for the Region's population is becoming more expensive and challenging
- Moving around the Region continues to be more of a challenge
- The Region's economy will continue to transform into a knowledge economy
- Governments are finding more ways to be open, responsive, and engage residents
- Governments will continue to face financial challenges

**Vision 2051 is aligned with other strategies which enables partnerships and collaborative efforts with neighbouring municipalities and other levels of government**

The goals and actions in *Vision 2051* are aligned with similar strategies from the local municipalities, neighbouring municipalities and the Province.

The Region's neighbouring municipalities of Toronto, Peel Region, Durham Region, and Simcoe County, some of which share services or infrastructure with York Region, also have strategic documents which were reviewed as a part of the development of *Vision 2051*. With each of these documents, there is a similar alignment in principles and priorities including economic vibrancy, community safety, transportation, affordable housing, health and growth and infrastructure.

*Vision 2051* is also closely aligned with the Province of Ontario's major strategies and interests as articulated in Places to Grow, Metrolinx- The Big Move, the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan, the Greenbelt Plan, the Lake Simcoe Plan, the Provincial Policy Statement, and the Provincial interests as expressed within the Planning Act.

This alignment positions York Region well to enter into discussions with its neighbours to collaborate on implementing *Vision 2051*.

### **Vision 2051 will inform future decisions and programs**

*Vision 2051* will be implemented through Council decisions on major policy issues. Staff reports to Council will provide the connection to the recommendations being made to Council and the key Regional strategies including *Vision 2051*, the Sustainability Strategy, the Regional Official Plan, and the Strategic Plan. *Vision 2051* will also inform the approach in the strategies emerging within the Region including the Integrated Waste Management Master Plan, the Economic Development Action Plan, and the Climate Change Mitigation Plan, just to name a few.

*Vision 2051* will be monitored through progress reports. Progress reports will be prepared every four years to demonstrate the progress that has been made toward the vision for 2051. This reporting will be co-ordinated with other reports including the Strategic Plan, and the Sustainability Strategy. Together, these will provide the monitoring and reporting tools required to ensure the Region successfully meets its desired future state.

### **Link to Key Council-approved Plans**

*Vision 2051* is the key long term overall vision for the Region's future which informs all other strategies and initiatives and establishes the context for more detailed short-term plans. In future reports to Committee and Council, this section of the staff report will describe the connection between the report content and recommendations and Council's direction as articulated through *Vision 2051*, the Regional Official Plan, the Sustainability Strategy or the Strategic Plan.

## **5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The development of *Vision 2051* is being completed within the existing Regional Staff complement, and within the approved 2012 business plan and budget.

## **6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT**

The local municipalities were engaged in the development and finalization of *Vision 2051*. A number of municipal staff attended the various sessions hosted in the development of *Vision 2051*. A targeted Local Municipal consultation session was held on the draft of *Vision 2051* in January 2012. Approximately 20 staff and local municipal council members attended the session and provided input into the draft. The result of

their involvement in the process is that *Vision 2051* is very closely aligned with similar long term strategic documents of our local municipal partners.

## **7. CONCLUSION**

*Vision 2051* has been finalized with the input of the community, Regional stakeholders, partners, and staff. The final document is presented for Council endorsement and included as *Council Attachment 1* to this report.

*Vision 2051* is a bold vision for the Region's future which has eight goal areas, and corresponding actions that together, take York Region in the direction that the community envisions for 2051. The goals and actions within *Vision 2051* are closely aligned with the strategies of neighbouring jurisdiction and major Provincial initiatives, and positions the Region well to embark in new partnerships and collaborative efforts to address the biggest trends and issues facing the Region in the years to come.

*Vision 2051* contains a number of bold and innovative actions including moving toward zero waste society, carbon neutral housing, developing community capacity, and promoting health through community design and active lifestyles, just to name a few.

*Vision 2051* advances the Region's efforts in sustainability, promotes the health and well-being of residents, and the liveability of communities. This vision is about the people of York Region, the places they live, and the systems and services that support and sustain them, the economy and the environment. It's about creating strong, caring, and safe communities.

*Vision 2051* will be implemented through Regional Council decisions, partnerships and collaborative efforts, and more specifically within the next round of Regional strategies and initiatives. *Vision 2051* is closely connected with the Strategic Plan which provides a four year tactical work plan that moves us closer in the direction of the long term vision. Progress reports on *Vision 2051* will be provided to Regional Council and the community, beginning with the first in 2015.

For more information on this report, please contact Karen Antonio-Hadcock, Head of Strategic Initiatives, Community and Health Services at 905 830-4444, Ext. 2001 or Paul Bottomley, Acting Director of Long Range Planning, Ext. 1530.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.

