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2012 YORK REGION BUSINESS DIRECTORY AND EMPLOYMENT SURVEY KEY HIGHLIGHTS

The Planning and Economic Development Committee recommends the adoption of the recommendation contained in the following report dated November 13, 2012, from the Executive Director, Corporate and Strategic Planning.

1. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Council receive this report for information.

2. PURPOSE

This report provides a summary of the information contained in the York Region Business Directory and outlines the methodology for collection of data through the York Region Employment Survey. It also provides key highlights from the 2012 Survey.

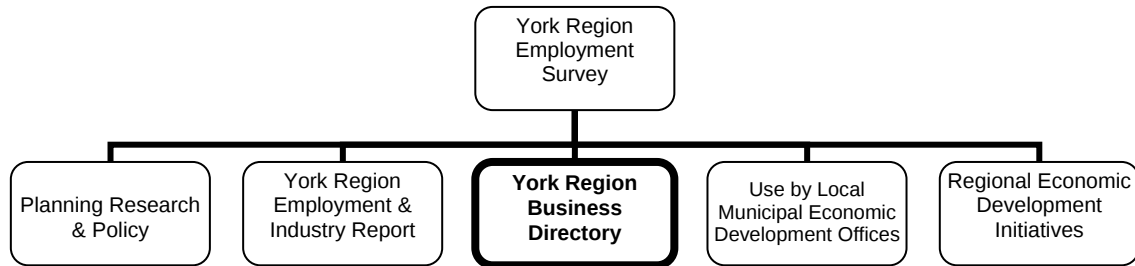
3. BACKGROUND

The York Region annual Employment Survey was one of the first of its kind in Ontario and is used to monitor the Regional economy and analyze industry and employment trends. The survey has been conducted in partnership with all nine local municipalities since 2002. The 2012 York Region Business Directory is based on information collected from the 2012 York Region Employment Survey. The Employment Survey is conducted annually between May and August by a team of university student employment surveyors retained by York Region. The primary method of data collection in 2012 was through door-to-door interviews, with supplemental information obtained through e-mail, phone and fax submissions. Where data could not be updated for a particular business, data was supplemented with the most recent information available from previous surveys.

A number of Regional products are derived from the employment survey. In addition to the Business Directory, survey information is used for the annual Employment & Industry report, as well as the Vacant Employment Land Inventory, Economic Strategies and Employment Forecasts.

Figure 1 illustrates the number of different products and initiatives that use the information collected from the York Region Employment Survey:

Figure 1
York Region Employment Survey Uses



The 2012 York Region Business Directory is an annual electronic publication that provides basic business information for York Region residents, businesses and local municipalities. The Directory is made available online through the York Region website.

The Business Directory is a valuable resource guide for business-to-business contact, a convenient research tool for the general public and a showcase for the diverse nature of York Region's economy.

4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

Staff completed the annual comprehensive, Region-wide employment survey during the Summer of 2012

In 2012, for the sixth consecutive year, a survey of business locations in the Region's nine local municipalities was conducted. At an aggregated level, this analysis offers an indication of how the York Region economy is performing and helps to determine whether the economic development goals of York Region are being met.

The 2012 database and directory contains information on approximately 28,100 of the Region's local businesses (excluding home and farm-based businesses). According to the Canadian Business Patterns (CBP) database from Statistics Canada, there were approximately 42,000 businesses in York Region that submitted payroll data in 2012. This number comprises businesses that register with the Canadian Business Register and would include home-based businesses that have employees and submit payroll.

In 2012, the Region began surveying home-based businesses on a voluntary basis and successfully surveyed approximately 300 home-based businesses. It is important to note that the number of surveyed home-based businesses is not reflective of the total number of home-based businesses in the Region. According to the 2006 Census, there were approximately 37,200 home-based jobs in York Region in 2006. A number of home-based businesses are self-employed operations and small business establishments that cover all industry sectors. The largest proportion of these businesses is within the

professional scientific and technical sector, which includes jobs in accounting, IT services, medicine and law.

Farm-based businesses are captured every five years through the Census of Agriculture conducted by Statistics Canada. Based on the 2011 Census of Agriculture, there were 828 farm-based operations in the Region. York Region intends to begin surveying farm-based businesses (on a voluntary basis) in the 2013 Employment Survey.

The York Region Employment Survey collects general information such as company name, business activity and number of employees. In addition, businesses are asked a question regarding their hiring intentions which is used to monitor York Region labour force activity. An export activity question is also asked which is value added information used for economic development purposes. *Figure 2* illustrates the basic business information collected through the 2012 York Region Employment Survey.

Figure 2
Basic Business Information Collected

Street Address: 123 Main St. Newmarket, ON A1B 2C3	Primary Business Activity: Lessors of Residential Building and Dwellings
Telephone: Voice: (905) 123-4567 Fax: (905) 555-5555	Secondary Business Activity: Real Estate Property Managers
Does your business intend on hiring within the next 3 months? Yes	# of Employees: 100
Contact(s): Joe Smith President	Does your business currently export? No
Information Last Updated: 7/24/2011 10:32:04 AM	Does your business plan to export? No
Voice: (905) 555-8219 ext. 20 Email: joe@smithenterprises.ca	Internet Address: http://www.smithenterprises.ca

Source: York Region Office of the CAO, 2012

York Region launched a new interactive Business Directory website in October 2012

On October 1, 2012, York Region launched its new Business Directory website, replacing the existing online directory which had been hosted by an external provider since 2007.

The new Business Directory website continues to enable the public to search for businesses using a combination of search criteria, including:

- Company name
- Product/service
- City or town
- Postal code
- Industry classification
- Number of employees
- Keywords

With the website now being developed and maintained in-house, existing features, ranging from mapping to search functions, have been revised to enhance the user-friendliness, usefulness, and overall accuracy of the information provided.

