

1

DRAFT VISION 2051

The Planning and Economic Development Committee recommends the adoption of the recommendations contained in the following report dated October 27, 2011 from the Acting Commissioner of Planning and Development Services.

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

1. The draft of *Vision 2051*, included as *Council Attachment 1* to this report be endorsed.
2. Planning and Development Services Department staff circulate this report to the Clerks of the local municipalities and to anyone who has requested notification on the development of *Vision 2051*.

2. PURPOSE

This report outlines the draft of *Vision 2051* that, once endorsed, will be circulated for review and comment prior to finalization.

3. BACKGROUND

Vision 2026, Regional Council's primary strategic document is being updated to *Vision 2051*. *Vision 2051* will take a 40 year outlook on York Region's future, in part to celebrate that the Regional Municipality of York was created by the Province of Ontario on January 1, 1971; making 2011 the 40th anniversary of York Region, and to acknowledge that a longer term outlook is what is needed to embody the principles of sustainability and truly inform the next round of strategic policy documents at the Region.

In June 2010, Regional Council endorsed a work plan and consultation program for the update to *Vision 2026*. In January 2011, Regional Council endorsed the update process described in *Figure 1* below.

Figure 1: Vision 2051 Process



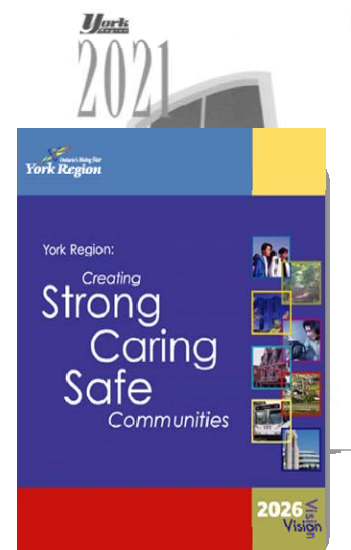
Vision Update was linked to the creation of a 4-year strategic Plan

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 4 years to coincide with the terms of Regional Council. *Vision 2051* will define the desired future state for York Region; the Strategic Plan will provide the critical path necessary to reach the vision.

Getting to a 2051 vision: *Vision 2026* was used as a solid foundation

York Regional Council approved its first strategic plan, *York Region 2021: A Vision* (known as *Vision 2021*), in 1993 as an expression of its goals for the York Region community. *Vision 2021* played a valuable role in establishing a unifying document for the Region, which takes a long term perspective.

In 2002, *Vision 2026: Creating Strong, Caring, Safe Communities* was prepared to update *Vision 2021*. Since 2002, *Vision 2026*, which was created in partnership with the



community and Regional Council, has been the blueprint for York Region. It provided 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. It has guided Regional Council and staff in the development and provision of services to meet the expectations of the York Region community.

The first step in developing *Vision 2051* was to review *Vision 2026*, and examine the goal areas and action areas to determine if they remain relevant to the Region's current operations and still address long term goals. The individual action areas were also been reviewed to ensure their continued relevancy in a 2051 Vision for York Region.

Through this review, it has been found that a number of the Vision 2026 goals and action areas remain relevant to the Region's current situation and operations. Many of the action areas have influenced the way York Region does business, and have been the source of a number of successes over the past 10 years. These include:

- From Vision to Results: 2011 to 2015 Strategic Plan
- Water for Tomorrow Program and Rebate Programs that conserve approximately 21.5 million litres of water per day, which is equivalent to servicing a community of about 90,000 people
- Corporate Clean Air Strategy
- Establishment of the Human Services Planning Board of York Region
- Three Accessibility Plans under the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001* containing 265 initiatives to make York Region's programs, services and facilities more accessible to people with disabilities
- Awarded Top 100 Employer in Canada and Top 75 Employer in GTA
- LEED® Sustainable Building Policy, Sustainable Development through LEED® and Sustainable Home Incentive Program (SHIP)
- York Region wide transit system (VIVA/YRT) + 10% ridership per year since 2001
- 10 Year prioritized Capital Works plan
- Housing Needs Study and York Region Housing Supply Strategy
- Centres and Corridors Strategy
- Greening Strategy: Since the program's origin in 2001 over 879 hectares (2,189 acres) of conservation lands have been secured and 750,000 trees and shrubs planted.
- The State of the Environment Report 2005
- Energy and Environmental Management System (EEMS)
- York Region International Investment Attraction Program

So as not to lose the valuable work within *Vision 2026*, the existing goals and actions areas were used as a starting point to develop *Vision 2051* and those that remained relevant were updated and incorporated into *Vision 2051*.

Getting to a 2051 Vision: Key Regional Strategies were incorporated

Since the development of *Vision 2026*, there have been a number of innovative and progressive policies and initiatives developed by the Region which have evolved our thinking on a number of issues and have taken the Region beyond the thinking currently within *Vision 2026*. The *York Region Sustainability Strategy* is a landmark within these strategies and provided a long-term framework for making smarter decisions about all municipal responsibilities and better integrates the economy, community and environment. This “triple bottom line” approach has influenced many Regional decisions and strategies since it was developed in 2007.

Many of the strategies developed since *Vision 2026* have very broad directions and specific actions which were used to inform *Vision 2051*. There are also a number of emerging strategies which have been closely followed to ensure that there is alignment with *Vision 2051*.