*(The attachment referred to in this clause is attached to this report.)*

YORK REGION  
**VISION  
2051**

Presentation to Planning & Economic  
Development Committee

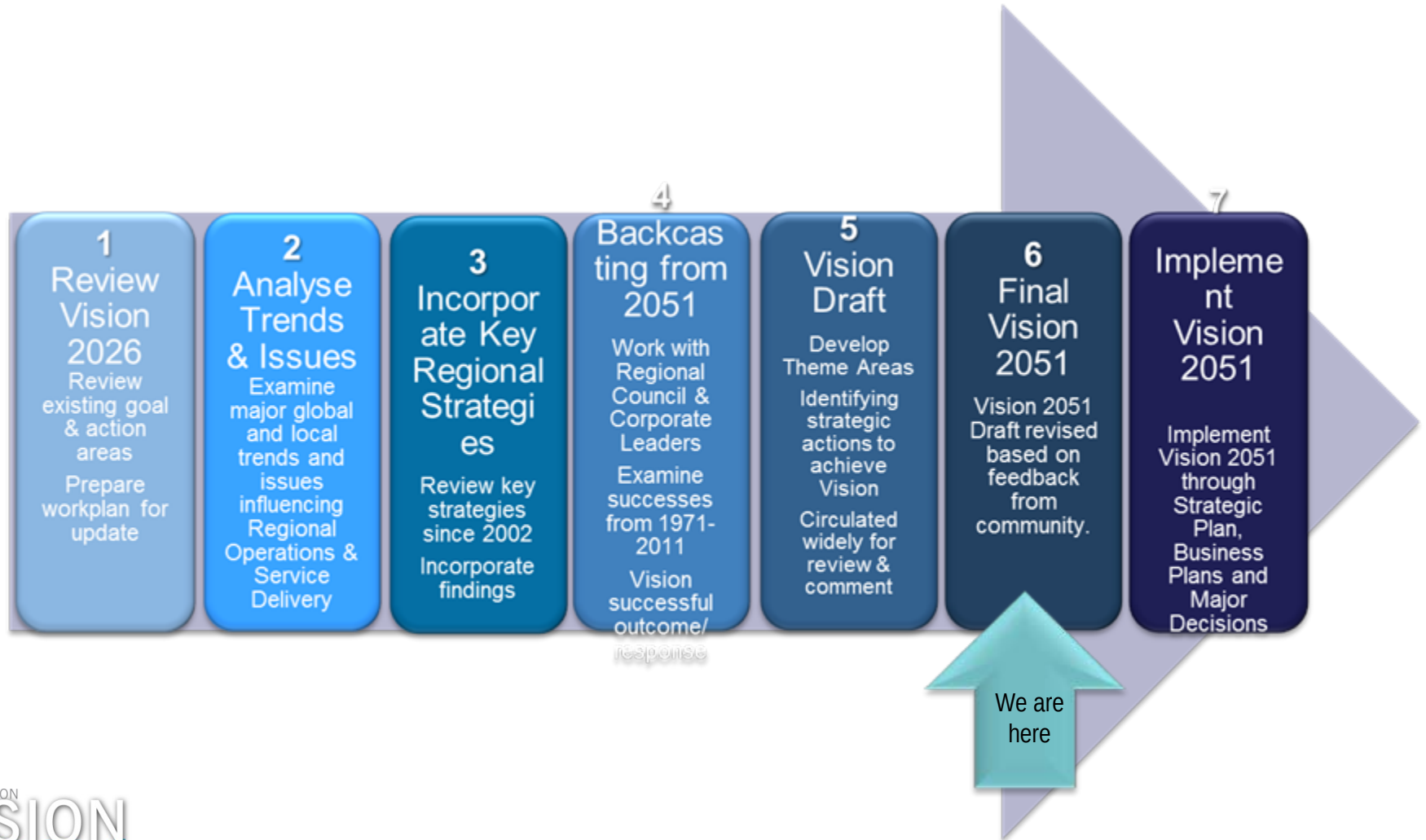
Karen Antonio-Hadcock  
May 2, 2012

# Outline

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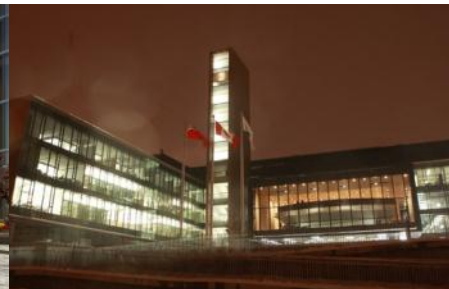
1. The Vision for 2051
2. Council Workshop – October 2011
3. Draft Release
4. Internal & external circulation and consultation
5. Summary of feedback & revisions
6. Implementation & Progress Reporting

# Vision 2051 Update Process



# The Vision for 2051: *Strong, Caring, Safe Communities*

A Place Where Everyone Can Thrive  
Livable Cities and Complete Communities  
A Resilient Natural Environment and Agricultural System  
Appropriate Housing for All Ages and Stages  
An Innovation Economy  
Interconnected Systems for Mobility  
Living Sustainably  
Open and Responsive Governance



# A Bold 40 Year Vision

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## Residents

- Promoting a healthy population through community design and active living
- Supporting community capacity

## Communities

- Complete, Welcoming and inclusive
- Vibrant City Region
- Integrated urban system & a Living City

## Housing

- Preventing homelessness
- Housing choices that match our needs
- Supporting Health & Sustainability

## Economy

- Facilitates Creativity and Innovation
- Skilled & Creative Workforce

## Environment

- Urban agricultural opportunities, local food, 100 mile diet
- Moving toward a zero waste society – waste as a resource

## Governance

- Open Government- open data
- Partnerships & collaboration
- Easy access to services

# A Bold 40 Year Vision

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## Climate Change

- Local Energy
- Carbon Neutral Housing
- Zero Greenhouse Gas emissions by 2051

## Water

- No new water by 2051 by leveraging conservation and innovative technology for waste water re-use

## Mobility

- People-first, reducing the need to travel
- Universal Transit Access

## Technology

- Telecommunications technology infrastructure
- Intelligent Information Systems
- E-Government

# Council Workshop Feedback- Oct. 2011

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- Regional government structure
- What we should be doing today vs. 2051
- Implementation is key
- Visionary enough? Firmer, more direct and specific language
- Greater emphasis on: technology, transportation (address the issue of single occupant vehicles), affordable housing

**Council's comments from the workshop were incorporated into the draft Vision 2051 endorsed by Council in November 2011**

# Release of Draft Vision 2051- November 2011

[www.york.ca/vision2051](http://www.york.ca/vision2051)

- Notification to 6000 on mailing list
- Website Updates
- Feedback Survey
- YRMG wallpaper takeover
- Twitter, Facebook
  - Posts, tweets, retweets

Services

- Regional Government
- Newsroom
- Business
- Public Notices
- Publications
- Departments
- Municipal Links

Home Communities Environment Infrastructure Economy Government

**Draft Vision 2051 has been released.**

**VISION 2051** draft released!

[Click here to view the Draft Vision 2051.](#)

York Region is developing Vision 2051, a new blueprint for the Region's future. Vision 2051 will update Vision 2026, York Region's primary strategic document. Prepared in 2002, in partnership with the community and Regional Council, Vision 2026 has been the overall blueprint for York Region and provides guidance to Regional Council in making decisions and moving ahead to achieve the kind of community our citizens told us they wanted York Region to be in the year 2026. Vision 2051 is taking a 40 year outlook on York Region's future. Vision 2051 celebrates 2011 as the 40th anniversary of The Statistical Municipality of York's creation by the Statute of York on November 1, 1871, and will build on 40 years of

[York Region in 1871: a retrospective](#)

**Regional Strategies**

[Sustainability Strategy](#)

Survey

**VISION 2051** draft released!

We want to hear from you!

1. Do the goals & actions within the draft Vision 2051 take us in the right direction – towards your vision for York Region in 2051?
2. Was anything missed in the draft Vision 2051? Would you like to see anything added or changed?
3. Please provide any additional comments or questions about the draft of Vision 2051.

Done

# Consultations on Draft

- Information posted at all York Region facilities
- 2300 hits to the Vision 2051 webpage
- 300 Social Media followers and steadily growing
- Local Municipal Consultation Session (Jan 9<sup>th</sup>)
- School sessions, Geography Teachers, Tech Trek



# York Region Media Group Articles on Draft

- Summarizing Feedback - October 2011
- Council Workshop & Draft – October 2011
- 2011 Newsmakers December 2011



# What We Heard on Draft Vision 2051

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- Demonstration of connectivity between goal areas
- Technical changes from internal departments
- Alignment with emerging/recent strategies – waste, economic action plan
- Transportation/Traffic
- Sustainability & protecting natural and cultural heritage
- Growth, agricultural areas protection
- More specific, more direct language, more aggressive actions
- Provide specific targets that can be measured and reported
- Implementation & monitoring is key
- Cultural shift required can present a challenge – getting from current behaviours to desired behaviours

# Summary of Revisions

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- Changes to preamble and introductory sections
- Principles – reducing and tightening
- Actions – strengthening and clarifying language
- Specific changes:
  - Greater emphasis on technology
  - Invasive Species
  - Waste as a closed system
  - Competitive economy
  - New and existing communities
  - CHS Multi-Year plan language
  - Community health supports
  - Housing stability

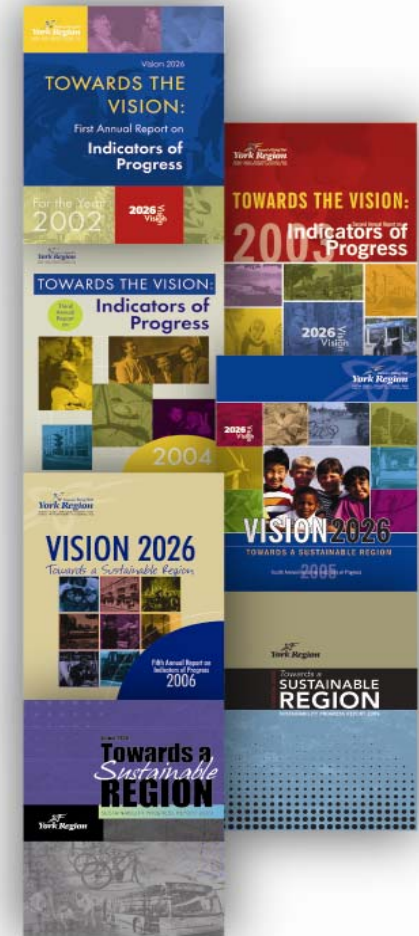
# Implementation of Vision 2051

- Regional Council and staff decisions on major policy issues
- Staff reports provide the connection to Vision 2051, the Strategic Plan or other Council approved initiatives
- Inform the approach in the emerging strategies within the Region
- Strategic Plan main vehicle for implementation



# Reporting on our Progress Every Four Years

- Co-ordinated with Strategic Plan
- Continue with regular Progress Reporting
- First Vision 2051 Progress Report in 2015



# Report Recommendations

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1. The final *Vision 2051*, included as *Council Attachment 1* to this report be endorsed as York Region's new 40 year vision for the future.
2. *Vision 2051* be circulated widely to all local municipalities, community partners and stakeholders.



