

The Regional Municipality of York

Committee of the Whole
Finance and Administration
November 11, 2021

Report of the Chief Administrative Officer

Renewing York Region's Vision: *Strong, Caring, Safe Communities* – Final Report

1. Recommendations

1. Regional Council approve the renewed Vision document.
2. The Regional Clerk circulate this report to local municipalities for their information.

2. Summary

This report presents the updated Vision document (Attachment 1).

Key Points:

- Vision reaffirms Regional Council's commitment to strong, caring, safe communities
- Vision serves as the guiding star for the Region's corporate activities, ensuring all York Region staff are similarly inspired, regardless of their role or function within the organization
- Consultation identified a desire for a simplified Vision document while maintaining key components of Vision 2051, including the Vision Statement of *Strong, Caring, Safe Communities* and support of four areas of focus: Economic Vitality, Healthy Communities, Sustainable Environment and Good Government
- Community indicators will be reported to each term of Council to inform Council, the community and staff how York Region is tracking in sustaining strong, caring and safe communities

3. Background

Regional Council is committed to strong, caring, safe communities

Vision outlines Council's commitment to strong, caring, safe communities. Vision represents the entire York Region population, with multiple partners involved in achieving the aspirational objectives set out in Vision.

The previous Vision, [Vision 2051](#), was endorsed [May 2012](#) and carried forward the Vision Statement of *Strong, Caring, Safe Communities* from Vision 2026.

A draft Vision was delivered to Council in [May 2021](#) with validation activities occurring over the balance of the year to finalize the Vision Document. Validation activities included information sharing with local municipal Chief Administrative Officers, a community indicator workshop and ongoing coordination with York Regional Police.

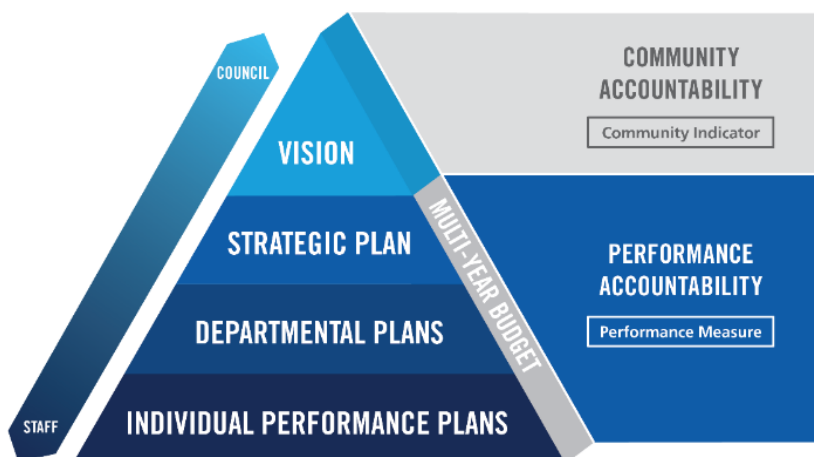
The Region’s Corporate Strategic Plan, Multi-Year Budget and other plans align with Vision

Vision serves as the guiding star for all of the Region’s corporate activities. It ensures all York Region staff work in the same direction regardless of their role or function within the organization. York Region’s Corporate Performance Management Framework (Figure 1) ensures consistent, corporate-wide application and alignment with our Vision.

To maintain organizational focus on Vision, the Region sets priorities over each four-year term of Council through the Corporate Strategic Plan, in alignment with the four areas of focus: Economic Vitality, Healthy Communities, Sustainable Environment and Good Government. The Corporate Strategic Plan is integrated with the Region’s Multi-Year Budget and provides direction to Departmental Plans and Individual Performance Plans.

Vision also serves as a guiding document for the Region’s provincially mandated plans such as the Regional Official Plan and the Community Safety and Wellbeing Plan.