These documents include:

- Customer Service Strategy (2001)
- Regional Greening Strategy (2001)
- Housing Supply Strategy (2002)
- Economic Strategy (2005 – to be updated 2011/2012)
- Sustainability Strategy (2007)
- Pedestrian and Cycling Master Plan (2008)
- Natural Heritage Discussion Paper/Strategic Directions (2008)
- Best Practices for New Communities (2008)
- Corporate Air Quality Strategy (2008)
- Water and Waste Water Master Plan Update: Servicing for a Safe and Healthy Environment (2009)
- Moving on Sustainability: Transportation Master Plan (2009)
- Regional Official Plan (2010)
- Community & Health Services Multi-Year Plan (2010)
- Long Term Water Conservation Strategy (2011)
- Aging Workforce Study: Beyond the Boomers (2011)
- Climate Change Adaptation (2011 target)
- Integrated Waste Management Master Plan (ongoing with target completion 2012)



These documents were summarized for Regional Council in the context of the *Vision 2051* process in Clause 6 of Report 5 of the Planning and Economic Development Committee in May 2011. The strategic directions, policy initiatives and actions that have emerged from these documents and their consultation processes have been incorporated into *Vision 2051*.

Trends and Issues were examined in the development of Vision 2051

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. While many of the trends that served to influence the development of *Vision 2026* remain relevant, there are many additional trends that have been taken into consideration to develop *Vision 2051*.

A number of key trends that were considered in the *Vision 2051* process are summarized below and are incorporated into the draft of *Vision 2051*. These trends and issues were considered in more detail by Regional Council in Clause 6 of Report 5 of the Planning and Economic Development Committee in May 2011.

- York Region's population is growing, aging, and diversifying
- Our communities are urbanizing and the Region will transform into an intensified City Region
- We are suffering from health issues related to lifestyle; particularly our children
- More York Region residents are having difficulty making ends meet
- The cost of housing is continuing to climb
- Our agricultural and natural environment lands continue to be highly valued
- York Region's climate is starting to change
- Local Energy supply, availability, and sources will become more important
- Providing infrastructure services for our 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
- York Region faces some tough fiscal realities

Consulting on Vision 2051 builds on years of community engagement

The *Vision 2051* process uses and builds on the years of engagement that the Region has had with the community on the development of the Regional Official Plan the Pedestrian and Cycling Master Plan, Water and Wastewater Master Plan, the Transportation Master Plan, and the Community and Health Services Multi-Year Plan. Each of these strategies had extensive community engagement opportunities over the last several years which provided a solid understanding on the community's sentiments on growth, environmental issues, infrastructure planning, and the services needed in our communities. The feedback

from these processes was used as a starting point for the development of *Vision 2051* and a consultation program was designed to build on this feedback.

To supplement this feedback, a focussed and targeted consultation program was developed for *Vision 2051*, and was approved in Clause 1 of Report 5 of the Planning and Economic Development Committee in June 2010. In addition to an internal engagement program, the conversations planned with our community and partners were to be primarily web based, using social media and piloting interactive engagement tools used to target members of the community who do not normally participate in traditional public engagement programs.

Backcasting was used as a tool for internal and partner discussions

A backcasting approach was used to assist in the development of *Vision 2051*. Backcasting is a method in which the future desired conditions are envisioned and steps are then defined to get there. In the process of backcasting, the progress that has been made in the Region from 1971 to 2011 has been examined, as has the desired end state for York Region in 2051 and the key steps that are necessary in taking the Region there as illustrated in *Figure 2* below.

Figure 2: Vision 2051 Backcasting Approach



Five internal backcasting sessions have been held with Regional staff and Regional Council. The staff sessions included staff from senior management, management, and the Region's newest and youngest staff members. These half day sessions focussed on activities to envision a desired state for 2051 in York Region and to backcast on the actions and steps that the Region needs to take now to get us there

In addition to the five half day backcasting sessions, several smaller sessions were held with internal department groups. These sessions included opportunities for staff throughout the corporation to learn about the *Vision 2051* process and provide input on

the issues and challenges from their perspectives, their ideas for 2051 in York Region, and some of the actions that the Region can take to achieve the desired visions. A Know York Session (Lunch and Learn) was also held with an open invitation to all staff.

Several sessions have been held with Regional partners including:

- The Human Services Planning Board of York Region
- York Region Accessibility Advisory Committee and the Accessibility Partners of York Region (comprised of 47 attendees representing accessibility issues from various sectors)
- Markham Economic Development
- York Region Local Municipal Economic Development Officers
- York Info Partnership (35 Local Municipal and TRCA staff)
- York Region's Agricultural Advisory Liaison Group (comprised of 15 members representing the Agricultural industry in York Region)
- Aging Workforce Conference (participants included 275 employers, human resource professionals and economic development stakeholders across the region) which included an Expert Café on *Vision 2051*.

Through these sessions, 1125 individuals were engaged.

250 Regional Youth were engaged in conversations on their future

Engaging the youth of York Region in the development of *Vision 2051* was recognized as an important component of the consultation program. Two Youth Open Houses were held in September, one in Richmond Hill, one in Newmarket, and the *Vision 2051* program was a highlight of the Youth Environmental Network of York Region (YENYR) conference on Ecological Action in October 2011. At this session, 12 high schools from across the Region were represented, and students shared their visions for York Region in 2051. Through these sessions, 250 high school students from across the Region were engaged.

