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2005 ECONOMIC STRATEGY UPDATE AND 2010 WORK PLAN

The Planning and Economic Development Committee recommends the adoption of the recommendation contained in the following report dated November 4, 2009 from the Commissioner of Planning and Development Services.

1. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that this report be received for information.

2. PURPOSE

This report provides Council with a progress update of the 2005 Economic Strategy and outlines future directions of the Economic Strategy and Tourism Branch.

The goal of the Economic Development and Tourism Branch is to sustain the economic vitality of York Region by promoting business investments and export initiatives, encouraging technology transfer and innovation, supporting small enterprise formation and promoting tourism. The goal is accomplished through completion of the actions in the 2005 Economic Strategy.

3. BACKGROUND

Council approved the 2005 Economic Strategy on June 23, 2005. The approved 2005 Economic Strategy encompasses five Strategic Directions with 18 Strategic Objectives with 90 associated Actions.

The five Strategic Directions are:

1. Create an Environment to Share Information and Ideas
2. Sustain a High Quality Workforce
3. Strengthen Entrepreneurship and Industry Clusters
4. Enhance the Quality of Place
5. Encourage the Efficient Movement of Goods and People

In January 2005, over 450 copies of the draft 2005 Economic Strategy were circulated to the following groups who were involved in the development and their comments were presented to Council in May 2005:

- Federal and provincial governments
- Business, individuals and stakeholder groups who were consulted during the development process

- Excellence in Manufacturing Consortium
- The Agricultural Advisory Liaison Group
- Local municipal Economic Development Offices and local municipal clerks
- Chambers of Commerce and Board of Trade
- Regional departments including Transportation and Works, York Region Transit, Rapid Transit, and Community and Health Services.

The global recession has impacted the York Region economy

The Canadian and Ontario economies have been negatively impacted by the global recession and financial crisis. As of the second quarter of 2009, Ontario real gross domestic product (GDP) was 5.0 per cent below the pre-recession peak. Employment has declined by 205,200 jobs, or 3.0 per cent, from a year ago.

In York Region, the impact has been reflected in declines in residential and commercial construction, real estate transactions and job hiring. Although there are signs that the economy has stabilized, the pace of growth is expected to be gradual. Gross domestic product is not expected to return to its pre-recession level until the second quarter of 2011. Because employment tends to lag GDP growth during a recovery — businesses increase the number of hours worked for existing employees before hiring new workers — employment is not projected to reach its pre-recession level until late 2011.

Forecasted economic conditions 2010 and 2011 indicate favourable GDP increases by 2.0 and 3.0 per cent

The Ontario Ministry of Finance is assuming a decline of 3.5 per cent in Ontario real GDP in 2009, followed by gains of 2.0 per cent in 2010 and 3.0 per cent in 2011. The Ontario Ministry of Finance's key economic planning assumptions, finalized on October 15, 2009, are more conservative than the average private-sector forecasts.

4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

Economic conditions in York Region from the time the 2005 Economic Strategy was developed, have changed.

- From March to August, 2009 USA exports to Canada were down 26.6 per cent versus one year ago and imports were down 41.8 per cent versus one year ago.
- Residential and commercial (ICI) building permits in York Region for Q2-2009 were 22 per cent lower versus Q2-2008.

In November, 2009 there are early indications that declines in the world economy are moderating. International markets for manufacturing goods remain weak while exchange rates and commodity pricing are volatile. Private sector job losses are being offset by

gains in self-employment and public sector hiring. Recovery in York Region is still not evident although the housing resale market grew substantially over the past 4 months.

Performance in the economy for York Region was relatively stable from 2005 – 2008

The compound annual growth from 2005 – 2008 indicates that York Region's diverse economy was relatively stable. The number of jobs, businesses, and total construction value has increased. Reductions in 2008 are evident across all economic indicators which is due to the global economic downturn.

Table 1 shows the changes in economic conditions for York Region from 2005 – 2008.