Figure 1
Corporate Performance Management Framework

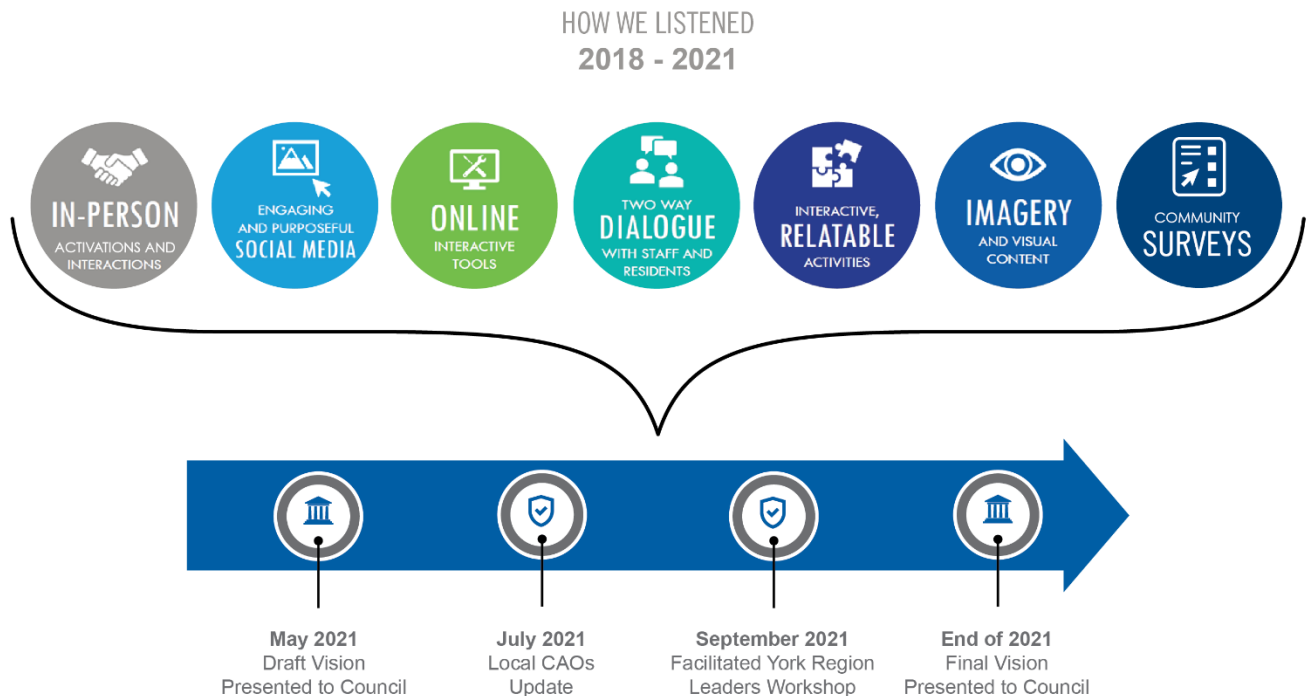


4. Analysis

Engagement with the community and stakeholders identified what York Region residents envision now for a better future

Community consultations since 2018 informed the renewal of the Vision Document (Figure 2). Consultations included outreach to every household in York Region through the Region's print publication, York Region Matters, along with nearly 4,000 direct engagements with stakeholders. Community members came together in person prior to the COVID-19 pandemic to enjoy walk and talks with the Chief Planner, York Region's social agencies and police services came together for consultations, and futurist and planning sessions were held with Council and senior management engaging renowned experts in the field. Statistically significant resident surveys also helped validate areas of focus and aspiration, highlighting areas residents enjoy about York Region while also flagging areas of concern.

Figure 2
Community consultation for Vision has been ongoing since 2018



Feedback provided valuable insight about the kind of place residents want York Region to be. Most residents feel the overall quality of life in York Region is very high and communities are safe. Residents also shared top-of-mind issues, which included those of housing affordability and the need for more robust transportation options. In addition, there is continued and growing interest in concepts such as embracing innovation and digital approaches, connectivity, inclusivity, resiliency, equity, social cohesion and prosperity. COVID-19 and public health concerns were new areas captured in recent surveys with corresponding impacts on how people live and work.

