

Thursday, March 21, 2019

York Regional Council Highlights – March 21, 2019

Live streaming of the public session of Council and Committee of the Whole meetings is available on the day of the meeting from 9 a.m. until the close of the meeting. Past sessions are also available at York.ca/councilandcommittee

York Regional Council holds moment of silence for New Zealand and Netherlands shooting victims

York Regional Council held a moment of silence for the victims of the March 15 incident in Christchurch, New Zealand and the March 18 incident in Utrecht, Netherlands. Condemning hatred and violence to any individual or group, Council extended its condolences to all those impacted by these horrific acts.

York Region Transit driving innovation for enhanced service

York Regional Council received an update on the [York Region Transit 2018 System Performance](#) highlighting its success in providing safe, accessible transit across all nine cities and towns.

Enhancements across York Region Transit (YRT) in 2018 to improve the customer experience include:

- Installing on-bus LCD displays with real-time, next stops and route connection information
- Launching [Live Chat](#) option on yrt.ca which allows travellers to connect with staff directly to have questions answered
- Launching a [Mobility Plus web-based booking app](#) and introduced same-day service to all travellers
- Increasing on-demand service by 37% from 2017

YRT monitors and modifies services to be more efficient, adjusting service levels to meet traveller demand and to meet the changing customer and operational needs, such as on-demand service in rural areas.

Additional initiatives planned for 2019 include:

- Improving frequency on the most heavily travelled corridors of the Region
 - Working with transit agency partners to develop a fare and service integration solution and support inter-regional transit travel
 - Providing services to help reduce the number of single occupant vehicles on the road, especially during rush hour
 - Continuing to invest in facilities to support future transit growth
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York Region encourages innovation in proposed made-in Ontario Environment Plan

York Region shared comments regarding the [proposed made-in-Ontario Environment Plan](#) which reflects the province's commitment to protect the environment and help industry, businesses, communities and families prepare for climate change.

The proposed plan includes more than 120 actions focused on protecting air, land and water, as well as reducing litter and waste in Ontario. York Region encourages the province to prioritize low-cost solutions that support innovation and build climate resiliency at the local level.

The Region also requests the creation of a municipal advisory group to enable further discussion with local partners before implementing the plan.

Research initiatives demonstrate York Region's leadership and excellence in water and wastewater

York Regional Council received an update on [2018 water and wastewater research activities](#) which demonstrate the Region's commitment to continuous improvement, leadership and excellence in water and wastewater services.

Highlights of ongoing and future projects include:

- Early detection and treatment of blue-green algae toxins
- Innovative upgrades to improve water quality in local municipal distribution systems
- Mussel control at drinking water intakes
- Evaluate the source and potential impacts of microplastics on drinking water

York Region's water and wastewater systems are a complex network of infrastructure which supports a balance between a growing population and various operational and regulatory challenges.

York Region achieves over 99% in Chief Drinking Water Report

The Regional Municipality of York [Drinking Water Systems Report](#) achieved over 99% in provincial water quality standards as confirmed by Ontario's Chief Drinking Water Inspector's Annual Report.

Under the [Safe Drinking Water Act, 2002](#), York Region reports annually on the quality and quantity of drinking water produced. It is one component of a robust and rigorous approach which also includes source water protection, operator training, water treatment, extensive monitoring and testing, as well as emergency preparedness.

Details of York Region water systems and drinking water quality can be viewed through the online reporting tool at york.ca/drinkingwater

Continuous improvement to York Region's water, wastewater and waste management systems

York Regional Council received an update on the [Integrated Management System](#) for water, wastewater and waste management which provides a structured approach to risk mitigation and continuous improvement.

In 2018, 92 water, wastewater and waste management audits were performed providing continued insight into the delivery of regional services. As well, new requirements under quality and environmental standards

were introduced and international quality management standard ISO 9001 for waste management was formally implemented.

These continuous improvement initiatives demonstrate York Region's commitment to protecting public health and the environment.

York Regional Council renews Toronto Global Agreement

York Regional Council renewed its commitment to [Toronto Global](#) – a non-profit corporation funded by all levels of government with a mandate of attracting global investment.