Table 1
Changes in Economic Conditions for York Region 2005 – 2008

Indicator	2005	2006	2007	2008	Compound annual growth (2005-2008) %
Ontario GDP (in \$Millions)	\$509,633	\$519,792	\$530,157	\$490,032	- 1.3%
York Region GDP * (in \$Millions)	\$38,259	\$40,629	\$43,249	N/A	+ 6.32% (2005-2007)
Population	903,600	931,900	964,300	997,700	+ 3.36%
# of Jobs	449,500	464,000	477,000	490,000	+ 2.92%
# of Businesses	28,000	28,500	29,000	29,500	+ 1.75%
Residential Construction **	1,691	2,212	2,392	2,031	+ 6.30%
ICI Construction **	868	909	1,115	770	- 3.91%
Total Construction ** (Residential & ICI)	2,559	3,121	3,507	2,801	+ 3.06%

* York Region GDP data available up to 2007

** Construction value in \$Millions

ACCOMPLISHMENTS FROM THE 2005 ECONOMIC STRATEGY

The 2005 Economic Strategy contains five strategic directions

1. Create an Environment to Share Information and Ideas
2. Sustain a High Quality Workforce
3. Strengthen Entrepreneurship and Industry Clusters
4. Enhance the Quality of Place
5. Encourage the Efficient Movement of Goods and People

Of the 90 Actions, 30 have been completed and 53 are ongoing actions which have been completed but are ongoing components of the programs as shown in *Table 2*. Seven actions are underway that will have a conclusion and will not recur.

Table 2
Status of 2005 Economic Strategy Actions

Strategic Direction	Completed Actions	Ongoing Actions	Actions Underway	Total
1. Create an Environment to Share Information and Ideas	3	9	1	13
2. Sustain a High Quality Workforce	7	8	1	16
3. Strengthen Entrepreneurship and Industry Clusters	5	23	2	30
4. Enhance the Quality of Place	2	12	2	16
5. Encourage the Efficient Movement of Goods and People	13	1	1	15
Total	30	53	7	90

Monitoring and reporting on economic performance measures are provided in the annual and mid-year Economic Development Review and the annual Tourism Marketing Report to Regional Council.

A detailed accomplishment on each Strategic Direction, their associated objectives and actions from the 2007 update to 2009 is in *Attachment 1*. Below are highlights of each Strategic Direction.

Accomplishments from Strategic Direction 1: Create an Environment to Share Information and Ideas

Key highlights of the accomplishments include:

- Financial support obtained from senior governments for economic development projects in the Region was \$1,123,500.

- Understanding the growth and change in the Region's economy is delivered by "An Economic Profile of York Region" produced annually and "Economic Indicators" initiated in 2009 and revised monthly to measure the economy.
- Established the Greater Toronto Area Economic Development Partnership (GTAEDP) to foster ongoing ideas.
- Integrated small business workshops and webinars into the Six municipalities the Centre serves and implemented business information centres at all Northern Six municipalities in 2008.

Accomplishments from Strategic Direction 2: Sustain a High Quality Workforce

Key highlights of the accomplishments include:

- Aging Workforce Program was launched to measure prosperity, equity, live-work ratio, reductions of gaps between resident labour force occupation and types of jobs available in the Region and educational attainment.
- Sustainable workshops were launched in 2009 engaging businesses and encouraging innovation in the emerging green economy.
- The "York Region Immigration Portal" was developed in 2008 to assist with immigrant support and training.
- Youth entrepreneurship is encouraged annually through the Small Business Enterprise Centre Summer Company and Business Plan Challenge Programs. In 2007 and 2008 provincial Business Plan Challenge award winners were from the York Small Business Enterprise Centre.