Vision 2051 consultation program uses website, social media and interactive engagement tools to generate discussion

In an effort to engage residents and stakeholders in a different way, the consultation with the community on *Vision 2051* was predominantly web-based and used Facebook and Twitter to share information, exchange ideas, generate discussion, network with other groups and organizations, ask important questions and gather input from the community.

The *Vision 2051* process 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...”.

The Vision 2051 webpages on the Region's main website and social media pages were launched in the summer 2011 and will remain active throughout the development and implementation of *Vision* and updated continuously. A mailing list of over 6,000 names has been generated for *Vision 2051* from the consolidated consultation lists from the Region's Growth Management Strategy, the Regional Official Plan, and Infrastructure Master Plans, Community and Health Services initiatives, Environmental Services initiatives, Transportation Services initiatives, local municipal partners, York Link organizations, and all of the businesses in York Region that provide public emails in the Business Directory. The mailing lists were used to generate interest in the webpages and social media sites. There are also cross-postings on the Region's main social media sites to generate interest, followers, and input.

As of the date of writing this report, the Vision 2051 webpages have received over 2600 external hits, and through the internet and social media channels (Facebook and Twitter), an additional 200 people were engaged in continuous conversations, 75 completed on-line surveys on the *Vision 2051* website, and 28 provided content to the *Vision 2051* map.

York Region Media Group helps to generate discussion on Vision 2051

The York Region Media Group was engaged to partner on generating discussion on the key issues and trends impacting the Region over the next 40 years, and the *Vision 2051* process. Articles with respect to the *Vision 2051* program, and issues related to public safety, social services, affordable housing, economic vitality, growth, education, health care, public health, recreation and leisure, transportation and infrastructure were published in a 6 part article series in September and October 2011, and were also posted on the York Region Media Group's website (www.yorkregion.com) as a "hot topic" under a page entitled "Shaping Our Future".

The effect of this article series and the partnership with the York Region Media Group is significant, with a circulation to over 300,000 households and businesses across the Region, and over 2,500 unique reader hits on-line.

The Region's traditional media forums were also used to spread the word on Vision 2051, including four media releases have been issued for *Vision*. *Vision 2051* was the front page story of the Winter 2011 edition of York Works, a newsletter that is distributed to every household in York Region, and follow-up information will be included in the Fall 2011 edition of York Works.

Feedback from 1550 individuals is the basis of York Region's vision for 2051

All of the feedback used from the various feedback channels informs the development of *Vision 2051*. Through all the sessions, including traditional consultation and social media, almost 1700 individuals were engaged. The feedback received through the engagement program was used to develop the draft of *Vision 2051*. Regional Council received a

summary of the internal and partner consultations in Clause 5 of Report 7 of the Planning and Economic Committee in 2011 which included the following:

- Housing should be intergenerational, flexible, accessible, affordable, safe, integrated, vertical, transit supportive, variety of tenures
- York Region should be an open and welcoming community for new immigrants
- There is a focus on health promotion and communities are designed to enable healthy lifestyles
- Sustainability needs to be the basis of everything we do
- There should be support for the local agricultural industry and local food production
- The principle of 'integration' should be ingrained throughout all aspects of the Region's operations and policies
- YR should be a magnet for investment; a place where value added jobs are created
- There is a quality job for every working-age resident in York Region, of every skill and level of education
- Invest in innovation, education and training
- York Region residents should be able to live and be supported in the same community throughout their life span
- York Region has complete, walkable, mixed use communities
- Regional Centres are thriving city-centres with a distinct form
- Technology infrastructure throughout the Region is as important as other Regional infrastructure
- Context sensitive design, complete streets, compact development
- Move from building to maintaining infrastructure in state of good repair
- There is a better relationship between where people live and work with appropriate housing for all York Region workers
- Communities and partnerships are built to be integrated, healthy, collaborative, interactive and participatory
- Careful monitoring and management of Regional fiscal resources

4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

The draft of *Vision 2051*, included as *Council Attachment 1* to this report was developed by using *Vision 2026* as a foundation, incorporating the key themes and actions from the Region's most recent strategies, most significantly, the *York Region Sustainability Strategy*, and finally embodying the feedback received from our community, Regional Council, staff and partners. The vision for York Region in 2051 is articulated through eight goal areas and corresponding action areas and actions that help 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.

The vision for 2051 includes eight goal areas, tied to the Region's key priorities

Draft *Vision 2051* contains the following eight goal areas based on the feedback from the community, Regional Council, Regional partners and stakeholders and Regional Staff:

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

The above goal areas address all of the subject areas within *Vision 2026*.

Together, these goal areas and the goal statements that follow articulate the vision for 2051 in York Region.

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.

Livable 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 and active living, social inclusion, and are the heart of business, culture and arts, 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; 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 are available that 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, 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.

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.

Actions take us in the direction of the Vision

Each of the eight goal areas contain a number of corresponding action areas, and specific actions which assist in achieving the vision for 2051 in York Region. Below is a list of the goal areas and their corresponding action areas. Within each of the action areas, there are a number of specific actions which are found on pages 12 through 27 in *Council Attachment 1* to this report.