# VISION 2051

*strong, caring, safe communities*



Mayor  
Frank Scarpitti  
Town of Markham



Regional Councillor  
Jack Heath  
Town of Markham



Regional Councillor  
Jim Jones  
Town of Markham



Regional Councillor  
Gordon Landon  
Town of Markham



Regional Councillor  
Joe Li  
Town of Markham



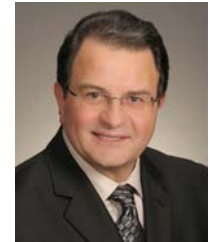
Mayor  
David Barrow  
Town of Richmond Hill



Mayor  
Maurizio Bevilacqua  
City of Vaughan



Chairman & CEO  
Bill Fisch



Regional Councillor  
Vito Spatafora  
Town of Richmond Hill



Regional Councillor  
Gino Rosati  
City of Vaughan



Regional Councillor  
Brenda Hogg  
Town of Richmond Hill



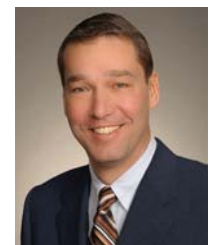
Regional Councillor  
Michael Di Biase  
City of Vaughan



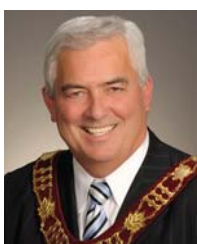
Mayor  
Tony Van Bynen  
Town of Newmarket



Regional Councillor  
Deb Schulte  
City of Vaughan



Regional Councillor  
John Taylor  
Town of Newmarket



Mayor  
Robert Grossi  
Town of Georgina



Regional Councillor  
Danny Wheeler  
Town of Georgina



Mayor  
Geoffrey Dawe  
Town of Aurora



Mayor  
Virginia Hackson  
Town of East Gwillimbury



Mayor  
Steve Pellegrini  
Township of King



Mayor  
Wayne Emmerson  
Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville

## Message from York Regional Council

*Vision 2051* establishes a blueprint for the future of The Regional Municipality of York and outlines the steps we can take collectively to achieve our vision. It is the outcome of two years of studies and consultations with residents, stakeholders, partners and staff.

*Vision 2051* is a bold and innovative strategy to guide us in creating strong, caring and safe communities designed with sustainability in mind. It will guide us to take actions, such as using more low-carbon, local energy systems to power zero carbon buildings. It will compel us to leverage innovative technology to re-use water and waste.

If we hold to this vision, we will improve the liveability of our communities, providing appropriate housing for all ages and stages of life, preventing homelessness and promoting healthier, active living.

This is a vision great enough to guide us a long way. We encourage you to use *Vision 2051*, which is available on our website at [www.york.ca](http://www.york.ca)

Please join us in working towards our vision for the future.

## Preamble

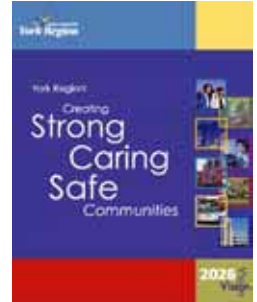
On the occasion of its 40th anniversary, The Regional Municipality of York has a lot to celebrate. As a destination of choice for newcomers, major employers and the skilled professionals they hire, the Region has grown from a series of small rural villages into a mosaic of communities as diverse as its people; small towns, villages, suburban neighbourhoods and emerging city centres. York Region's rich natural heritage—the shores of Lake Simcoe, major valleys, extensive forests and wetlands, the productive soils of the Holland marsh and the rolling hills of the Oak Ridges Moraine—continues to attract people to the region and sustains our health and our economy. Residents of York Region are proud of our communities. We cherish the quality of life that living in York Region brings, and want to continue to ensure the liveability of our communities, the health of our children and the services and supports networks we have come to rely on.

*Vision 2051* celebrates and builds on how far we have come in the last 40 years, examines where we are today and provides a pathway to an even brighter future ahead in the next 40 years. As the third vision of its kind, *Vision 2051* builds on a legacy of long term strategies that have established a direction for future initiatives within York Region together with partners and the community.

*Vision 2051* is the new blueprint for York Region's future and helps guide Regional Council and staff decisions, ensuring that we set a course today for the future we desire by the year 2051. This Regional Council and community initiative articulates an integrated pathway to achieve our desired collective future. It establishes a series of goals and actions that informs the decisions of Regional Council, corporate strategies including York Region's Strategic Plan, and informs conversations with our partners and future collaborations.

This vision advances our efforts in sustainability, fosters the health and well-being of our residents, and the liveability of our communities.

This vision is about the people of York Region, the places we live in, the systems and services that support and sustain us, our economy and our environment. It's about creating strong, caring and safe communities.



# Strong Caring Safe Communities



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## York Region in Retrospective: 1971

In 1971, York Region provided the following services:

1. Planning and Development Services
2. Police Services
3. Public Health
4. Regional Roads
5. Sewer/Pollution Control
6. Water Works
7. Welfare
8. York Manor and Child Care Centres

Regional Committees in 1971:

- Engineering Committee
- Finance Committee
- Health and Social Services Committee
- Planning Committee

Prior to 1971, the land area now known as York Region was called the "County of York", and was comprised of 14 municipalities: Aurora, East Gwillimbury, Georgina, King Township, Markham Township, Markham, Newmarket, North Gwillimbury, Richmond Hill, Stouffville, Sutton, Vaughan Township, Whitchurch Township, and Woodbridge.

The Province of Ontario reformed local government and created a system of Regional governments. On January 1, 1971, The Regional Municipality of York was created and the existing 14 municipalities were consolidated into nine local municipalities. York Region was one of six regional governments created in Ontario.

*By establishing this new Regional Government we together, demonstrate that rational plans can be translated into reality. We shall demonstrate that sprawling, uncontrolled growth is not inevitable. With a local government system having strength financially and administratively, we shall be partners in making the essential decisions that lead to orderly, balanced development.*

*- Honourable Darcy McKeogh, Minister of Municipal Affairs  
Inaugural Regional Council, October 14, 1970*

In 1971, York Region was considered a 'bedroom community' with most of the development in York Region being residential in nature and most workers commuting outside of the Region to work. Issues facing the Region in 1971 included rapid urbanization, traffic congestion, pollution, urban sprawl, strip development and local finances.

### YORK REGION IN 1971

Population 169,200<sup>1</sup>  
Employment 47,770<sup>2</sup>  
Households 44,720<sup>3</sup>  
Regional Staff 381<sup>4</sup>  
Regional Budget \$18.7 Million<sup>5</sup>

### Population by Local Municipality<sup>6</sup>

|                                  |                |
|----------------------------------|----------------|
| Aurora                           | 13,900         |
| East Gwillimbury (Prior to 1971) | 9,500          |
| Georgina                         | 15,300         |
| King                             | 13,100         |
| Markham                          | 37,400         |
| Newmarket                        | 19,300         |
| Richmond Hill                    | 33,000         |
| Vaughan                          | 16,200         |
| Whitchurch-Stouffville           | 11,500         |
| <b>York Region Total</b>         | <b>169,200</b> |



## York Region 2011

The Regional Municipality of York is one of six regional governments in Ontario. Regional Council is comprised of 21 members—the Regional Chair and 20 local municipal Mayors and Regional Councillors who sit on both their Local Municipal Council and Regional Council.