Accomplishments from Strategic Direction 3: Strengthen Entrepreneurship and Industry Clusters

Key highlights of the accomplishments include:

- Manufacturing Sector Competitiveness Study completed in 2009 delivering 92 key performance indicators for York Region manufacturers as an outcome of the Industry Cluster Analysis Program.
- The York Regional Biotechnology Cluster Consortium has evolved from inception in 2005 into YORKbiotech and has, in Q3-2009 engaged in a memorandum of understanding with the Network Centre for Medical Device Development (NCMDD). As York Region is a founding member, the Commissioner of Planning and Development Services is on the Board of Directors.

- The Export Development Program delivered four global workshops in each of 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, and 2009 and intensified collaboration with the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Agri-Foods (OMAFRA) Profit Mission to Buffalo focusing on York Region food exporters. The Export Development Program participates in events with the York Export Alliance (a partnership of York Region, the Innovation Synergy Centre Markham, and provincial and federal government). In 2008 a “Business Opportunities Assessment” program was initiated and delivered to ten qualified exporters.
- In 2008 the York Small Business Enterprise Centre placed information kiosks at each municipal Economic Development Office and the small business workshops are hosted by the local municipalities. Visibility was further advanced in late 2008 and early 2009 by moving to the first floor of the Administration building and establishing accessible information kiosks outside of the centre. Economic impact at the Small Business Enterprise Centres is defined using five numerical criteria: businesses registered, new business start-ups, business expansions, number of consultations and jobs created. *Table 3* provides the economic impact from 2005 to 2008.

Table 3
Economic Impact of the York Small Business Enterprise Centre

Performance Indicator	2005	2006	2007	2008	% Variance 2007 vs 2008
Businesses registered	90	96	104	112	+ 8%
New business start-ups	111	67	132	197	+49%
Business expansions	8	10	14	18	+29%
Consultations	244	257	240	333	+39%
Jobs created	91	102	114	126	+11%

- The York Small Business Television program, was created to build awareness among residents and encourage entrepreneurship. Altogether there are 36 small business episodes of one-half hour each highlighting York Region entrepreneurs.

Accomplishments from Strategic Direction 4: Enhance the Quality of Place

Key highlights of the accomplishments include:

- York Region's attributes are promoted through a variety of programs and publications: The International Investment Attraction Program launched in 2009, the annual "Economic Profile of York Region", the websites: york.ca, yorkeconomicinsights.ca, investinyork.ca, yorksmallbusiness.ca, and yorktourism.com.

- The York Region Tourism Program promotes York Region as a premier tourism destination through the tourism website, Discovery Guide, the Keynote Conference Planner and the seasonal In Your Backyard magazines.
- Consular officials and trade representatives are active partners in two Programs: Export Development and International Investment Attraction. Diplomatic relationships were promoted with all nine municipalities during the two international investment tours of the Northern Six (2006 and 2008) and one investment tour of the Southern Three municipalities in 2007.
- The International Investment Attraction Program launched in 2009 will promote York Region attributes extensively both domestically and internationally. Sustainable cities in the USA are targeted for business development and the program will be extended internationally in subsequent years.
- The 10-Year Long Range Tourism Strategy was finalized in 2009.

Accomplishments from Strategic Direction 5: Encourage the Efficient Movement of Goods and People

Key highlights of the accomplishments include:

- The Transportation Master Plan is a key strategic initiative to enhance public transit and roads.
- Engaged York Region businesses to identify efficiencies and incentives for alternative employee journey to work systems through Smart Commute.

Table 4
Economic Impact of Smart Commute

Performance Indicator	2005	2006	2007	2008	Total
Businesses Recruited to Transportation Management Associations (TMA's)	6	11	17	9	43
TMA employees registered on carpoolzone.ca*	6	343	267	905	1,521

* carpooling or looking for a carpool match

PROPOSED 2010 STRATEGIC ACTIONS

The five Strategic Directions of the 2005 Economic Strategy will continue to be the framework for implementation of work plans from 2010 to 2014 and individual action plans incorporate new economic realities and Region Council approved directions.