A Place Where Everyone Can Thrive:

- A Place Where People Achieve Optimal Health
- An Integrated Network of Community Support
- Celebrating our Culture, Heritage and Diversity
- An Accessible Region
- Safe and Secure Communities

Cities and Complete Communities

- A Vibrant City-Region
- Complete Communities
- An Integrated Urban System
- A Living City

A Resilient Natural Environment and Agricultural System

- A Protected, Connected and Enhanced Regional Greenlands System
- A Healthy Environment for a Healthy Population
- Protecting Vital Water Systems
- Maintaining a Thriving Agricultural Community

Appropriate Housing for All Ages and Stages

- Housing Choices that Match our Needs
- Housing that Supports Health and Sustainability

An Innovation Economy

- An Economy that Facilitates Creativity and Fosters Innovation
- Infrastructure and Resources Supporting a Knowledge Economy
- Attracting and Developing a Creative and Skilled Work Force

Interconnected Systems for Mobility

- A System that Prioritizes People and Reduces the Need for Travel
- Prioritize Alternative Modes of Travel for Active Transportation
- A Variety of Transit Choices
- A Network of Complete Streets
- Moving Our Economy

Living Sustainably

- Innovative Management of Water Resources
- Integrated Solutions for Waste
- Low-Carbon Local Energy Systems
- Adapting to a New Climate, Mitigating the Change
- Fostering Healthier and More Sustainable Behaviours

Open and Responsive Governance

- Open Government
- Service Delivery through Collaboration and Partnerships
- Operational Excellence
- Fiscal Responsibility

Draft Vision 2051 is aligned with local municipal, neighbouring municipal and provincial strategies

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

The majority of the Region's local municipalities have a strategic plan or similar document which outlines the municipality's long term priorities. A number of the local municipalities have recent strategies including East Gwillimbury (2011-2014 Strategic Plan) and Markham (Green Print). Others have emerging strategies including Aurora (Strategic Plan 2011-2031), King (Sustainable King), and Whitchurch-Stouffville. Each of the local strategies were reviewed and there is a close alignment with these and *Vision*

2051. The core issues are in alignment including service and operational excellence, vibrant, well-balanced and well planned communities, economic vitality and caring for the community. Each of these local strategies have informed the drafting of *Vision 2051*.

The Region's neighbouring municipalities of Toronto, Peel Region, Durham Region, and Simcoe County, with which we share borders and in some cases, share services or infrastructure, 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.

Draft Vision 2051 will be circulated widely for review and comment prior to finalization

The draft of *Vision 2051* will be circulated widely for review and comment. The draft will be posted on the *Vision 2051* webpages and available through Facebook and links through Twitter, in addition to print copies being made available to anyone who requests them. Copies will also be circulated to the local municipalities.

After a review of the draft with our partners, stakeholders and the community, *Vision 2051* will be brought forward to Regional Council early in 2012 for finalization.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The development of *Vision 2051* is being completed within the existing Regional Staff complement, and within the approved 2011 business plan and budget.

6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

Throughout the *Vision 2051* process, it has been recognized that the local municipalities are key stakeholders in contributing to a collective vision for York Region's future. Regional staff have examined the strategic plans of the local municipalities, those that are existing and emerging, to ensure alignment with the local strategic documents and *Vision 2051*.

The development of *Vision 2051* builds on the contributions of the past and ensures that local municipalities are fully consulted and engaged in the update process. A number of municipal staff have attended the various sessions hosted for the development of *Vision*

2051. Local municipal staff will continue to be engaged in the finalization of *Vision 2051* through a consultation session for local municipal staff on December 1, 2011.

7. CONCLUSION

The draft of *Vision 2051* is presented in this report for Regional Council endorsement for wide circulation and comment prior to finalization early in 2012. The draft of *Vision 2051* was developed through a review of *Vision 2026* and emerging trends and issues, incorporating a number of significant Regional policies and initiatives over the past 10 years, and with the feedback from Regional Council, the community, Regional stakeholders and partners, and Regional Staff through a number of backcasting sessions and an internet based consultation program.

The draft of *Vision 2051* 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 the draft of *Vision 2051* are closely aligned with similar local municipal strategies, our neighbouring jurisdiction and major Provincial initiatives.

Once endorsed and circulated widely for review and comment, *Vision 2051* will be brought forward to Regional Council early in 2012 for finalization.

For more information on this report, please contact Karen Antonio-Hadcock, Acting Manager of Growth Management at 905 830-4444, Ext. 1532, or Paul Bottomley, Acting Director of Long Range and Strategic Planning at Ext 1530.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.

(The attachment referred to in this clause was distributed with the agenda of the Planning and Economic Development Committee for the November 2, 2011, agenda and has been distributed under separate cover to Members of Council.)



VISION 2051

draft

November, 2011



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
Michael Di Biase
City of Vaughan



Regional Councillor
Deb Schulte
City of Vaughan



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

This draft of Vision 2051 for The Regional Municipality of York establishes a blueprint for the Region's future and outlines the steps we can collectively take to achieve this vision.

Early in the process, we recognized that a vision which reflects the wishes of the community should be developed through consultation with the community. We believe we are well on our way to accomplishing this.

This draft was based on what people told us they want York Region to become over the next 40 years. It also incorporates what people expressed during the development of recent Regional strategies, including the York Region Official Plan, the Transportation Master Plan, the Water and Wastewater Master Plan, the Pedestrian and Cycling Master Plan, the Long Term Water Conservation Strategy and the Community and Health Services' Multi-Year Plan.

Based on the views expressed by residents, stakeholders and partners, York Region has important strengths that need to be nurtured, including ethnic diversity, economic strength and quality of life.

