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YORK REGION BUSINESS DIRECTORY 2005

The Planning and Economic Development Committee recommends the adoption of the recommendations contained in the following report, June 15, 2005, from the Commissioner of Planning and Development Services:

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

1. This report and the attached excerpt of the draft York Region Business Directory 2005 be received.
2. The York Region Business Directory 2005 be made available in print and electronic form to the public, area municipalities, various agencies, as marketing material to trade shows and corporate events.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of the York Region Business Directory 2005 is to provide businesses and area residents with up-to-date business address and contact information to promote existing local businesses and to assist in business recruitment. The print version of the Business Directory contains approximately 11,600 business listings, plus information on Regional business and employment trends, population and labour force analysis and economic development contact information, making it a valuable resource guide for business-to-business contact and a useful tool for highlighting the diverse nature of York Region's economy.

The report serves to inform Council of the variety of employment survey products available. The report also provides insight and information, allowing for a better understanding of York Region's economy. The detailed employment data collected is analyzed and provides a large part of the background data for the forthcoming York Region Employment & Industry Report.

3. BACKGROUND

The York Region Business Directory 2005 is based on information collected from the 2004 York Region Employment Survey, a door-to-door survey conducted with businesses located in selected employment areas in York Region between May and August, 2004.

4. ANALYSIS

The York Region Business Directory 2005 is an annual publication that provides an important point of contact to York Region residents and businesses alike. The Directory is available in print form and electronically on CD-ROM.

The York Region Business Directory information is also available online. The web-site enables a combination of searches of the York Region Business Directory by municipality, street name or business category, company name or by product/service. Each business record contains the following information: business name, street address, mailing address, contact information, municipality and location map. Each business can be sorted according to the main industry sector, as defined by the North American Industrial Classification system.

The 2005 York Region Business Directory is derived from the York Region Employment Database. This database contains information on 24,500 of the Region's estimated 27,000 local businesses. The remaining 2,500 businesses which are not included in the database represent businesses that surveyors have either been unable to contact or are located outside the employment survey area.

Where updated information is not available for a particular firm, information is supplemented with the most recent data available from previous years.

The print version of the Directory contains 11,600 individual business entries. The print Directory focuses specifically on commercial and industrial firms. *(Information on businesses in the following sectors has been excluded from the print version of the Business Directory due to space limitations: farming, retail and personal services, restaurants and recreational facilities, health care and public administration.)*

4.1 Directory Highlights

Information on business and employment trends are also included at the beginning of the print Directory. Highlights of this section include:

- The number of businesses in York Region increased 4.3% annually between 1998 and 2004. As of 2004, there were an estimated 27,000 businesses in the Region.
- There were an estimated 440,000 jobs in York Region in 2004.
- Recent employment growth in a number of industry sectors has contributed to the diversification of an already broad-based economy. This diversification helps to insulate our economy from sectoral shifts in the business cycle.
- Based on 2004 survey data, manufacturing continues to be the dominant employment sector in York Region accounting for approximately 25% of jobs. The Business Services and Personal Services sectors ranked second and third at 15.5% and 13% respectively.

4.2 Benefits

The York Region Business Directory 2004 is a useful business-to-business resource guide, providing points of contact to businesses across the Region. The Directory also serves as a Regional marketing brochure, highlighting population and employment statistics, providing interested parties with contacts to area municipal economic development personnel and promoting the Region and its many diverse business sectors. An analysis of employment information obtained from the Directory also provides a better understanding of the Regional economy.

4.3 Availability

The York Region Business Directory is available in three formats:

1. Internet (go to www.york.ca then follow the links for Business and Business Directory)
2. CD (available now)
3. Print (available June 2005)

The York Region Business Directory is currently being marketed through a variety of means, including:

- online via the corporate website;
- in print advertisements on the back cover of a number of planning documents (e.g., Opportunities for Investment, Employment & Industry 2003); and
- in person at various trade shows and corporate events attended by Economic Development.

4.4 2005 Survey

Future updates of this Directory are planned on an annual basis as a by-product of the annual York Region Employment Survey. The 2005 York Region Employment Survey update is currently underway.

4.5 Breken Partnership

The Region has entered into a partnership with Breken Technologies Group to improve the data collection efforts of the York Region Employment Database through online surveying of local businesses. This partnership will enhance the York Region online Business Directory by making online business searches easier and by allowing local businesses the option of upgrading their listing to include logos, electronic coupons and small web sites. In addition to promoting local businesses and enhancing our survey coverage, this software also provides the Region with a contact management system to assist our Economic Development Department with the distribution of materials to a targeted audience. The new software functionality is scheduled to be installed and operational during June 2005.

4.6 Municipal Partnership

York Region also continues to lead the initiative created in 2004 to work collectively with local municipalities to expand the scope of the York Region Employment Survey,

thereby enhancing the Regional Business Directories. This partnership has resulted in an increase in the number of businesses surveyed and provides a more comprehensive analysis of Regional employment patterns at the micro and macro level. This partnership has also aided local planning and economic development staff in a number of local initiatives.

4.7 Relationship to Vision 2026

The York Region Business Directory 2005 supports the Vision 2026 goal of creating a vibrant economy through its accomplishment in satisfying requirements in the following action area:

- **Attracting and Supporting Businesses.** By providing local businesses with a source of free advertising via the York Region Business Directory, business-to-business contact is enhanced. Further, the provision of these Directories to local business development centres and the accompanying Regional economic overview within the Directory helps to build more global awareness of York Region's strengths as a destination to live, work and play.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Database products including electronic and printed business directories offer an additional revenue source for the Region that can be used to maintain the employment database, based on a cost-recovery basis. Based on a pricing analysis of similar products in other jurisdictions, the pricing for the York Region Business Directory 2005 products are as follows: *(Copies of the Directory are available free of charge to non-profit organizations, local libraries and area municipalities).*

- Electronic directory - \$175; and
- Print directory - \$50.

Demand for the publication and CD continues to grow. Revenues for the 2004 York Region Business Directory have increased 319% over the 2001 version. As of May 16, 2005, the 2004 Directory has raised \$11,650 by selling 58 publications and 50 CD's.

6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

Information contained in the attached draft 2005 Directory excerpt presents business contact information at the local municipal level sorted by business sector. Regional employment and demographic data compiled from Census data and the 2004 York Region Employment Survey is also included in the introductory pages of the Directory. The York Region Business Directory 2005 will provide all those using this document with a summary of York Region's economy at the regional and area municipal level, which can be used as a basis for decision making, strategic planning and attracting new business.

7. CONCLUSION

The York Region Business Directory is one of several products derived from the York Region Employment survey. This Directory acts as an important resource to assist in business marketing efforts, to source local trades and suppliers, to assist residents in targeted job searches and to analyze the Regional economy. The significant increase in the number of updates available in the 2005 Directory is a direct result of the co-operative effort with local municipalities in undertaking the York Region Employment Survey.

The electronic version of the 2005 Directory is currently available, with the print version becoming available by the end of June. Detailed employment data at the local municipal level is currently being analyzed and will be released at the September Planning & Economic Development Committee as part of the York Region Employment & Industry 2004 report.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.

(The attachments referred to in this clause are included with this report.)