York Region provides many services to residents, businesses and visitors, including:

1. Court Services
2. Emergency Medical Services (EMS)
3. Family and Children's Services
4. Housing
5. Long Term Care
6. Planning and Economic Development
7. Police Services
8. Public Health
9. Regional Transportation System
10. Social Assistance
11. Solid Waste Management
12. Public Transit System (YRT/ Viva)
13. Water/Wastewater

### Regional Committees and Boards in 2011

- Audit Committee
- Accessibility Advisory Committee
- Community and Health Services Committee
- Finance and Administration Committee
- Planning and Economic Development Committee
- Environmental Services Committee
- Transportation Services Committee
- Rapid Transit Corporation Board of Directors
- Housing York Inc.
- Human Services Planning Board of York Region

### YORK REGION IN 2011

Population 1,073,200

Employment 516,000<sup>7</sup>

Households 322,000<sup>8</sup>

Regional Staff 2,836<sup>9</sup>

Regional Budget \$2.52 Billion<sup>10</sup>

### Population by Local Municipality<sup>11</sup>

|                               |                  |
|-------------------------------|------------------|
| <b>Aurora</b>                 | <b>55,600</b>    |
| <b>East Gwillimbury</b>       | <b>23,700</b>    |
| <b>Georgina</b>               | <b>46,500</b>    |
| <b>King</b>                   | <b>21,400</b>    |
| <b>Markham</b>                | <b>312,100</b>   |
| <b>Newmarket</b>              | <b>84,600</b>    |
| <b>Richmond Hill</b>          | <b>189,600</b>   |
| <b>Vaughan</b>                | <b>300,600</b>   |
| <b>Whitchurch-Stouffville</b> | <b>39,000</b>    |
| <b>York Region Total</b>      | <b>1,073,200</b> |



## Trends

Trends serve to influence the services required by residents in the future. In understanding global, national and local trends, Regional Council can respond effectively to needs with high-quality services and programs.

### **York Region's population is growing, aging and diversifying**

York Region will continue to experience rapid population growth. In 1971, the population of York Region was 169,248; in 2011, it is 1.073 million, and in 2051, it is forecasted to be 1.8 million<sup>12</sup>. Our aging population will experience the greatest increase during this period with a 250 per cent increase in the population over the age of 65 between 2011 and 2051<sup>13</sup>. The population also continues to diversify and by 2051, 60 per cent of the population will consist of newcomers to Canada<sup>14</sup>.

### **Our communities are urbanizing: the Region will transform into an intensified city region**

York Region's communities are intensifying. The four Regional Centres: Vaughan Metropolitan Centre, Richmond Hill/Langstaff Gateway Centre, Markham Centre and Newmarket Centre; and the Regional Corridors of Yonge Street, Highway 7, and portions of Davis Drive and Green Lane will have the highest levels of intensification across the Region. The Regional Centres will accommodate population and jobs at densities of 200 people and jobs per hectare.

### **We are dealing with health issues related to lifestyle; particularly our children**

Canadian adults are dealing with 21st century lifestyle diseases: obesity, cardiovascular and respiratory disease, type 2 diabetes, stress, mental illness and cancers related to unhealthy lifestyles including lack of physical activity and poor eating habits. The current generation of children is not likely to live as long as its parents due to the risk of developing life-threatening illnesses such as high blood pressure, type 2 diabetes and heart disease<sup>15</sup>.

### **More York Region residents are having difficulty making ends meet**

A growing number of York Region residents are subject to economic vulnerability. York Region had the fifth highest median family income in Canada in 2006<sup>16</sup>; yet one in eight of its residents or 112,165 people lived in low income households. Between 2001 and 2006, York Region experienced a 55 per cent increase in the low income population<sup>17</sup>, illustrating the growing gap between household income and the cost of living in York Region<sup>18</sup>.

### **The cost of housing is continuing to climb**

The price of housing in York Region continues to climb to an all-time high. In 2011, the average resale house price was \$638,158<sup>19</sup> while what is considered to be affordable based on Provincial standards is \$404,007<sup>20</sup>. There is a mismatch in the housing types, tenures and stock with the housing necessary to accommodate the Regional labour force and meet the needs of our population throughout our lives, driving people outside of the Region to find appropriate housing. For our most vulnerable residents, there is a growing need for social and transitional housing.

### **Our agricultural and natural environment lands continue to be highly valued**

Approximately 43 percent of York Region's land base is designated as Agricultural or Specialty Crop Lands (the Holland Marsh). The agricultural and rural areas of the Region are highly valued for their economic production and their contribution to the Regional identity. Sixty-nine per cent of the Region's land base is protected within the Provincial Greenbelt and Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan. These areas are critical to our economy and lifestyle in York Region.

## Trends

### **York Region's climate is starting to change**

The climate of the Great Lakes Region, which York Region is a part of, is already changing with winters getting shorter, annual average temperatures growing warmer and violent storms increasing in frequency<sup>21</sup>. Changes to climate have impacts on our infrastructure, health care, human services, emergency services, natural systems and how we plan communities and deliver services.

### **Local, alternative, renewable energy sources will become more important**

With energy costs rising and availability declining, local sources of alternative and renewable energy are becoming more important components of our community and economy.

### **Providing infrastructure services for our population is becoming more expensive and challenging**

A growing population and economy demands more services. New services are more expensive and challenging to provide. A new approach to managing services is required, including water conservation, waste reduction, transportation demand management and reduction in energy use. More emphasis also needs to be placed on transit, walking, cycling and complete streets.

### **Moving around the Region is a challenge**

As we grow, the ability to travel throughout the Region will become more challenging. Increasing mobility in the future will rely on a diverse range of transportation choices and other solutions, including transportation demand management, better land use arrangements, congestion management, optimizing the capacity of our road network and the use of intelligent transportation systems.

### **The Region's economy will continue to transform into a knowledge economy**

As the Region matures, its economy, while resilient, is continuing to transform. Service-oriented jobs are outpacing traditional goods-producing jobs in York Region as there is a continuing decline and off-shoring of manufacturing. Signs of transition toward a knowledge economy with value-added manufacturing and an increased emphasis on innovation are present. York Region needs to adapt to a changing economy and position itself as a leader in the emerging knowledge economy.

### **Governments are finding more ways to be open and responsive and to engage residents**

Information technologies, including social media and social networking, are being utilized more effectively to facilitate the operation of government and communicate with our community and businesses about government information and services.

### **York Region will continue to manage its finances carefully**

The demand for human services and new infrastructure is increasing as York Region grows and matures. The demand for existing and enhanced services, as well as revival of infrastructure systems, is expensive and requires careful financial management. Increasing efficiencies and tough financial choices will be required.

## Developing the Vision for 2051

The development of *Vision 2051* was based on a number of objectives:

- To reflect changes and emerging issues in the Region
- To recognize the Region's expanded mandate
- To co-ordinate strategic initiatives and guide business planning in the Region
- To provide an opportunity for residents to think and talk together as a community about what kind of place they want York Region to be
- To build on recent and emerging Regional policies and strategies

*Vision 2051* builds on the foundation and legacy of successes established by York Region's previous long term strategies *Vision 2021* and *Vision 2026*.

Since the development of *Vision 2026* in 2002, there have been a number of innovative policies and initiatives developed by the Region and the Province that have influenced how the Region does business. In the face of a significant amount of growth, there is a greater emphasis on sustainability coupled with an increasing concern with respect to climate change and energy. Pressures on York Region's transportation, waste, water and social infrastructure, an increasingly diverse and aging population, and meeting the housing, human services and safety needs of our population are continuing challenges. *Vision 2051* responds to this landscape and establishes priorities and actions to guide decision making in York Region.