To complete the consultation process, we need your input. Please review this draft of Vision 2051 and provide your feedback. Together, we can make choices that lead us toward a very positive future.



Regional Councillor
Brenda Hogg
Town of Richmond Hill



Mayor
Tony Van Bynen
Town of Newmarket



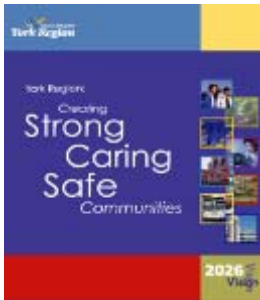
Regional Councillor
John Taylor
Town of Newmarket

Vision 2051

Preamble



Vision 2051, together with the Region's Sustainability Strategy and the Regional Official Plan, are the Region's primary strategic documents. The Region's Strategic Plan implements Vision 2051 in 4 year increments, coinciding with the terms of Regional Council.



York Region's *Vision 2051* is a new blueprint for the Region's future. As the Region's primary strategic document *Vision 2051* updates *Vision 2026: Creating Strong, Caring, Safe Communities* which was prepared in 2002. *Vision 2051* was created in partnership with the community and Regional Council, and informs Regional Council and staff decisions to ensure that the decisions we make today set a course for the future we desire by the year 2051.

Vision 2051 takes a 40 year outlook, in celebration of 2011 as the 40th anniversary of the creation of the Regional Municipality of York by the Province of Ontario on January 1, 1971. This outlook builds on 40 years of accomplishments and sets the stage for the next generation of successes.

Vision 2026 and its predecessor, *Vision 2021* have influenced many Regional successes. Since the approval of *Vision 2026* in 2002, *Towards the Vision* annual progress reports have been released, cataloguing the successes achieved in implementing *Vision 2026* and where progress needs to be made in the coming years.

The landscape in York Region has changed significantly since *Vision 2026* was developed in 2002. 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, pressure on York Region's transportation, waste, water, and social infrastructure, the Region's increasingly diverse and aging population, and meeting the housing, human services and safety needs of our population. *Vision 2051* responds to this changing landscape and establishes priorities and actions to guide York Region's future.

In 2007, York Region adopted a *Sustainability Strategy*, which provided a framework to evaluate decisions using the triple bottom-line elements of environment, economy and community. The *Sustainability Strategy* assisted in fostering a culture of continuous improvement, and provided a framework for making smarter decisions about our lifestyle, community design, infrastructure and financial decisions. It has filtered through the corporation as a way of thinking and acting. This thinking is embodied in *Vision 2051*.

Vision 2051 provides an integrated perspective on the Region's future, and the pathways to achieve our desired future.

Contents

Vision Statement1

York Region in Retrospective: 19712

York Region in 20113

Trends4

Guiding Principles6

Developing the Vision7

Consulting on the Vision for 20518

York Region in 205110

The Vision for 2051 11

 A Place Where Everyone Can Thrive12

 Liveable Cities and Complete Communities14

 A Resilient Natural Environment and Agricultural System16

 Appropriate Housing for All Ages and Stages.....18

 An Innovation Economy20

 Interconnected Systems for Mobility22

 Living Sustainably.....24

 Open and Responsive Governance26

Implementing the Vision28

Reporting on Our Progress29

References30

We Need Your Feedback31

York Region:

creating

Strong Caring Safe

communities

creating
communities
safe
creating
communities

York Region in Retrospective: 1971

In 1971, the 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

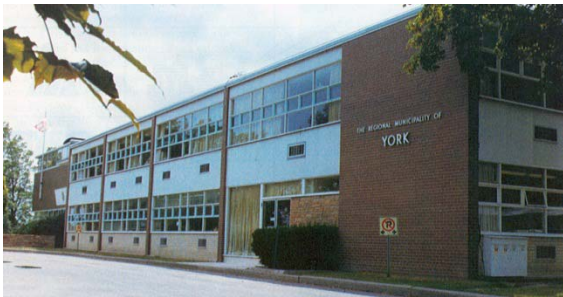
Prior to 1971, the land area now known as York Region was called the “County of York”, and was comprised of 14 municipalities: Aurora, East Gwillimbury, Georgina, King Township, Markham Township, Markham, Newmarket, North Gwillimbury, Richmond Hill, Stouffville, Sutton, Vaughan Township, Whitchurch Township, 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 9 local municipalities. The Regional Municipality of York 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.



First Regional Administration Centre 62 Bayview Parkway, Newmarket

YORK REGION IN 1971

Population 169,250¹
Employment 47,770²
Households 44,720³
Regional Staff 381⁴
Regional Budget \$18.7 Million⁵

Population by Local Municipality⁶

Aurora	13,900
East Gwillimbury	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
York Region Total	169,200



BACK ROW (L to R): Councillor Ray Twinney (Newmarket), Councillor Albert H. Rutherford (Vaughan), Councillor H. Lawrie (Markham), Councillor James P. Jongeneel (Markham), Mayor William C. Lazenby (Richmond Hill), Councillor Robert Pollock (Georgina), Mayor Richard Illingworth (Aurora), Mayor Kenneth MacTaggart (King), Councillor Gordon Rowe (Richmond Hill) **FRONT ROW (L to R):** Mayor Bob Forhan (Newmarket), Mayor Kenneth Laushway (Whitchurch-Stouffville), Mayor Gladys Rolling (East Gwillimbury), The Honourable W. Darcy McKeough (Minister of Municipal Affairs), Chairman Garfield Wright, Albert J. Rettie (Chief Administrative Officer), Mayor Garnet Williams (Vaughan), Mayor Anthony Roman (Markham), Mayor George M. Burrows (Georgina) **ABSENT:** Councillor Donald Plaxton (Richmond Hill)

