

Clause 2 in Report No. 9 of Committee of the Whole was adopted, without amendment, by the Council of The Regional Municipality of York at its meeting held on May 17, 2018.

2

2014 - 2018 Council Accomplishments
Planning and Economic Development

Committee of the Whole recommends adoption of the following recommendation contained in the report dated April 27, 2018 from the Commissioner of Corporate Services and Chief Planner:

1. Council receive this report for information.
-

Report dated April 27, 2018 from the Commissioner of Corporate Services and Chief Planner now follows:

1. Recommendation

It is recommended that Council receive this report for information.

2. Purpose

This report highlights some of the major accomplishments, events and successes of Regional Council during the 2014 – 2018 term through the Planning and Economic Development section of Committee of the Whole.

3. Background

Council-approved programs and initiatives support long range planning, development approvals, and opportunities for economic development

Council's commitment to developing complete and sustainable communities in York Region is expressed through direction by the Planning and Economic Development section of the Committee of the Whole. This is achieved through

strong leadership, collaboration and innovation in growth management policies, development approvals and on-going opportunities for economic development.

Regional Council works toward planning for and managing population and employment growth as forecasted in the Provincial Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (Growth Plan) and the York Region Official Plan (Official Plan).

The Region is forecast to grow to 1.5 million residents, 510,000 households and 780,000 jobs by 2031. The Official Plan contains a growth management strategy to accommodate the population and employment forecasts as determined by the Province. Council's decisions between 2014 and 2018 were integral to building complete communities, maintaining a sustainable natural environment and promoting strong and vibrant economic growth.

On July 1, 2017, the updated Growth Plan came into effect which includes updated population and employment forecasts to 2041. The Province has allocated 1.79 million residents and 900,000 jobs to York Region by 2041. As directed by Council, the Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR) and update to the Official Plan will plan to accommodate Provincial forecasts to 2041 while ensuring on-going opportunities for economic development.

Council accomplishments successfully support priorities in the 2015 – 2019 Corporate Strategic Plan

Vision 2051 outlines the long term vision for the Region's future, articulated in goals and action areas. Council decisions align with the goals and action areas of the Vision Plan to build a strong future for York Region residents and businesses. The eight goals of Vision 2051 are:

- A place where everyone can thrive
- Liveable cities and complete communities
- A resilient natural environment and agricultural system
- Appropriate housing for all ages and stages
- An innovative economy
- Interconnected system for mobility
- Living sustainability
- Open and responsive government

Vision 2051 informs all other strategies and initiatives, including the Official Plan and the 2015 – 2019 Strategic Plan.



Council-approved programs and initiatives have successfully implemented the planning vision and economic strategy of the Regional Official Plan, aligned with transit investment, to help build compact mixed use communities.

4. Analysis and Implications

Over the last four years, Council's commitment to York Region residents and businesses has supported major accomplishments in the Strategic Plan priority areas of "Provide Responsive and Efficient Public Service", "Manage Environmentally Sustainable Growth", "Support Community Health and Well-Being", and "Strengthen the Region's Economy". The following outlines the major planning and economic development accomplishments of Council.

PROVIDE RESPONSIVE AND EFFICIENT PUBLIC SERVICE

In December 2014 Council appoints a Chief Planner to provide strong leadership to the Region's Planning and Economic Development Branch

The Chief Planner works closely with Regional Council on matters related to land use planning and economic development to provide a unified vision for the Region. Through advice and recommendations provided by the Chief Planner, Council has been successful in advancing various initiatives, programs and projects towards achieving the goal of building complete communities.

Council establishes the Region's first Planning Advisory Committee to provide advice on key Regional planning matters

Under amendments to the *Planning Act*, in November 2017, Regional Council appointed 8 resident members of the public and 3 Regional Council members to the Region's first Planning Advisory Committee (PAC). The PAC's role is to

provide Council and staff with advice on planning matters. The creation of the PAC increases resident involvement in the planning process and demonstrates Council's commitment to collaboration and the exchange of ideas with the public.