*Vision 2051* builds on the Region's ongoing consultation with the community, partners and stakeholders for a number of years on recently developed strategies, including the Sustainability Strategy, the Regional Official Plan, Infrastructure Master Plans and the Community and Health Services Multi Year Plan, just to name a few. To complement the existing feedback on Regional strategies, a targeted engagement program was used for *Vision 2051* which relied primarily on the internet and social media.

### **Vision webpages and social media sites were the focus of the discussion**

Facebook and Twitter were used to share information, exchange ideas, generate discussion, network with other groups and organizations, ask important questions and gather input from the community. *Vision 2051* enabled the Region to practice new engagement tools, including an interactive mapping application which allowed the community to tag a map of the Region and share "My favourite place", "My vision for this area is", "This area has potential because", and "The area could be improved by". Invitations to participate were sent to 6,000 businesses and individuals across the Region.

### **Engaging Regional youth**

York Region youth were consulted throughout the *Vision 2051* process, including at the Youth Environmental Network of York Region (YENYR) Ecological Action Conference in October 2011 where more than 250 students from 13 schools across the Region were engaged. *Vision 2051* was also presented as a part of the York Region Geography Teacher's Conference "Illuminating Our Future."





York Region:

creating

# Strong Caring Safe

communities

creating  
communities  
caring  
strong  
creating  
communities

## Guiding Principles

The following principles have influenced the approach used throughout *Vision 2051* and shape the future directions and actions:

|                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Accessible & Inclusive        | Programs and services that are available to all, regardless of location or personal abilities and inclusion of all, regardless of age, gender, ability, income, culture or faith                          |
| Adaptable & Flexible          | Solutions, processes, policies or built form that is able to be changed or repurposed in response to changing needs or technologies                                                                       |
| Collaborative & Integrated    | Working together to achieve success in partnership with our community and examining challenges and issues in a holistic manner, where they are connected or overlap                                       |
| Efficiency & Conservation     | Using less, achieving more or the same with fewer resources                                                                                                                                               |
| Innovative & Creative         | The ability to transcend traditional ideas or solutions and to create meaningful new ideas or more effective solutions, processes and opportunities                                                       |
| Leadership                    | Motivating or driving action towards achieving a strategic vision for the future                                                                                                                          |
| Open & Transparent Government | Openness of government decision making and operations                                                                                                                                                     |
| Preventative                  | Addressing the root cause of social and health issues through education, partnerships and policy development                                                                                              |
| Resilient                     | Strength or capacity of people, communities, ecosystems, economy and organizations to overcome, successfully adapt or continue to thrive under any number of conditions.                                  |
| Sustainable                   | Achieving economic vitality, healthy communities and a sustainable natural environment by meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs |

## York Region in 2051

By 2051, it is estimated that York Region will have a population of 1.8 million. Of this population, 23 per cent will be over the age of 65 and 60 per cent will be newcomers to Canada, representing the myriad of global cultures and ethnicities. The communities of York Region will have matured into a system of compact and complete communities—towns, villages, rural areas and cities where people live, work, play, age and are supported throughout all ages and stages of life in a safe, healthy and vibrant city-region.



York Region's residents are able to live active and healthy lives, achieve a level of economic self sufficiency, and practice wellness and sustainable living. They are able to walk or cycle for all their daily needs: get healthy local food, access community services, chat with their neighbours, walk their children to a local school and find meaningful employment. The urban structure makes sustainable and affordable living choices easier. The community works together and assists each other in finding solutions to their challenges. In this safe and supportive environment, the community becomes stronger.

The majority of the 640,000 households will be located within the Region's urban areas—in particular, within the four Regional centres: Vaughan Metropolitan Centre, Richmond Hill/Langstaff Gateway Centre, Markham Centre and Newmarket Centre; and along the Regional corridors of Yonge Street, Highway 7 and portions of Davis Drive and Green Lane. Communities are supported by a transportation system that provides a variety of mobility choices for residents and workers. The low-carbon system prioritizes active transportation—walking and cycling in a safe and convenient system, and an interconnected network of transit services from subways, light rail transit, rapidways and community buses that move our residents to where they need to be. This system is connected through a street network that is designed for all users but prioritizes people; making them attractive places.



The almost one million jobs throughout the Region will be driven by the creative and entrepreneurial spirit of our business owners and labour force. York Region's economy is resilient to global economic changes and is supported by an advanced telecommunications infrastructure that enables quick adaptation to changing technologies and attracts global investment. York Region will be known as the place for innovation.

Technology plays a critical role in everyday life, from enhanced communications which limit the need for people to travel, to intelligent information systems which facilitate efficiencies and allow us to optimize our networks and make more informed decisions on infrastructure, human services and the economy.



Water and waste are recognized as critical resources in our economy and treated as closed systems. Water conservation and reuse are fundamental elements of the water system, and residents actively participate in the prevention of waste generation.

The Region has an extensive green network made up of the most valuable natural lands where native biodiversity can thrive. One can find solace in a peaceful walk in the woods, spot a heron in a shallow marsh or the more adventurous can cycle or hike from Lake Simcoe to Lake Ontario through a Regional Trail network. The local agricultural industry thrives and is able to support a healthy population with fresh local food.

## The Vision for 2051

The vision for York Region in 2051 is articulated through eight goal areas and corresponding action areas that take us in the direction of our vision through collective action. Alignment with the goals and actions help ensure that the decisions we make today set a course for the future we desire.



### A Place Where Everyone Can Thrive

In 2051, York Region's diverse population can thrive in an environment that fosters **healthy** living; is **safe**, accessible, **inclusive** and supportive.

### Liveable Cities and Complete Communities

In 2051, York Region's diverse urban form provides a variety of interesting and exciting places to live, work and play. Communities are **people-first** and designed for **healthy**, active **living** and social inclusion, and are the heart of **business**, arts and culture, **community life** and services.

### A Resilient Natural Environment and Agricultural System

In 2051, York Region's natural systems are **connected**, **protected** and **enhanced** through communities; they provide opportunities for **recreation** and support **biodiversity**. Agricultural areas are **thriving** and provide healthy food and resources to a growing population.

### Appropriate Housing for All Ages and Stages

In 2051, York Region has housing to match the needs of its residents and workers. Housing choices support **affordable** and **sustainable** living and address the needs of a diverse and aging population.

### An Innovation Economy

In 2051, York Region's economy is **resilient** and focuses on **creativity** and **innovation** with sufficient **infrastructure** and resources to support a **knowledge economy**. York Region's diverse labour force is supported with **opportunities** for collaboration and continuous learning and development.

### Interconnected Systems for Mobility

In 2051, a seamless network for **mobility** provides access to all destinations using diverse transportation **options** for people in all communities, promotes **active healthy living** and safely and efficiently moves people and goods.

### Living Sustainably

In 2051, sustainability can be practiced in everyday life through climate resiliency, innovative **water conservation** and reuse, water resource protection, **waste** reduction, **energy** conservation and greenhouse gas **reduction**.

### Open and Responsive Governance

In 2051, while the form of government may change over time, the function and principles of **governance**—openness, **accountability**, fiscal responsibility and **engagement** of community members in decision making—remain the key focus.