With regards to the Vision document, consultation identified the desire for a simplified document while maintaining key components, including the Vision Statement of *Strong, Caring, Safe Communities* and support for four areas of focus: Economic Vitality, Healthy Communities, Sustainable Environment and Good Government. These insights are reflected in the renewed Vision.

Meaningful feedback representative of the community informs Vision

York Region's history of community polling helps Council understand and respond to resident preferences, needs, opinions and satisfaction levels. York Region's annual community surveys are statistically representative of the make up of the Region's population according to the latest Census data. Feedback and input received helps internal decision-making through informing program and policy decisions. Ongoing consultation has been especially important to validate the renewed Vision considering the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Surveying the York Region Accessibility Advisory Committee when finalizing Vision further ensured the renewed Vision reflects the many diverse perspectives in the Region's communities.

York Region is a place of Economic Vitality, Sustainable Environment, Healthy Communities and Good Government, now and in the future

While York Region's Vision documents have evolved and matured over time, the overall objectives and goals remained stable and could be similarly streamlined according to four areas of focus.

In staying true to the request for the refreshed Vision Document to be higher-level and more aspirational, the renewed Vision is rooted in Economic Vitality, Sustainable Environment, Healthy Communities and Good Government as areas of aspirational focus, while the Strategic Plan and Departmental Plans will identify action items moving forward, allowing staff to be flexible and responsive to residents' changing needs.

Community indicators will show how York Region is doing in achieving Vision

Community indicators will be reported to each term of Council to show how York Region is doing in achieving Council's Vision of strong, caring, safe communities. Community indicators are key to making the Vision credible and tangible.

Vision's community indicators were selected after thorough environmental scanning and assessed in alignment with existing global and national standards, such as the [United Nations Sustainable Development Goals](#) and [Canadian Index of Wellbeing](#). Many of the community indicators are also [social determinants of health](#), such as those relating to income, employment and housing, recognizing social and economic factors are key to ensuring positive health and wellness outcomes for York Region residents.

Indicators were prioritized through consultation with leaders from across the organization. The community indicators in the Vision Document were selected for aligning most with the Vision Statement of *Strong, Caring, Safe Communities*.

Vision is enduring and timeless

With the approval of the refreshed Vision, staff will deliver a Vision Report to Council with every term of Council. The Vision Report will provide Regional Council with updates on community indicators and highlight some of the community activity taking place to ensure Vision is being fulfilled.

The Corporate Strategic Plan, which sets priorities over each four-year term of Council to achieve Vision, will continue to be reported on annually to Council using performance measures to track how well core services are working towards contributing to our communities' wellbeing.

5. Financial

The development of the updated Vision was completed using existing Regional staff complement and within approved business plans and budgets.

6. Local Impact

Local municipalities are key stakeholders in achieving Regional Council's Vision of strong, caring, safe communities for York Region. Staff conducted environmental scans of local municipal strategic plans, and confirmed Vision is consistent with and complementary to local municipal plans. The local Chief Administrative Officers group was also consulted as part of the Vision validation process.

Staff recommend this report be circulated to local municipalities for their information.

7. Conclusion

Vision is Regional Council's commitment to strong, caring, safe communities. Vision serves as the guiding star for all of the Region's corporate activities and ensures all York Region staff work are similarly inspired, regardless of their role or function within the organization.

Consultations identified a desire for a simplified Vision Document while maintaining key components, including Council's Vision Statement of *Strong, Caring, Safe Communities* and support of four areas of focus: Economic Vitality, Healthy Communities, Sustainable Environment and Good Government.

Regular analysis will ensure ongoing alignment with Vision. Regional Council will receive a fulsome report each term of Council outlining the progress towards achieving Vision.

For more information on this report, please contact Krista South, Executive Manager, Office of the Chief Administrative Officer at 1-877-464-9675 ext. 71208. Accessible formats or communication supports are available upon request.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'B Macgregor', with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Approved for Submission:

Bruce Macgregor
Chief Administrative Officer

October 29, 2021

Attachments (1)

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