Work Plan for 2010: Ongoing Actions

Strategic Direction 1: Create an Environment to Share Information and Ideas

- Produce key economic publications: *An Economic Profile of York Region* and *Economic Indicators*.
- Enhance and expand websites: york.ca, yorkeconomicinsights.ca, yorktourism.com, yorksmall-business.ca and investinyork.ca.
- Deliver the sustainable "Green Business" workshops.
- Maintain membership and involvement with York Region's Chambers of Commerce and Board of Trade.
- Apply for supplemental sources of funding from federal and provincial government programs such as the Federal Development Agency for Southern Ontario (FedDev Ontario) program, the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade Invest Canada-Community Initiatives, and the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities.

Strategic Direction 2: Sustain a High Quality Workforce

- Facilitate forecasting of industry requirements with programs such as the Aging Workforce Study, Green Economy Jobs Expansion and Manufacturing Sector Competitiveness Program.
- Identify opportunities to attract and support new institutions of higher learning and innovation through programs and partnerships including the Aging Workforce Program, Industry Education Partnership, and YORKbiotech.
- Engage the Region's youth in workforce initiatives through the Aging Workforce Study, the York Small Business Enterprise Centre, the Industry Education Partnership and the Science in Action partnership.

Strategic Direction 3: Strengthen Entrepreneurship and Industry Clusters

- Improve the visibility and services of the York Small Business Enterprise Centre.
- Annually update the Canada-wide BizPal permit and licence system with Service Ontario.
- Expand the Region's global contact network through the Export Development Program and the International Investment Attraction Program.
- Support York Region's businesses export activities with the Export Development Program.
- Improve linkages with York University and Seneca College to promote research, commercialization and technology transfer.
- Facilitate multi-year business cluster building initiatives in the green economy.
- Maintain partnership and support for YORKbiotech and the National Centre for Medical Device Development (NCMDD).
- Facilitate access to capital by improving business access to capital, examining the creation of small business investment fund corporations and intensifying collaboration with financial institutions and venture capital groups.

Strategic Direction 4: Enhance the Quality of Place

- Promote environmental stability and economic vitality with the 2007 Sustainability Strategy, the Economic Profile of York Region, York Tourism and the International Investment Attraction Program.
- Produce and update program guides and brochures for Tourism programs and projects.
- Develop and promote arts and culture in York Region through York Tourism.
- Implement the Long Range Tourism Strategy.

Strategic Direction 5: Encourage the Efficient Movement of Goods and People

- Engage in discussions with shippers and exporters to understand logistics challenges.
- Host roundtables with manufacturers and foreign owned corporations on future service needs.

2010 WORK PLAN: NEW ACTIONS

Three new initiatives have been identified as a result of the changing market conditions.

Alternative Funding Sources

Enhance Economic Development and Tourism program delivery capabilities by increased sourcing of provincial/federal funding, in particular the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario to leverage approved Economic Strategy budgets.

Manufacturing Sector Revitalization Strategy

Develop a renewal strategy for the manufacturing sector based on the manufacturing sector survey conducted in 2009. This project will be subject to a further report to Council.

New Media Technology

Use new media technologies to communicate with local business, youth entrepreneurs and foreign investors, as part of the approved Economic Development and Tourism marketing programs.

Relationship to Vision 2026

Implementation of the 2005 Economic Strategy and proposed future directions supports the Vision 2026 goals by attracting and supporting businesses, by partnering in service delivery with federal, provincial and municipal government partners, by building a Region that involves its citizens and by encouraging and promoting our arts and culture.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The action areas proposed in the future directions for the 2005 Economic Strategy will form the basis of a multi-year business plan for the Economic Development and Tourism Branch. Resources required for continual implementation of the action areas and future directions are in the proposed 2010 Economic Development and Tourism budget.