**In 2051, York Region's diverse population can thrive in an environment that fosters healthy living; is safe, accessible, inclusive and supportive.**

To support this goal, York Region, working in collaboration with others, will focus on the following actions:

### **A Place Where People Achieve Optimal Health**

- Designing communities to promote healthy and active living, and social inclusion for all life stages and ages
- Fostering health and well-being of the population through the promotion and protection of health and the prevention of illness so that residents are able to achieve optimal physical, mental and emotional health
- Providing community-based primary health supports through community paramedicine
- Facilitating access to affordable healthy food choices and the opportunity for meaningful work for all residents

### **An Integrated Network on Community Support**

- Providing services through an integrated network within communities so that York Region residents can readily access services they need
- Supporting an aging and diverse population and those working hard to make ends meet
- Addressing the core basic needs of residents in our community, including children, the elderly and people with disabilities
- Developing community capacity such that the community has the resources and ability to work together as individuals, groups, organizations and networks to address its own challenges

### **Celebrating our Culture, Heritage and Diversity**

- Fostering a welcoming and inclusive community and ensuring that newcomers are economically, socially, culturally, politically and civically integrated
- Embracing the complete diversity of our population including ethno-cultural, religious, spiritual, ages, abilities and incomes
- Recognizing, conserving and promoting cultural heritage and its value and benefit to the community
- Celebrating our First Nations origins, including recognizing the importance of conserving archaeological resources
- Valuing historic towns, villages and historic buildings and areas as critical elements of our community identity which contribute to sense of place
- Encouraging and promoting arts and culture



### An Accessible Region

- Integrating York Region residents and providing the ability to contribute, free of barriers, to every dimension of Canadian life—economic, social, cultural and political
- Encouraging a built environment, employment opportunities, transportation system and information that are accessible to all York Region residents

### Safe and Secure Communities

- Developing sustainable community safety and crime prevention strategies through community mobilization, engagement and education
- Enhancing crime suppression activities, including traffic safety

#### Making the Connections

A healthy population has the support network to live fulfilled lives and thrive. The residents are able to be active and achieve optimal health by

- living in walk-able, complete communities
- have access to healthy food and a robust natural heritage system and
- being able to rely on a formal and informal support network
- People choose to live in York Region because they can access jobs to match their skills and housing to match their needs and they can feel safe and secure in their neighbourhoods.

**In 2051, York Region's diverse urban form provides a variety of interesting and exciting places to live, work, and play. Communities are people-first and designed for healthy, active living and social inclusion, and are the heart of business, arts and culture, community life and services.**

To support this goal, York Region, working in collaboration with others, will focus on the following actions:

## **A Vibrant City-Region**

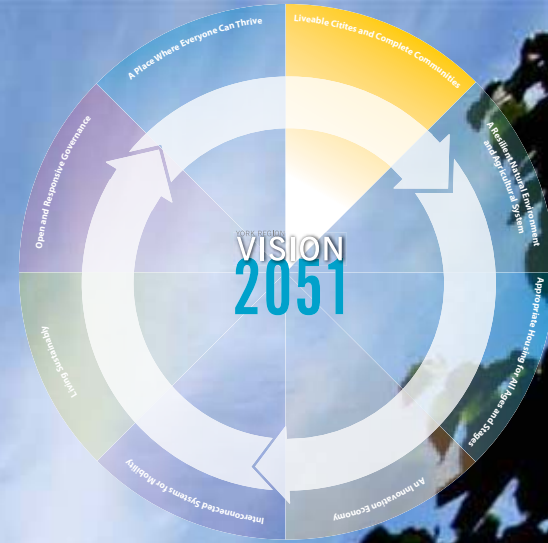
- Focusing intensification in a system of active vibrant Regional City Centres and Corridors that are the hub of commerce, entertainment and culture
- Planning mixed-use pedestrian environments with attractive streets, high quality urban design and a distinct sense of place
- Providing a place for everyone by ensuring an inclusive, safe, integrated and welcoming community
- Enhancing mobility within Regional Centres and Corridors through higher order transit systems, including subways and rapid transit
- Maintaining economic competitiveness by encouraging major office, institutional, cultural and entertainment facilities to locate within Regional Centres and Corridors with a goal to achieve a balance of employment and residential opportunities

## **Complete Communities**

- Planning for safe, compact, complete, walk-able, mixed-use communities, towns and villages that offer residents the opportunity to work and live active and healthy lives in the same community throughout their lives
- Working with others to provide a range of quality human services, including education, social, health, arts, culture and recreational facilities within communities that are accessible to all residents
- Designing communities that are accessible to the entire population, including people with disabilities, seniors and children
- Strengthening our communities by supporting children, families and youth so they can fulfill their potential
- Recognizing the importance of our countryside and rural communities as well as the distinctiveness of our towns, villages and hamlets

## **An Integrated Urban System**

- Planning for an integrated urban network of communities, human services, jobs, transportation and infrastructure systems that connect people to places, jobs and services
- Achieving a transit-oriented urban form
- Achieving better connections between where people live, work, learn and play
- Developing a network of social infrastructure facilities and services that support a growing, aging and diverse population
- Facilitating community building by providing complete communities that allow people to live, work and play in close proximity
- Planning for public spaces, cultural events, attractive urban form and public art that contribute to place making



## A Living City

- Fostering sustainable communities that support a healthy natural environment and sustainable lifestyle choices
- Facilitating an interconnected and enhanced natural system through communities and urban areas that offer opportunities for recreation, urban wildlife and linkages for flora and fauna
- Developing communities to facilitate an integrated approach to water management, including water conservation and reuse
- Providing an energy efficient urban form and buildings that facilitate reduced energy demand, and options for local renewable and alternative energy systems
- Enabling access to local healthy food through urban agriculture opportunities
- Designing and managing infrastructure to be context sensitive and enhance natural systems
- Valuing and supporting the ecosystem services of our green infrastructure

### Making the Connections

Liveable cities and complete communities offer a variety of opportunities to live, work and play in a compact community supported by an integrated mobility system. They foster social inclusion by providing spaces for people to interact, and contribute to a healthier environment through innovative energy use and water management. These communities attract a skilled workforce, particularly newcomers to Canada.

**In 2051, York Region's natural systems are connected, protected and enhanced through communities; they provide opportunities for recreation and support biodiversity. Agricultural areas are thriving and provide healthy food and resources to a growing population.**

To support this goal, York Region, working in collaboration with others, will focus on the following actions:

#### **A Protected, Connected and Enhanced Regional Greenlands System**

- Protecting and enhancing a connected Regional Greenlands System and its functions to ensure a healthy system through our cities, communities and rural areas
- Strategically enhancing natural cover to increase biodiversity, system resiliency and mitigate against the effects of climate change
- Partnering with other organizations to secure priority greenlands
- Encouraging private land stewardship and natural area enhancement

#### **A Healthy Environment for a Healthy Population**

- Fostering a healthy population through clean air, land and water
- Encouraging recreational opportunities in the natural environment, including the ability to bike or hike from Lake Simcoe to Lake Ontario
- Reducing emissions of criteria air contaminants and greenhouse gases that contribute to poor air quality and climate change
- Ensuring a drinking water supply that meets regional, provincial and federal drinking water quality and quantity standards
- Promoting the use of urban tree canopies and other green infrastructure to protect against extreme heat events

#### **Protecting Vital Water Systems**

- Protecting Lake Simcoe and its surrounding watershed to ensure they are healthy and contain clean, safe water
- Protecting water system health, ground water quality and quantity, and maintaining natural hydrological function through a system of streams, rivers and lakes from Lake Simcoe to Lake Ontario





## A Thriving Agricultural Community

- Recognizing the role of agriculture on the landscape and in our heritage and economy
- Ensuring high-quality agricultural land is available for growing and producing local food that is accessible to residents and communities, and other agricultural products
- Facilitating a secure and safe food supply by encouraging local food production, farmers markets, field-to-table initiatives and a 100—mile diet
- Recognizing the value of the agricultural landscape for its economic productivity, contribution to sustaining natural habitat and corridors, and as a carbon sink
- Encouraging value-added food production, food manufacturing and processing

### Making the Connections

A resilient natural environment supports a healthy population with clean and safe drinking water, and clean air. A connected and enhanced natural system is a permanent legacy for the Region that drives economic investment and makes York Region a choice location for new investment, employers and a creative and skilled workforce. Our agricultural system not only contributes to healthy local food choices and affordable food options, but is also an important contributor to economic vitality in the Region.

