

From: [Jean-François Obregón](#)
To: [Clerk General Line](#); [Linda Jackson](#); [RC Mario G. Racco - Vaughan](#); [Mario Ferri](#); [Gino Rosati](#); [Mayor Steven Del Duca - Vaughan](#)
Subject: Communication - D1. Proposed 2024 to 2026 Regional Budget - Introduction for Committee of the Whole Week 2
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 1:35:51 PM

Dear Regional Council members,

I would like to express my support for a Vacant Homes Tax in York Region. Solving the housing crisis requires using what we have in the tool box. That includes demand-side responses like a Vacant Homes Tax that would put homes on the market quickly compared with the time it takes to build. Investors also come to York Region to buy and some are keeping homes empty waiting for asset prices to rise. Is this fair to young people wanting to access the market or rental housing markets? This measure would also reduce the acceleration of farmland loss that is enabled through rezonings to facilitate greenfield development, which will put increased upward budgetary pressures on operating costs in the future. (1)

I am pleased to see that York Region Transit ridership levels are expected to reach pre-pandemic levels in 2024. Fares are already high compared with TTC. I would consider lowering them to help improve transit's attractiveness to motorists, especially at a time of sustained inflation.

Please prioritize pedestrian and cyclist safety in your operating budget. It is unacceptable that after extensive public consultation on the Traveller Safety Plan that the Region is continuing to focus on traveller education - and even dedicating police resources to this (p.85). I don't see anything on improved enforcement directed at motorists. I see distracted motorists and many motorists disregarding stop signs. I ask you to have York Regional Police prioritize enforcing laws to reduce this behaviour.

On the capital budget, I also ask that your Traveller Safety Plan emphasizes design changes to regional roads that drastically improve pedestrian and cycling safety. This can include having wider curbs at intersection included from the design to completion and a part of the capital budget for repaving, resurfacing road projects on regional roads. On Nov. 20 at 8:40 pm, I was saddened to see what I suspect was a pedestrian losing their life after a collision at the northeast corner with what I suspect was a motorist of Bathurst St. And Steeles Ave. West. Please consider my suggestions through the budget to reduce such collisions.

To support farmers through your Agri-Food division, I ask that you dedicate funds to a grant program to encourage reduced tillage and cover cropping. The County of Wellington's Experimental Acres pilot has successfully awarded grants worth less than \$10,000 each to farmers to adopt such practices. (2) Dufferin County has also collaborated on this. Such a program can help York Region farmers produce better quality food longer. It would help to strengthen the local food supply chain.

Thank you for considering my requests.

Sincerely,
Jean-François Obregón
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