6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

Economic vitality is sustained by promoting the Region as a location for knowledge-based activities by leveraging existing employment clusters, engaging in workforce development projects, and establishing and maintaining strong links to educational and research institutions and businesses to advance business creation and promote economic success and growth of enterprises. Economic Strategy and Tourism, in partnership with the local municipalities and residents, will engage the community to establish and promote new business investment.

7. CONCLUSION

The accomplishments from the 2005 Economic Strategy to 2009 are included in this report and *Attachment 1*. Of the 90 Actions, 30 have been completed and 53 are ongoing actions which have been completed but are ongoing components of the programs as shown in *Table 2*. Seven actions are underway that will have a conclusion and will not recur. Three new initiatives have been identified and are in the proposed Economic Strategy Work Plan for 2010: Alternative Funding Sources, Manufacturing Sector Revitalization Strategy and New Media Technology.

For more information on this report, please contact Sharon Végh, Program Manager, Economic Strategy at (905) 830 4444 Ext. 1509 or Patrick Draper, Director, Economic Strategy and Tourism at Ext. 1503.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.

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

STRATEGY #1: CREATE AN ENVIRONMENT TO SHARE INFORMATION AND IDEAS

OBJECTIVES:

- 1. Better understand the growth and change in the Region's economy**
- 2. Foster ongoing opportunities for sharing information and ideas**
- 3. Expand broadband telecommunications**
- 4. Improve co-ordination with other levels of government**

ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- Supplemental funding sourced in 2009 for Economic Development and Tourism Programs was \$1,123,500.
- "An Economic Profile of York Region" is revised bi-annually and published annually.
- "Economic Indicators", initiated in June 2009 in response to the economic downturn is produced monthly.
- Websites are updated regularly.
- The CEO Forum was delivered in 2007. A bi-annual "Wisdom Exchange" is planned.
- In 2009 a series of sustainable "Green Business" workshops was developed, three have been completed.
- Established Greater Toronto Area Economic Development Partnership. Bi-annual meetings are held to further international business development.
- Initiated the Industry Education Partnership in 2008, key members include the two school boards, York University and Seneca College.
- The Character Business Program was completed in 2008 by Tourism and is ongoing in 2009/2010.
- Membership is maintained with the Chambers of Commerce and Board of Trade. Events are promoted on the yorksmallbusiness.ca website. Invitations extended for partnerships, for example, Industry Education Partnership, one Chamber is involved (Aurora).
- The Northern six municipalities established a cohesive, successful working relationship in 2007 and 2008.
- Integrated business workshops and webinars hosted by the Northern Six municipalities.
- Implemented business information centres at all Northern Six municipalities in 2008.
- The municipalities had the opportunity to participate in a government-funded application to conduct broadband studies in 2009. Whitchurch-Stouffville and King completed a survey of broadband requirements in their communities with support from York Region.
- Meetings are hosted quarterly for information exchange with area municipal Economic Development staff and provincial and federal government ministries and departments.
- A review of the optimal service delivery model and organization of the Region's economic development services was completed in 2007.

STRATEGY #2: SUSTAIN A HIGH QUALITY WORKFORCE

OBJECTIVES:

- 1. Align workforce development efforts with the needs of industry clusters in York Region**
- 2 Support immigrant mentoring and integration**
- 3. Involve the Region's youth in workforce development planning**
- 4. Integrate land use, transit and housing policies to encourage closer live-work opportunities and improved accessibility by employers and employees**

ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- Established the Industry Education Partnership and coordinated working groups to implement the goals of the Industry Education Partnership. Key partners include the two school boards, York University and Seneca College. They are planning a MOU for coordinated services and engagement of a move forward strategy. Report to Council Dec. 2008 – Industry Education Partnership Business Model Recommendations.
- To Facilitate better forecasting of industry requirements, skills shortages and deficiencies programs were implemented in 2009:
 - Green Economy Jobs Project will prepare York Region and the Toronto Region to compete globally in the emerging green sector by researching and defining what a green job is, developing job profiles and experience and education requirements for green jobs. Report to Council Sept. 2009.
 - Completed Manufacturing Sector Survey Competitiveness Program surveyed York Region manufacturers, Report to Council Dec. 2009.
 - Aging Workforce Program launched in 2009, Report to Council Oct. 2008 and Nov. 2009.
- To identify opportunities to attract and support new institutions of higher learning, research, management and training, engaged Seneca College and York University in the Industry Education Partnership from 2007-2009.
- The Aging Workforce program has engaged York University and Seneca College on the Advisory Group.
- Compile a comprehensive resource guide of employment, education and training resources for employers in the Region. A resource guide was developed in 2009 for the Industry Education Partnership (IEP). The IEP has not completed their action plan, in 2009 we will determine use of the Guide.
- Worked with "Pathfinders to Employment" on development committee with the Newmarket Library. Will determine the best use of the resource guide: internal at InfoYork, IEP, or "Pathfinders to Employment".
- "York Region Immigration Portal" was developed in 2008 to assist with immigrant support and training.
- Youth are involved in two Small Business Enterprise Centre initiatives, the Business Plan Challenge and the Summer Company Program. In 2009 there were a total of 26 students involved in these programs. Report to Council March 2010.
- The Aging Workforce Study will survey the Region's youth for future career aspirations. Report to Council Nov. 2009.
- The Industry Education Partnership can play a role in engaging the Region's youth in workforce development initiatives. Two youth participated in the strategy development of the Industry Education Partnership.
- Students gain familiarity with plant visits during the annual Science in Action bus tour which is conducted in partnership with the York Catholic District School Board, YORKbiotech, and the Town of Markham. In 2009 there were 75 students involved.
- The Summer Company program has attained increased participation by the students over the past two years. The My Company program is called the Business Plan Challenge. In 2007 and 2008 the York Small Business Enterprise Centre had award winners in Ontario.
- Undertake a marketing and communications program to promote the economic and environmental benefits of intensification within existing urban areas. Collaborated with Long Range Planning on the Draft Regional Official Plan (June 2009).
- Facilitate meetings with ICI realtors/developer community to identify how future employment areas can be designed to encourage closer live-work opportunities. York Region Economic Strategy Branch has been involved with the development of the York Region Official Plan (June 2009) and has engaged the municipalities in consultation with Long Range Planning in Q3-2009.

STRATEGY #3: STRENGTHEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND INDUSTRY CLUSTERS

OBJECTIVES:

- 1. Support the creation of new business enterprise**
- 2. Encourage technological innovation and commercialization**
- 3. Enhance the export capabilities of Regional companies**
- 4. Strengthen the Region's industry clusters**
- 5. Facilitate access to capital**
- 6. Strengthen the economic vitality and business diversity of employment areas and urban centres**

ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- In 2008 the York Small Business Enterprise Centre was integrated into the municipalities through two initiatives: implementing information kiosks at each municipal Economic Development Office and hosting the small business workshops at the municipalities.
- Visibility was further advanced in late 2008 and early 2009 by moving to the first floor of the Administration building and establishing two information kiosks outside of the centre.
- Developed a new Small Business Enterprise Centre brochure in 2009.
- Completed a rural outreach direct mail campaign in 2009.
- To increase co-operative programs between the Small Business Enterprise Centres and other business support agencies, the York Small Business Television program was developed. Series 1 was aired in Q3-2007, Series 2 in Q3-2008, and Series 3 in Q4-2009. Altogether there are 36 small business episodes of one-half hour each for all York Region entrepreneurs.
- A website was developed in Q1-2008 which promotes all four small business enterprise centres and the Chambers of Commerce and Board of Trade and posts their events. The site is updated bi-weekly.
- During 2007 and 2008, implemented BizPal with Service Ontario in collaboration with York Region Information Technology and Corporate Communications to provide residents of all nine local municipalities with access to permits and licences. Report to Council June 2008.
- Produced "Economic Insights", a monthly indicator of economic activity to understand the ongoing impact of the economic downturn, Report to Council June 2008 and monthly at PEDC.
- Respond to the H1N1 outbreak by volunteering for the vaccination program.
- Information exchanges are ongoing with the National Research Council Canada and the Industrial Research Assistance Program advisors.
- The Export Development Program partners with the Innovation Synergy Centre on the York Export Alliance. York Region and the Innovation Synergy Centre develop events for established businesses and exporters on a variety of topics.
- The Manufacturing Sector Survey was completed and will be presented to Council in Dec. 2009.
- A new model for engagement of the manufacturing sector will be presented to Regional Council in 2011. An application to support a Manufacturing Sector Revitalization Strategy was submitted to FedDev Ontario in October 2009 for work to be completed March 31, 2009.
- Seneca College and York University are involved in collaborations in an advisory capacity including the Industry Education Partnership (key group – 2007-2009) and the Aging Workforce Study (2009-2010).
- The York Regional Biotechnology Cluster Consortium has evolved into YORKbiotech and has, in Q3-2009 engaged in a memorandum of understanding with the Network Centre for Medical Device Development (NCMDD), Council Reports May 2007, May 2008 and May 2009.
- The York Export Alliance has been established and the Export Development Initiative was renamed the Export Development Program.
- Renewed Export Development Program marketing materials were developed in 2009.
- A client satisfaction survey was completed in Q4-2009.

STRATEGY #3: STRENGTHEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND INDUSTRY CLUSTERS
ACCOMPLISHMENTS (continued):

- A Northern Six Investment Tour was completed in 2006 and 2008. A Southern Three Investment tour was held in 2008.
- The Export Development Program delivered three global workshops in each of 2006, 2007, 2008 and 2009 and intensified collaboration with the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Agri-Foods (OMAFRA) Profit Mission to Buffalo in 2009 focusing on York Region food exporters. Each year the Export Development Program participated in the "New Exporters to Border States" workshops. In 2008 a "Business Opportunities Assessment" program was initiated and delivered to ten qualified exporters. Report to Council in each of Q1-2006, 2007, 2008, 2009 and 2010.
- The York Region Export Development Program has supported York Region businesses involved in, or ready to, export in 2006, 2007, 2008 and 2009. An Export Opportunities Assessment component was added to intensify export opportunities for select export ready companies in 2009.
- The International Investment Attraction Program was started in Q3-2009. Report to Council Nov 2008 and Sept. 2009.
- A Manufacturing Sector Study was completed Q3-2009, many manufacturers rely on exports. Report to Council Dec. 2009.
- An application was submitted to FedDev Ontario for funding in Q4-2009 to support a Manufacturing Sector Revitalization Strategy to be completed by March 31, 2010. Report to Council May 2010 and Nov. 2010.
- Industry Cluster Analysis were reported to Council in 2007 and March 2008 which resulted in conducting a Manufacturing Sector Study completed in Q4-2009 and Report to Council Dec. 2009.
- The Region has a diversified industry segmentation with the main innovation cluster manufacturing. A Manufacturing Sector Study completed in Q4-2009 and Report to Council Dec. 2009.
- Council Reports on collaboration with the GTMA were presented in Feb. 2007, May 2008 and Nov. 2009.
- The International Investment Attraction Program launched in 2009 with further reach with economic development and senior government agencies.
- The Green Economy Jobs project was initiated in 2009 but is on hold due to funding from the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities.
- To promote agri-business and support the implementation of the GTA Agricultural Action Plan a Council Report on GTA Agricultural Committee Update in June 2008.
- The Guide to Capital for York Region Entrepreneurs was reported to Council in May 2009 and Dec. 2009.
- Relationships with venture capital providers were established in 2009 and they will present at the Access to Capital for York Region Entrepreneurs conference to be held on February 9, 2010.
- Developed the financial institution plan in 2009 and implemented with the Guide to Capital Sources for York Region Entrepreneurs and the Access to Capital for York Region Entrepreneurs conference to be held on February 9, 2010.
- Completed the Manufacturing Sector Study in Q3-2009 which identified manufacturers concerns. Report to Council Dec. 2009.
- Work with area municipalities to expedite key industrial/commercial developments through the Regional approval process Expedited ICI through collaboration on the Draft Regional Official Plan (June 2009).