Key initiatives identified for York Region over the next term of the contract are:

- Targeting key industries, including advanced manufacturing, health and life sciences, financial services, technology and innovation
- Showcasing specific Regional assets, like the proximity to Pearson International Airport, accessible transit, incubation space, university and college campuses as collateral to attract business

In addition to Toronto Global's economic development efforts, York Region's ongoing business attraction campaign [York Link](#) will continue to undertake global attraction of business, including York Region's involvement in North America's fastest-growing tech conference, [Collision](#). Learn more about York Region's tech experience pavilion [here](#).

York Region grows by over 15,000 jobs in 2018

The Regional Municipality of York released the [2018 Employment and Industry Report](#) which provides a detailed overview of industry and employment trends in York Region. Highlights from the report include:

- 2.4% employment growth rate from 2017, continuing to outpace national and provincial employment rates for the fifth consecutive year
- 636,630 estimated jobs in York Region as of mid-2018
- 15,120 jobs added between 2017 and 2018
- 78% of surveyed employment in York Region is in service-producing sectors

In 2018, York Region surveyed 34,100 businesses through the [York Region employment survey](#). The annual survey collects employment data and provides a snapshot of York Region's economy. Data is compared over time to identify trends.

Council also received the [2018 Year in Review](#). The annual publication highlights local business achievements and reinforces York Region as a destination of choice for businesses and top-talent.

The publication provides an update on key activities taking place under [York Region's Economic Development Action Plan 2016 to 2019](#) which provides a road map to advance the Region's local economy and will be updated later this year.

York Regional Council approves employment areas conversion criteria

York Regional Council [endorsed criteria](#) that will be used to assess requests for employment area conversions through the [Municipal Comprehensive Review](#) (MCR).

The criteria will facilitate current conversion requests that provide a comprehensive, transparent and equitable review process beyond what is outlined in the Provincial Growth Plan.

Employment areas currently make up 53% of the Region's 2018 employment base and are fundamental to maintaining the Region's economic vitality and creating complete communities that serve all ages and stages of life.

York Region is expected to grow to approximately 1.8 million people and 900,000 jobs by 2041. More people mean more demands on employment. To plan for and accommodate this growth the Region is undergoing the MCR. To submit an employment conversion request send an email to futureyork@york.ca

York Regional Council approves bylaw to support affordable rental housing

York Regional Council approved a bylaw to designate York Region as a [Community Improvement Project Area](#) for affordable rental housing incentives.

Council has endorsed a [Draft Guideline](#) and has advanced the process of creating a Community Improvement Project Area for affordable rental housing incentives. The rental housing incentives endorsed through the Guideline are:

- A new 48-month deferral for Regional development application fees (initial submission only)
- A new Tax Increment Equivalent Grant for the Regional portion of the property tax increase for up to five years

The above are in addition to the [existing 36-month development charge deferral for purpose-built high density rental buildings](#). With the [lowest rental stock in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area](#), affordable housing remains a priority for this term of Council.

Expanding affordable housing in York Region

York Regional Council received an update from the [Markham Inter-Church Committee for Affordable Housing \(MICHA\)](#) on the development of a 32-unit affordable rental apartment building in the City of Markham.

Construction of the development, which is funded through the [Federal/Provincial Investment in Affordable Housing Extension program](#), is underway and will include 25 one-bedroom units for seniors, two one-bedroom apartments designated to 360°Kids and five accessible units for seniors with disabilities.

York Region continues to have the lowest supply of rental housing in the Greater Toronto Area. Once complete, the building at [18 Water Street](#) will contribute to a full mix and range of housing options that help create complete communities.

Next regular meeting of York Regional Council

York Regional Council will meet on Thursday, April 18, at 9 a.m. in the York Region Administrative Centre Council Chambers, located at 17250 Yonge Street in the Town of Newmarket.

The Regional Municipality of York consists of nine local cities and towns and provides a variety of programs and services to 1.2 million residents and 52,000 businesses with over 636,600 employees. More information about the Region's key service areas is available at york.ca/regionalservices

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