The development review process is streamlined to better respond to Council inquires and provide improved customer service

In November 2017, supported by IT Services in the Finance Department, the Region launched YorkTrax, an on-line development tracking system to streamline the development review process. YorkTrax has the ability to monitor the life cycle of an application from pre-consultation to approval and build-out. To centralize information from various business units and introduce process automation, this solution leveraged three existing technologies (Esri mapping, Salesforce business automation, and SharePoint document storage).

YorkTrax enables effective and update-to-date reporting to Council on the status of development applications approved under delegated approval authority. Through YorkTrax, staff are also able to monitor data for consistency, track application fees, integrate maps, and eventually facilitate the transition to a paperless system. Overall, YorkTrax improves efficiency of the development review process, thereby providing better customer service.

MANAGE ENVIRONMENTALLY SUSTAINABLE GROWTH

With Council support, the York Region Official Plan receives final approval through the Ontario Municipal Board process

On September 7, 2010, the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing approved the Region's Official Plan which was subsequently appealed to the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB), now called the Local Planning Appeal Tribunal (LPAT). The Official Plan was updated to be in conformity with the Provincial Growth Plan (2006), the Greenbelt Plan, and the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan.

Over the past 4 years, Council supported Regional staff to work with appellants to successfully negotiate settlements to resolve the majority of the appeals before the OMB. Notably, in November 2015, the OMB approved the majority of the remaining policies under appeal, which included policies related to urban expansions and the land budget, transportation, agriculture, rural areas, and conformity to the Greenbelt Plan and Oak Ridges Moraine Conversation Plan.

Only one policy (6.4.8) remains subject to Region-wide appeal, pertaining to cemetery uses in rural areas. In response to this, in March 2016, Council approved a cemetery needs analysis that examined current cemetery capacity

and projected future needs. As directed by Council, the cemetery needs analysis will be considered as part of the Official Plan update.

Council supports continued growth and economic development, while ensuring updated Provincial direction is implemented to build complete communities

On July 1, 2017 the updated Growth Plan came into effect and includes updated population and employment forecasts to 2041. In October 2017 Council approved the workplan to resume review of the Official Plan as a component of the broader MCR.

In January 2018, Council approved the Communications Plan for the MCR, which will promote community engagement. The updated Official Plan will guide population and employment growth to 2041 in accordance with the Provincial Policy Statement (2014), and the updated Provincial Plans: the Growth Plan (2017), the Greenbelt Plan (2017), and the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan (2017). A Regional Climate Change Action Plan and Community Energy Plan will also be undertaken, as directed by Council.

Council comments on numerous Provincial initiatives to protect Regional interests

To ensure York Region's interests are considered and remain protected, Council continues to provide formal comments during the development and review of various Provincial policies and plans related to managing growth and development while building complete communities. Formal comments were submitted to the Province on the following:

- Provincial Policy Statement, 2014
- The coordinated provincial plan review, which included the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan, the Greenbelt Plan, and the Growth Plan Amendments to the *Planning Act* and *Development Charges Act* to change the land use planning and appeal system by streamlining the planning process, limiting matters appealed to the Ontario Municipal Board, and new requirements for public engagement (Bill 73 – *Smart Growth for Our Communities Act, 2015* & Bill 139 – *Building Better Communities and Conserving Watershed Acts*)
- Inclusionary zoning, which would allow municipalities to require affordable housing units to be included in residential developments (Bill 204 – *Promoting Affordable Housing Act*)
- Draft provincial guidelines and mapping on natural heritage and agricultural systems, including revisions to the Greenbelt Plan boundary and Land Needs Assessment Methodology

By taking an active role in commenting on Provincial initiatives, Council has helped to ensure the Region's interests remain protected both locally and within the context of the Greater Toronto Area.

Council approves local Plans that implement the framework of the York Region Official Plan

Local municipalities have been actively working to ensure local Official Plans and secondary plans conform to the York Region Official Plan. Regional staff works with local municipal staff to ensure conformity with the Regional Official Plan policies and participate in public consultation on proposed plans.

On October 20, 2016 Regional Council approved the Town of Georgina's Official Plan, which is the sixth local Official Plan update under the Region's 2010 Official Plan.