York Region in 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 both on 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 516,000⁷

Households 322,000⁸

Regional Staff 2,836⁹

Regional Budget \$2.52 Billion¹⁰

Population by Local Municipality¹¹

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



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.¹² Our aging population will experience the greatest increase during this period with a 250% increase in the population over the age of 65 between 2011 and 2051.¹³ The population also continues to diversify and by 2051, 60% of the population will consist of newcomers to Canada.¹⁴

Regional Centres and Corridors System



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 suffering from health issues related to lifestyle; particularly our children

Canadian adults are suffering from 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.¹⁵

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;¹⁶ yet one in eight of its residents lived in low income households: a total of 112,165 people. Between 2001 and 2006, York Region experienced a 55% increase in the low income population,¹⁷ illustrating the growing gap between household income and the cost of living in York Region.¹⁸

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 \$638,158¹⁹ while what is considered to be affordable based on Provincial standards is \$404,007.²⁰ 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 their 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.

Trends

Our agricultural & natural environment lands continue to be highly valued

Approximately 43% 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 percent 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.

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.²¹ Changes to climate have impacts on our infrastructure, health care, human services, emergency services, natural systems, and how we plan communities and deliver services.

Energy supply, availability, and sources

As energy costs are rising and availability is declining, local sources of energy and 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 becomes 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, responsive, and 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 business about government information and services.

The Region faces some tough fiscal realities

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.

Guiding Principles

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

Accessibility	Programs and services that are available to all regardless of location or personal abilities.
Adaptable/Flexible	Solutions, processes, policies, or built form that is able to be changed, or repurposed in response to changing needs or technologies.
Collaboration & Inclusion	Working together to achieve success in partnership with our community, and including all; regardless of age, gender, ability, income, culture or faith.
Community Capacity	A community's collective resources and skills that are used to address its own problems and opportunities together as individuals, groups, organizations and networks.
Efficiency/ Conservation	Using less; achieving more or the same with fewer resources.
Innovation and Creativity	The ability to transcend traditional ideas or solutions, and to create meaningful new ideas or more effective solutions, processes, and opportunities.
Integration	Examining challenges and issues in a holistic manner; where they are connected or overlap.
Leadership	Motivating or driving action towards achieving strategic vision for the future.
Open Government/ Transparency	Openness of government decision making and operations.
Prevention	Addressing the root cause of social and health issues. Preventative social and health services promote healthy sustainable communities, living and awareness through education and policy development.
Resiliency	Strength or capacity of people, communities, ecosystems, economy, and organizations to overcome, successfully adapt, or continue to thrive under any number of conditions.
Sustainability	Achieving economic vitality, healthy communities and sustainable natural environment by meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Developing the Vision

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; and,
- To build on recent and emerging Regional policies and strategies.

Vision 2026 was a solid foundation

The first step in developing *Vision 2051* was to review *Vision 2026* goal areas and actions to determine if they remain relevant to the Region's current operations and still address long term goals. This review confirmed that many of the goal and action areas in *Vision 2026* are valid, timeless, and remain relevant and have been the source of the Region's great number of successes over the past eight years. *Vision 2051* builds on the foundation that *Vision 2026* established and provides an updated approach.

The landscape has changed

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, coupled with an increasingly diverse and aging population, and meeting the housing, human services and safety needs of our population are continuing challenges. *Vision2051* responds to this landscape and establish priorities and actions to guide decision making in York Region.

Regional strategies inform the path forward

A number of progressive strategies and documents have been prepared by the Region which influences an updated approach to issues and challenges we face. Each strategy deals with a variety of issues, and the time horizons vary from 5 to 40 years. Their key policy directions and specific actions have been used to inform the development of *Vision 2051*.



VISION 2026 GOAL AREAS

1. Quality Communities for a Diverse Population
2. Enhanced Environment, Heritage and Culture
3. A Vibrant Economy
4. Responding to the Needs of Our Residents
5. Housing Choices for Our Residents
6. Managed and Balanced Growth
7. Infrastructure for a Growing Region
8. Engaged Communities and a Responsive Region

REGIONAL DOCUMENTS INFLUENCING VISION 2051

- Customer Service Strategy (2001)
- Regional Greening Strategy (2001)
- Housing Supply Strategy (2002)
- Sustainability Strategy (2007)
- Natural Heritage Strategic Directions (2008)
- Best Practices for New Communities (2008)
- Corporate Air Quality Strategy (2008)
- Pedestrian and Cycling Master Plan (2008)
- Water and Waste Water Master Plan Update: Servicing for a Safe and Healthy Environment (2009)
- Moving on Sustainability: Transportation Master Plan (2009)
- Regional Official Plan (2010)
- Community & Health Services Multi-Year Plan (2010)
- Long Term Water Conservation Strategy (2011)
- Aging Workforce Study: Beyond the Boomers (2011)
- York Region Immigration Settlement Strategy (2011)
- Climate Change Adaptation Action Plan (2011)
- Economic Action Plan (2012 target)
- Integrated Waste Management Master Plan (2012 target)