A second phase of the website update is expected to be released in spring 2013. This update is expected to include a number of new analysis and report features for end-users. Such features may include upgraded search capabilities as well as business sector analyses mapping and reporting functions.

Similar to previous years, the York Region Business Directory continues to be made available in two online formats:

- The newly launched interactive Business Directory website
- The entire dataset in downloadable Microsoft Excel and Access formats

The new interactive Business Directory can be accessed online through: www.york.ca/businessdirectory. This link can also be found on the Region's homepage. Staff will be presenting a demonstration of the updated Business Directory website to Planning and Economic Development Committee in early 2013.

York Region partners with the nine local municipalities to maintain the employment survey and business directory

York Region continues to work collectively with all nine local municipalities to update the York Region Employment Survey. Local municipalities share in survey costs and provide feedback and guidance through the Employment Database Working Group. The partnership has also aided local planning and economic development staff in a number of local initiatives related to business promotion and business retention strategies.

The Business Directory is a useful tool for residents and businesses to make connections and foster economic growth

The York Region Business Directory is a useful business-to-business resource guide, providing points of contact to businesses across the Region. The Directory also serves as a Regional marketing tool, promoting York Region and its many diverse business sectors.

In addition to promoting local businesses, the database also provides the Region with a contact management system to assist the Economic Strategy Branch with the distribution of materials to a targeted audience. An analysis of employment information obtained from the Directory also provides a better understanding of the Regional economy.

York Region grew by an estimated 11,700 jobs in 2012

Through the Employment Survey and further analysis, the following business and employment trends were observed for mid-year 2012:

- There were an estimated 527,500 jobs in York Region.
- There was a net increase of 11,700 jobs from mid-year 2011 to mid-year 2012, compared to 15,000 jobs during the same period between 2010 and 2011.
- The total number of surveyed businesses in the Region increased to approximately 28,100 from 27,500 in 2011.
- The four largest industry sectors by size in York Region were manufacturing, retail, professional scientific and technical services, and wholesale trade.
- Approximately 75% of York Region employment is full-time.

The 2012 Employment and Industry Report will provide further analysis of the information gathered in the 2012 York Region Employment Survey and is anticipated to be presented to Committee in early 2013. A detailed overview of industry and employment trends in York Region, including sector breakdowns and local municipal profiles will be included. Economic outlook and trends at the national and provincial levels will also be examined.

Survey of businesses to continue and directory update is planned for 2013

Another comprehensive employment survey is planned for 2013 and is scheduled to commence in May 2013. The Region, in collaboration with the local municipalities, intends on making significant improvements to the current employment survey process for 2013. These include improvements to the way the data is collected, stored, tracked, edited and disseminated. The employment survey process as a whole will become more interconnected with the new business directory website, local municipal partners and the public. The Employment Survey re-design will increase efficiencies and improve the quality of the Region's employment data. The consultation process with local municipalities and internal departments is currently underway to determine the specific

re-design elements. The re-design will be completed by early 2013, in order to commence the 2013 employment survey.

Link to Key Council-approved Plans

The 2012 York Region Business Directory supports the *2011 to 2015 Strategic Plan* action area of “Increase the Economic Vitality of the Region” and the Vision 2051 goal area of fostering “An Innovation Economy”. This will be accomplished by creating “An Economy that Facilitates Creativity and Fosters Innovation”.

The business directory strengthens these goals by providing local businesses with a source of free advertising via the York Region Business Directory, enhancing business-to-business contact. Further, the provision of these Directories to local business development centres will help to develop and attract businesses from a broad array of sectors.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The collection of employment and business data plays a fundamental role in monitoring changes in the Region’s economy. Estimating the Regional assessment base and forecasting of future infrastructure and service requirements are also obtained through the use of the data. The 2012 Employment Survey was provided for in the Office of the Chief Administrative Officer’s 2012 budget. The total budget for the York Region Employment Survey is \$160,000, of this amount, approximately \$79,200 is provided by the nine local municipalities. In addition, the budget for the Business Directory website update was approximately \$30,000.

6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

All local municipalities have contributed to the Directory through their guidance and financial contributions associated with the Employment Database Working Group. Regional staff continues to work with all nine local municipalities to address their data needs as well as to assist in the gradual transition to the newly developed business directory website over time.

The 2012 York Region Business Directory makes business data, including sectoral and contact information, available at the local municipal level. The York Region Employment Survey is one of the first of its kind in Ontario and the information gathered for the York Region Business Directory is an essential component of the Employment and Industry Report 2012, which will be presented to Committee early in 2013. That report will provide a summary of York Region’s economy at the regional and local municipal level, which can be used as a basis for decision making, strategic planning and attracting new business.

7. CONCLUSION

In partnership with the nine local municipalities, a survey coverage of 28,100 businesses in York Region was completed for 2012, providing data for the 2012 York Region Business Directory. Survey information collected includes company name, business activity, number of employees and business contact information. This Directory acts as an important resource to assist in business marketing efforts, to source local trades and suppliers, and to analyze the Regional economy. It is also useful in targeted job searches and assisting citizens in locating specific products/services located within York Region. The 2012 York Region Business Directory can be viewed on the online interactive directory and is available for download in electronic formats. More detailed analysis will be provided in the forthcoming Employment and Industry Report 2012, which is anticipated to be presented to Committee in early 2013.

For more information on this report, please contact Paul Bottomley, Manager, Growth Management at 905 830-4444, Ext 1530 or Valerie Shuttleworth, Director, Long Range Planning at Ext. 1525.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.