STRATEGY #4: ENHANCE THE QUALITY OF PLACE

OBJECTIVES:

- 1. Develop and Promote York Region's attributes**
- 2. Attract Tourism and Special Events**

ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- Promoted sustainability actions from the 2007 Sustainability Strategy.
- Promoted York Region in the annual "Economic Profile of York Region".
- Promoted York Region internationally in the International Investment Attraction Program.
- Recommended by Regional Council in September 2009. To be initiated in the Tourism Program in Q4-2009.
- The York Region Tourism Program is active in promotion the integration of amenities in community planning to promote York Region's attributes with the following activities:
 - Annual marketing program, Report to Council May 2007, Oct. 2007, Oct. 2008, June 2008 and Feb. 2009.
 - Annual Visitors Guide, Report to Council April 2007.
 - Discovery Guide (memo), Report to Council April 2008 and Feb. 2009.
 - Long Range Tourism Strategy, Report to Council May 2007, Dec. 2009 and Oct. 2009.
 - Tourism Industry Partnership Development Program, Report to Council Oct. 2008.
 - Tourism Performance Update (memo), Report to Council April 2008.
 - Tourism Program Annual Report and Marketing Plan, Report to Council March 2009, May 2009 and Oct. 2009.
 - Tourism Spring Brochure (memo), Report to Council March 2009.
 - Website developed, Report to Council June 2007 and Feb. 2008.
 - York Region Tourism Customer Service Program, Report to Council Feb. 2008.
- A Marketing and Communications Strategy to promote York Region and its natural and cultural attributes was presented to Council in May 2007 and a Report to Council submitted in June 2007 with consultations at municipalities prior to and after the presentation.
- These brochures and guides were produced by York Region Economic Strategy Branch:
 - Annual Economic Profile produced annually.
 - Green Directory produced in 2008 and launched in 2009.
 - Guide to Capital Sources for York Region Entrepreneurs was produced in 2009 and will be launched in 2010, Report to Council June 2009 and Dec. 2009.
 - The International Investment Attraction Program will produce brochures and advertising materials in 2010
 - New promotional materials for each Economic Development Program: Export Development and Small Business Enterprise Centre.
- Export Development Program hosts three meetings annually with trade commissioners and foreign diplomats.
- Two Northern Six Investment Tours and one Southern Three Investment Tour was completed (2006 to 2008).
- The International Investment Attraction Program launched in 2008 will promote York Region attributes extensively both domestically and internationally. Three cities were visited in 2009.
- A 10-year Long Range Tourism Strategy was developed, Report to Council May 2007, Dec. 2009 and Oct. 2009.
- A major events infrastructure audit to identify capacity to host major cultural and sporting events that could be attracted to York Region was initiated in 2009 with a Sport Tourism Strategy.
- Worked with the media by developing York Small Business Television with Rogers TV. Three Series aired in 2007, 2008 and 2009 for a total of 36 episodes of one-half hour each.

STRATEGY #5: ENCOURAGE THE EFFICIENT MOVEMENT OF GOODS AND PEOPLE

OBJECTIVES:

- 1. Ensure that the transportation system meets the ongoing needs of business for goods movement**
- 2. Encourage Regional businesses to support and promote transit and alternatives to the single occupant vehicle for journey to work**

ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- Evolving logistics challenges with major shippers and exporters may be integrated into the planned Manufacturing Revitalization Strategy.
- The Transportation Master Plan is a key strategic initiative to enhance public transit and roads.
- Engaged York Region businesses to identify efficiencies and incentives for alternative employee journey to work systems through Smart Commute.