**In 2051, York Region has housing to match the needs of its residents and workers. Housing choices support affordable and sustainable living, and address the needs of a diverse and aging population.**

To support this goal, York Region, working in collaboration with others, will focus on the following actions:

### **Housing Choices that Match our Needs**

- Promoting a broad range of appropriate housing choices including mix, range and tenures, and supports to meet the diverse needs of residents and workers
- Addressing diversity in housing stock that accommodates a variety of household compositions throughout all stages of life from young families, to seniors, single persons and multi-generational families
- Providing a diversity of housing choices so that every worker in York Region can afford to live in York Region
- Encouraging housing that is flexible and adaptable to meet the needs of varying households and changing demographics
- Promoting housing affordability options, programs and supports that are integrated throughout York Region for low and moderate income families and individuals
- Promoting housing stability and preventing homelessness through programs that address the conditions that put people at risk for homelessness

### **Housing that Supports Health and Sustainability**

- Promoting energy and water efficient housing that supports human and environmental health
- Supporting the local economy through housing that uses locally sourced sustainable materials, technologies and labour
- Encouraging housing that is carbon neutral
- Ensuring housing at densities and in locations that support our transportation infrastructure
- Supporting healthy housing that ensures good indoor air quality and protection from environmental health hazards
- Encouraging the development of climate resilient housing that uses passive solar techniques, building orientation, shade and cool roofs



### Making the Connections

Providing a variety of housing choices for the residents and workers of York Region, which are in close proximity to meaningful work and an integrated transportation system, ensures a healthy and prosperous Region. Access to safe and affordable housing is one of the social determinants of health, and contributes to the overall well-being of our population. Housing built to be affordable and sustainable through the use of innovative water and energy saving tools allows us to maximize our environmental benefits, save money and reduce our carbon footprint and improve human health.

**In 2051, York Region's economy is resilient and focuses on creativity and innovation with sufficient infrastructure and resources to support a knowledge economy. York Region's diverse labour force is supported with opportunities for collaboration and continuous learning and development.**

To support this goal, York Region, working in collaboration with others, will focus on the following actions:

**An Economy that Facilitates Creativity and Fosters Innovation**

- Recognizing the Region as a global hub for innovation
- Supporting creativity that leads to innovation and positive change
- Encouraging a strong, resilient, competitive and diverse economy that attracts global investment
- Developing and attracting businesses from a broad array of sectors
- Providing programs and initiatives that foster entrepreneurship and support small business development and growth
- Building on the fundamentals of energy, water and waste as opportunities for innovation
- Promoting the creation of eco-business and employment areas, which facilitate sustainable business practices and an eco-business approach to streamlining business operations through resource and knowledge sharing, and eco-efficiency approaches
- Supporting arts and cultural industries

**Infrastructure and Resources Supporting a Knowledge Economy**

- Facilitating the creation of an advanced telecommunication technology infrastructure to support the innovation network across the Region
- Supporting an innovation ecosystem and the development of innovation hubs throughout the Region
- Harnessing and developing knowledge resources, including research and academic institutions
- Investing in innovation, education and training, entrepreneurs and the development of innovation incubators
- Encouraging the use of sustainability principles in business operations
- Pursuing the development of a University and a national scale innovation research institute in the Region
- Supporting the efficient movement of people and goods throughout the Region and surrounding areas



## Attracting and Developing a Creative and Skilled Work Force

- Promoting the creation of—quality jobs throughout the Region, for every resident of every skill and level of education
- Promoting York Region as a destination of choice for skilled and educated new immigrants by recognizing that their education, skills and experience are vital to our global economic success
- Focusing on continuous education and training and skills development to ensure a labour force that is flexible, adaptable and resilient to economic and labour needs changes
- Identifying the educational needs of the workforce together with key workforce development agencies, business and educational partners
- Encouraging progressive and innovative work and other opportunities that respond to the needs of seniors and people with disabilities, to maximize productivity and inclusivity in the economy and provide opportunities for everyone in York Region to contribute
- Fostering innovation and entrepreneurship in the labour force and encouraging education about business and entrepreneurial skills in early education
- Recognizing the importance of quality and affordable child and elder care options to support a working population

### Making the Connections

A strong and stable economy is essential to a healthy and prosperous York Region. Strengthening the links between the natural environment, attractive cities, communities and the economy is necessary to continue to attract a skilled labour force and progressive employers that help to maintain a high-quality of life and opportunities for meaningful employment. We can ensure York Region remains a destination of choice for business and investment by developing vibrant communities, providing affordable housing choices, facilitating the easy movement of goods and people and celebrating a rich arts and cultural community.

**In 2051, a seamless network for mobility provides accessibility to all destinations using diverse transportation options for people in all communities, promotes active healthy living and safely and efficiently moves people and goods.**

To support this goal, York Region, working in collaboration with others, will focus on the following actions:

**A System that Prioritizes People and Reduces the Need for Travel**

- Ensuring a compact, mixed-use built form that minimizes the need for travel and reduces dependence on single occupant vehicles
- Implementing and supporting transportation demand management initiatives that reduce automobile dependence by enhancing opportunities for residents and workers to walk, cycle, take transit and carpool
- Promoting initiatives including telecommuting, hoteling of offices, shared space, land use as well as working and learning arrangements that reduce the need to travel

**Prioritize Alternative Modes of Travel for Active Transportation**

- Providing convenient and reliable alternative modes of travel and prioritizing walking, cycling, public transit and carpooling
- Implementing a comprehensive pedestrian system and programs that encourage walking, cycling and transit use
- Facilitating an on and off-road cycling network that connects municipal cycling networks and trail systems and creates a Regional spine that will facilitate transportation by bicycle and support the use of public transit

**A Variety of Transit Choices**

- Providing a variety of transit facilities and services that are integrated into communities and together provide a comprehensive network of transit options that link people to places
- Enhancing public transit by improving existing infrastructure and services and maintaining the system in a state of good repair
- Improving the speed and reliability of the transit system through the use of intelligent transportation systems
- Providing universal transit access
- Providing a public transit system that combines a feeder network of buses operating in dedicated lanes and higher order transit including light rail lines and subway extensions including the Yonge Street and Toronto-York Spadina Subway Extensions



## A Network of Complete Streets

- Designing urban streets as public spaces that contribute to achieving liveable and vibrant communities by accommodating recreation and community interaction for people regardless of age or mobility, and providing access to destinations
- Supporting a road network that has a hierarchy of road types to increase travel choices
- Designing streets to prioritize the most vulnerable users; ensuring accessibility for all
- Managing congestion and optimizing the road network through intelligent transportation systems
- Designing streets to be context sensitive and complement adjacent land uses and environmental needs
- Providing beautiful, clean and well cared for streets that are maintained in a state of good repair

## Moving Our Economy

- Supporting the efficient movement of goods
- Providing an interconnected network for mobility that links people to jobs

### Making the Connections

An interconnected mobility system that encourages active transportation and is supported by an urban form, which reduces the need for long trips, is essential to creating an economically vibrant, socially– connected and environmentally–sustainable Region. Transit can play a key role in creating destinations to live, work, shop and play, and a strong economy when integrated with a vibrant mix of residential, employment and commercial land uses that reduce live-work-play distances, improve air quality and our carbon footprint and enhance the quality of life for residents, employees and visitors.