The urban structure of the Official Plan is supported by a framework of centres and corridors that align with the provincial urban growth centres in the Growth Plan. Council approved secondary plans for the Newmarket Urban Centre (OPA 10) and the Concord GO Centre transit area (Vaughan OPA 8).

As part of development review and implementing policies of the Regional Official Plan at the local level and with the support of Council, staff also defended Regional interests in major development applications and secondary plans before the OMB.

SUPPORT COMMUNITY HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

Under the direction of Council, the Region's Centres and Corridors are evolving into vibrant transit supportive mixed use areas

Regional Centres (Vaughan Metropolitan Centre, Markham Centre, Richmond Hill/Langstaff Gateway, and Newmarket Centre) are planned for the most intense concentration of development and are expected to accommodate a significant share of the Region's population and employment growth. The Corridors (Highway 7, Yonge Street, and portions of Davis Drive, and Green Lane) are evolving into highly active urban areas, serviced by rapid transit and the Spadina subway extension to the Vaughan Metropolitan Centre.

The Centres and Corridors are the focus of high density residential development within the Region. In 2017, 35 per cent of all new high-density residential units were located in the Regional Centres and Corridors. There are currently 26 multi-storey residential and mixed-use buildings under construction in the Centres and Corridors, which represents 77 per cent of all high-rise residential unit building activity across the Region. This is a clear indicator of increasing growth in the Regional Centres and Corridors.

Regional Council continues to promote employment opportunities in the Centres and Corridors, where over 123,200 jobs currently exist. Employment in the Centres and Corridors accounts for 20 per cent of all jobs in York Region. In the past five years, jobs in the Regional Centres and Corridors have increased by 16.5 per cent. In 2016, the Centres and Corridors program partnered with York Link, to reinforce the relationship between transit supportive city building and economic development, while promoting continued growth in office employment.

Regional Council proactively worked with the Federal and Provincial Governments to realize the Vaughan Metropolitan Centre multi-modal transit hub, and Toronto York Spadina subway extension

Regional Council effectively worked with various levels of government to realize the extension of the Toronto York Spadina subway in the Vaughan Metropolitan Centre. The York Spadina subway extension provides key connections to the Vaughan Metropolitan Centre Vivastation on Highway 7, York Region Transit's Smartcentres Place Bus Terminal, and the Highway 407 Bus Terminal. The opening of the subway extension on December 17, 2017 was a significant catalyst to advance the Vaughan Metropolitan Centre as a mixed use community hub for economic and cultural activity. The Vaughan Metropolitan Centre has the

most development activity of the four Regional Centres with 2,700 residential units currently under construction. The current proposed, approved and built residential development applications in the Vaughan Metropolitan Centre represent 94 per cent of the 2031 population target of 25,000 people.

Regional Council continues to advocate to the Province for the extension of the Yonge Subway to advance development in the Richmond Hill Centre/Langstaff Gateway

After years of strong advocacy from York Region Council, the Government of Canada and the Province of Ontario have approved \$91 million in funding for the continued planning of the proposed Yonge subway extension. Completion of the subway extension is necessary to achieve the full development potential of the urban growth centre and Yonge Street corridor, and provide a key transit connection of the Viva rapid transit system to the Yonge subway.

Council continues to advocate for affordable housing options

As directed by Council, Regional staff continue to work to address housing needs across the Region. Complete communities offer a full range of housing options at various price points. Council supported:

- Identifying and measuring the supply of new affordable housing on an annual basis
- Commenting on new housing related initiatives, such as inclusionary zoning
- Supporting the private market rental pilot project at 212 Davis Drive in Newmarket to support a development charges deferral program
- Working with local municipalities to explore options for affordability through the establishment of the York Region/Local Municipal Housing Working Group
- Working toward the development of a mid-range income housing incentives framework

STRENGTHEN THE REGION'S ECONOMY

The Economic Development Action Plan 2016 to 2019 establishes the framework for continued economic growth and prosperity

Economic vitality remains a strategic priority of Council and cornerstone for building a prosperous Region. The importance of a strong economy is identified in strategic documents of Council, including Vision 2051, the Official Plan, and the Strategic Plan. Attracting and retaining a variety of high quality jobs across a range of sectors promotes economic resilience and helps to ensure York Region residents have the opportunity to work and thrive where they live.