Consulting on the Vision for 2051



The backcasting approach includes the following elements:

1. Begin with the end in mind.
2. Move backwards from the vision to the present.
3. Move step by step toward the vision.

Share YOUR VISION 2051



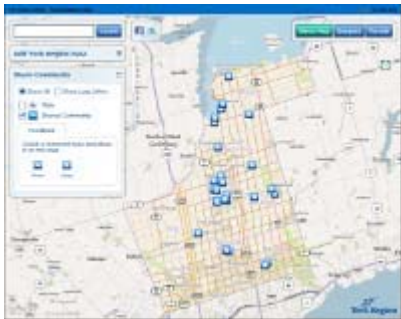
Visit our website
www.york.ca/vision2051



Follow us on Twitter
@YorkRegion2051

Like us on Facebook
www.facebook.com/YorkRegion2051

Vision 2051 Consultation Map



Vision 2051 was built on a foundation of ongoing consultation that the Region has been having 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 primarily relied on the internet and social media. Information on the *Vision 2051* program was provided to every household and business in York Region through two editions of "York Works", as well as 992 subscribers in businesses across the Region through Workplace eBulletins.

Backcasting Approach Was Used To Consult On Vision

Backcasting is a method in which the future desired conditions are envisioned first and steps are then defined to get there. The backcasting approach was used in internal and stakeholder consultation sessions as a method to examine the progress that has been made in the Region from 1971 to 2011, imagine the desired end state for York Region in 2051, and determine the key steps that are necessary in taking the Region there.

Vision Webpages and Social Media Sites Were the Focus of the Discussion

In an effort to engage residents and stakeholders in a different way, the consultation on *Vision 2051* was predominantly web-based and used Facebook and Twitter 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.

York Region Media Group helped spread the word on Vision

Building on the successes of the *Vision 2026* process, the York Region Media Group was engaged to partner on generating discussion on the key issues and trends related to *Vision 2051*. Articles on public safety, social services, affordable housing, economic vitality, growth, education, health care, public health, recreation and leisure, transportation and infrastructure were published in September and October of 2011 in a six part series entitled "Shaping Our Future". The YRMG also published the article series on-line and provided a forum to share photos and videos.

Engaging Regional Youth

York Region youth were engaged throughout the *Vision 2051* process. Two Youth Forums were held in September 2011. *Vision 2051* was presented at the Youth Environmental Network of York Region (YENYR) Ecological Action Conference in October 2011 with over 250 students participating from 13 schools across the Region, and was presented as a part of the York Region Geography Teacher's Conference "Illuminating Our Future".

Summarizing Feedback

This Word Cloud provides a snapshot of the Vision statements collected during consultation on *Vision 2051*. The size of each word illustrates the frequency with which the term was used.

Summarizing Feedback

This Word Cloud provides a snapshot of the Vision statements collected during consultation on *Vision 2051*. The size of each word illustrates the frequency with which the term was used.



York Region in 2051



By 2051, it is estimated that York Region will have a population of 1.8 million. Of this population, 23% will be over 65 and 60% 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 has the ability to work together and assist each other in finding solutions to their challenges.



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 which 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 economy and 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 to be.



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 re-use 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 help 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.

Livable 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** and active **living**, social inclusion, and are the heart of **business**, culture and arts, **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; 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 are available that 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, there is a seamless network for **mobility** that provides accessibility to all destinations using diverse transportation **options** to people in all communities, promotes **active healthy living**, safely and efficiently moves people, goods and our economy.

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.

Making the Connections:

The *Vision 2051* Goal Areas and Action Areas are interrelated and connected to one another – together contributing to a holistic approach to a successful future for 2051 in York Region.

How to Read this Document

Vision 2051 is comprised of eight

GOAL AREAS

followed by a *goal statement* which provides a description of the Goal Area.

Within each Goal Area there are a number of

Action Areas

and

- Actions

that collectively can lead us in the direction of our Vision for 2051.

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**.*

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 wellbeing 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
- Facilitating access to affordable healthy food choices and the opportunity for meaningful work for all residents

An Integrated Network of 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 needs of residents in our community, including children, the elderly and persons 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 and village cores, and historic buildings and areas as critical elements of our community identity which contribute to sense of place
- Encouraging and promoting arts and culture



A Place Where Everyone Can Thrive

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. They are able to be active and achieve optimal health by living in walkable complete communities, have access to healthy food and a robust natural heritage system and can rely on a formal and informal support network. They choose to live in York Region because they can access jobs to match their skills, housing to match their needs, and feel safe and secure in their neighbourhoods.

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** and active **living**, social inclusion, and are the heart of business, culture and arts, **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 heart 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, walkable, mixed-use communities, towns and villages that offer residents with the opportunity to work, and live active and healthy lives in the same community throughout their life
- 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



Liveable Cities and Complete Communities

An Integrated Urban System

- Planning for an integrated urban network of communities, human services and jobs and a transportation system that connects 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, and linkages for flora and fauna
- Developing communities to facilitate an integrated approach to water management including water conservation and re-use
- 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 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.

A Resilient Natural Environment and Agricultural System

*In 2051, York Region's natural systems are **connected, protected and enhanced** through communities; 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 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 Resilient Natural Environment and Agricultural System

A Thriving Agricultural Community

- Recognizing the role of agriculture on the landscape, in our heritage and economy
- Ensuring high-quality agricultural land is available for growing and producing local food 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.