**In 2051, sustainability can be practiced in everyday life through climate resiliency, innovative water conservation and re-use, water resource protection, waste reduction, energy conservation and greenhouse gas reduction.**

To support this goal, York Region, working in collaboration with others, will focus on the following actions:

#### **Innovative Management of Water Resources**

- Demonstrating leadership in water conservation and efficiency by working to achieve no new water by 2051 by leveraging innovative technology for wastewater re-use
- Providing innovative water conservation programming, water resource protection, energy conservation and greenhouse gas reduction in water and wastewater infrastructure
- Maximizing the sustainability of the water supply and wastewater treatment through the application of best-in-class technology and practices
- Treating wastewater, including stormwater, as a resource
- Optimizing the capacity and efficiency of the wastewater system through reduced inflow and infiltration and the use of intelligent information systems
- Supporting the development of an innovative water centre in York Region

#### **Waste as a Resource**

- Revaluing our resources through the provision of integrated solutions, focusing on waste prevention and reduction programs, leading to waste elimination in all sectors—striving to achieve a zero waste society
- Evolving the concept of resource management through innovative education, demonstration projects and showcases that lead the way in valuing resources while reducing waste
- Advocating for industry responsibility for full lifecycle costs for all consumer goods and repositioning waste as a resource to drive toward the achievement of enhanced product design, increased product durability and 100 per cent product and packaging recyclability
- Recognizing waste as an important resource by focusing on resource recovery, energy-from-waste opportunities and creative repurposing and reuse initiatives

#### **Low-Carbon Local Energy Systems**

- Reducing dependency on non-renewable, carbon-based energy sources by diversifying local energy supply, prioritizing local energy generation and distribution and using renewable and alternative energy sources
- Promoting an energy efficient transportation network and reducing fossil fuel emissions by promoting walking, cycling and public transit
- Promoting fuel efficiency, emissions reductions, renewable fuels and the necessary infrastructure to support a low-carbon transportation system
- Encouraging energy and water efficient new building construction and retrofits to existing building stock, such that buildings can contribute to energy efficiency and water management
- Creating energy efficient water and wastewater systems



### **Adapting to a New Climate, Mitigating the Change**

- Advocating for increased energy efficiency and building standards to move toward zero carbon buildings
- Encouraging initiatives that move toward zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2051
- Building resiliency into infrastructure and communities
- Promoting preparedness for emergencies related to climate change including more frequent extreme weather days, droughts and flooding, vector borne diseases, invasive species, water borne diseases, extreme heat events and air quality issues
- Adapting to a changing climate by developing and implementing a corporate Climate Change Adaptation Action Plan
- Mitigating the climate impacts of urban development through cooling measures including urban forestry initiatives and other shade promoting initiatives

### **Fostering Healthier and More Sustainable Behaviours**

- Promoting an awareness of the value and benefits of our environment and sustainable lifestyle choices
- Providing education and training on the use of alternative transportation modes including commuting safely on cycling routes and transit use
- Fostering behavioural changes to maximize waste reduction, reuse, recycling and energy recovery
- Providing public education and outreach to increase awareness of the health impacts associated with air quality, climate change and the built environment
- Creating supportive physical and social environments through policy development and support

#### **Making the Connections**

Living sustainably means practicing water and energy conservation, minimizing waste generation and adapting to and mitigating against climate change. Living sustainably ensures a better quality of life for our residents and a stronger economy.

**In 2051, while the form of government may change over time, the function and principles of governance – openness, accountability, fiscal responsibility and engagement of community members in decision making—remain the key focus.**

To support this goal, York Region, working in collaboration with others, will focus on the following actions:

## **Open Government**

- Setting high standards for transparency and accountability in policy and decision making
- Finding new ways to facilitate easy access to services
- Responding to the customer service needs of a diverse population through a suite of tools, techniques and approaches including e-government
- Offering services in an integrated, seamless and transparent manner with increased efficiency and effectiveness
- Supporting better representation of our cultural diversity in staff, leadership and decision making roles
- Facilitating effective communication, meaningful inclusion and citizen engagement through the use of new media tools and technologies to foster a more interactive conversation with stakeholders
- Building stronger relationships with our diverse communities including First Nations and Métis communities
- Identifying new measures to evaluate and report on our performance
- Facilitating information sharing and open data so the broader community can benefit and add value to data collected and maintained by government
- Recognizing and valuing the importance of the Region's history as a way to inform the future

## **Service Delivery through Collaboration and Partnerships**

- Examining new partnerships and collaborative opportunities to deliver services
- Improving access to services in a co-ordinated manner with all levels of government
- Maximizing partnerships with local municipalities, neighbouring municipalities, community agencies, public-sector and private-sector partners
- Fostering community-based social innovation including social enterprise, grass roots community leadership and the development of community capacity
- Advocating for progressive policy changes and integration at all levels of government
- Identifying alternative ways to deliver services, including demand management



## Operational Excellence

- Fostering a culture of innovation and excellence
- Developing high performance teams by attracting and retaining quality staff and fostering a corporate culture of continuous improvement
- Leading by example in operations, maintenance, and customer service delivery
- Evaluating decisions using the triple bottom line elements of environment, economy and community
- Using intelligent information systems to understand and make strategic and informed decisions
- Providing an adaptive and flexible structure to facilitate the ability to respond to changing context and influences
- Being a leader to whom others turn for best practices

## Fiscal Responsibility

- Practicing responsible stewardship of finances and assets
- Practicing efficiency in service delivery and operations
- Promoting fiscally responsible growth by ensuring that growth pays for growth
- Advocating for sustainable sources of funding from other levels of government
- Using a full-cost accounting approach to financial management
- Exploring innovative financial models and funding tools
- Investing in infrastructure systems to ensure they remain in a state of good repair

### Making the Connections

An open and responsive government makes transparent decisions by involving its residents, businesses and stakeholders in decision making processes. Services and information are provided through a variety of interactive e-government technologies to allow all residents and businesses to participate in their own way, and on their own time, in decision making or using government services. Government services are offered in an integrated manner, and the Region pursues excellence in its operations.

## Implementing the Vision



### Vision 2051 Informs Regional Council and Staff Decisions

Implementation and monitoring are important components of a plan's success. To ensure *Vision 2051* is successful, we will measure how goals are being achieved and monitor the appropriateness of these goals as we advance, or as circumstances and trends change.

*Vision 2051* is a key component of York Region's strategic planning and business planning processes. *Vision 2051* establishes the overall vision and direction for Regional Council and the Region's employees and sets the stage for future strategic initiatives.

### The Strategic Plan Takes Us in the Direction of Vision 2051

*Vision 2051* provides a long-range desired state for York Region. The Region's short-term *Strategic Plan* provides the critical path necessary to reach the vision. The *Strategic Plan* is set up in four-year horizons corresponding with the terms of Regional Council.



## Reporting on Our Progress

*Vision 2051* will be monitored through both the *Strategic Plan* process and progress reports itemizing the achievements made in moving toward the vision for 2051. Progress reports will be prepared every four years, the first being in 2015. Reporting on *Vision 2051* will be co-ordinated with other Regional reporting including the *Strategic Plan* and the *Sustainability Strategy*. Together, these will provide the monitoring and reporting tools required to ensure the Region successfully meets its desired future.

### **Vision 2051 is a living document**

*Vision 2051* will be a living document for York Region. Regular progress reports and monitoring ensures that we are moving in the direction of the vision. These will be prepared every four years, coinciding with the term of Regional Council. As trends, issues, and the landscape changes, *Vision* will be reviewed and updated as appropriate to respond to the changing needs of the community.

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