Appropriate Housing for All Ages and Stages

*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.*

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 and programs that are integrated throughout York Region for low and moderate income families and individuals
- Preventing homelessness through programs that address the conditions that put people at risk for homelessness



Appropriate Housing for All Ages and Stages

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
- Planning 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 wellbeing 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.

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.*

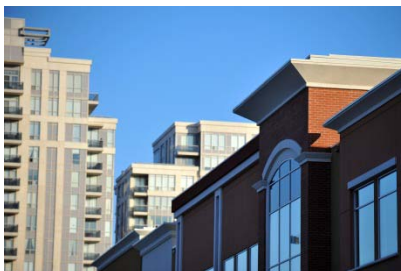
To support this goal, York Region, working in collaboration with others, will focus on the following actions:

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
- Focusing on developing the green/blue/brown economy; 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



An Innovation Economy

Attracting and Developing a Creative and Skilled Work Force

- Promoting the creation of a quality job for every resident in York Region, 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 resilient to economic changes, and flexible and adaptable as the economy and labour needs change
- 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 persons 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.

Interconnected Systems for Mobility

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

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, hotelling 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 prioritize 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 for utilitarian and recreational purposes 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 Yonge Street and Spadina Avenue



Interconnected Systems for Mobility

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.

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**.*

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 waste water 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

Integrated Solutions for Waste

- Providing integrated solutions focussing on waste prevention and reduction programs, leading to waste elimination
- Working with partners to reconceptualise consumerism through reduction and reuse, including enhanced product design and full lifecycle costing
- Advocating for extended producer responsibilities to include ownership of full lifecycle costs for all consumer goods
- Repositioning waste as a resource to drive toward the achievement of zero waste manufacturing processes and 100% product recyclability
- Recognizing waste as an important resource by focussing on resource recovery, energy-from-waste opportunities and creative repurposing and reuse



Living Sustainably

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, re-use, 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.

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.*

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

Open and Responsive Governance

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 where others look to 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 to use 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. *Vision 2051* 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 the 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.

Vision 2051 will be monitored through both the Strategic Plan and the Region's business plan and budget process. Together, these processes provide the detailed measurements and performance indicators required to ensure the Region successfully meets its desired future.

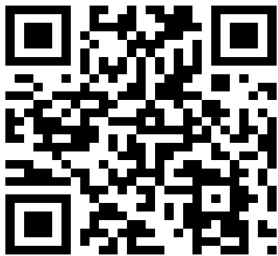


Reporting on Our Progress

Future reporting on Vision 2051 will be co-ordinated with other Regional performance reporting including the Strategic Plan, the Sustainability Strategy, and Department Business Plans. A set of indicators of progress will be developed to assist in reporting on the progress of the implementation of *Vision 2051*.

-
1. York Region Planning and Development Services Department estimate, based on Statistics Canada 1971 Census Data, 2001.
 2. York Region Planning and Development Services Department estimate, based on Statistics Canada 1971 Census Data, 2001.
 3. York Region Planning and Development Services Department estimate, based on Statistics Canada 1971 Census Data, 2001.
 4. York Region Treasury Department, 1971.
 5. York Region Treasury Department, 1971.
 6. York Region Planning and Development Services Department estimate, based on Statistics Canada 1971 Census Data, 2001.
 7. York Region Planning and Development Services Department, 2011.
 8. York Region Planning and Development Services Department, 2011.
 9. York Region Human Resources Department, 2011.
 10. York Region Finance Department, 2011.
 11. York Region Planning and Development Services Department, 2011.
 12. York Region Planning and Development Services Department, 2011 based on York Region Population Forecast Model.
 13. York Region Planning and Development Services Department, 2011 based on York Region Population Forecast Model.
 14. York Region Planning and Development Services Department, 2011 based on York Region Population Forecast Model.
 15. Heart and Stroke Canada, 2009 Report on the Health of Ontario's Kids.
 16. York Region Community and Health Services Department using data from Statistics Canada 2006 Census, Custom Tabulation: UPP06_Table 1, 2010.
 17. York Region Community and Health Services Department using data from Statistics Canada's 2001 and 2006 Censuses, Custom Tabulations: UPP06_Table 1 and T1 Geo1-4 version 2 Urban Poverty, 2010.
 18. Making Ends Meet in York Region Discussion Paper - 2011, Human Services Planning Board of York Region, Newmarket, Ontario.
 19. Average Single Detached Resale Price in York Region. Toronto Real Estate Board, Market Watch 2010, 2011.
 20. Based on 2010 full year income data. York Region Planning and Development Services Department, 2011.
 21. Union of Concerned Scientists and the Ecological Society of America. Confronting Climate Change in the Great Lakes Region. Page 1.

Share YOUR YORK REGION VISION 2051



Visit our website
www.york.ca/vision2051



Follow us on Twitter
[@YorkRegion2051](https://twitter.com/YorkRegion2051)



Like us on Facebook
www.facebook.com/YorkRegion2051

We appreciate your comments on this document.

Please provide any feedback to:

Planning & Development Services

17250 Yonge Street

Newmarket, ON L3Y 6Z1

Phone (905) 830-4444 extn. 1532

Fax (905) 954-4607

Email us at: vision2051@york.ca

Review the draft document, and provide your
comments via our website at www.york.ca/vision2051

Contact us to request materials that are translated into
a different language or in accessible formats.