The Council-approved Economic Development Action Plan 2016 to 2019 identifies innovation driven by creative people, companies and institutions as the foundation for future economic growth and vitality. The Plan is structured around four main program areas:

- Research and Analysis
- Business Advisory
- Innovation and Entrepreneur Development
- Marketing and Communications

These programs have directly spurred new investments and business growth which are reported annually to Council in the Economic Development Year in Review report. Some of the significant accomplishments are highlighted in the following sections.

York Region secures a York University campus in Markham in recognition of the Region as a growing knowledge hub

Council supported York University in its successful proposal to the Province to develop a new campus in Markham, and committed up to \$25 million in funding towards the project. The new campus, scheduled to open in the fall of 2021, will accommodate 4,000 graduate and undergraduate students in the first phase, and 10,000+ students in future phases. Programs will focus on business and technology providing a talent pipeline for York Region's growing knowledge-based business community. Located in Markham Centre and accessible by transit, the York University Markham campus will play an important role in advancing the Region as an innovative knowledge hub.

Council recognizes the importance of high speed connectivity as an economic enabler through the Broadband Strategy

Council approved the Region's first Broadband Strategy in 2014. Developed in partnership with the local municipalities, the Strategy sets a vision for York Region as a Gigabit Region, recognizing that elevating broadband access and capacity supports economic activity and job growth. The Strategy establishes connectivity priorities around Centres and Corridors, employment lands, and rural areas to be realized through a variety of public and private approaches. The Strategy has helped set the framework to support specific initiatives around improved connectivity.

Council approves the creation of the YTN Telecom Network Inc. as a separate Region-owned dark fibre provider

In response to a need identified by Southlake Regional Health Centre for broadband capacity to undertake research, the Region delivered a high speed fibre connection in partnership with the Ontario Research and Innovation Optical Network (ORION) between the hospital and York University. The Region's dark fibre network, the York Telecom Network, was used to make the connection. This provided the first ORION point of presence in the Region and significantly increased the hospital's capacity to undertake research and connect with research partners around the world.

Council recognized the value of the Region's fibre network as an economic enabler. In March 2017, Council established a separate corporation to manage the York Telecom Network. As a separate business entity named the 'YTN Telecom Network Inc.', now known as York Net, the Region can optimize the benefits of broadband by making the network accessible to both public institutions and, for the first time, to private internet service providers. This creates the potential for private service providers to extend cost-effectively into currently under-served portions of the Region, improving internet access for both residents and businesses.

Council launches YorkLink which positions the Region as a destination for knowledge based employers

In June 2016, Council supported the launch of YorkLink, an award-winning marketing strategy that promotes the Region as the place "Where Talent and Opportunity Intersect." YorkLink builds awareness of the Region as a destination for knowledge-based office employers, particularly in the centres and corridors. It complements and reinforces direct-to-business sales and advisory services with a dedicated digital media platform.

The YorkLink strategy and campaign targets office employers, business decision makers and professionals in key knowledge based growth sectors such as Information & Communications Technology (ICT), Financial Services, Business and Professional Services, Corporate Head Offices, Healthcare Technology and Engineering.

Council continues to collaborate with our local municipal partners to promote York Region's unique position in the GTA as a place for knowledge-based business investments

In June 2016, General Motors (GM) announced the Markham Centre as the location for its Canadian Technical Centre. The facility, which opened in January 2018, is Canada's largest automotive innovation hub with more than 700 staff

projected by 2019. The GM Markham campus focuses on software development and innovation in active safety, in-car infotainment systems, and software and controls of self-driving vehicles.

To attract GM, Regional staff worked closely with Markham and industry stakeholders to convey to GM the Region's value proposition around talent. General Motors selection of Markham demonstrates the top talent and innovative business community available in York Region. Their decision follows recent business investments in the Region by other major office employers, which include Aviva Canada and KPMG.

5. Financial Considerations

There are no direct financial implications associated with this report. The costs of implementing the programs and initiatives cited in this report have been managed by Council in its administration of their annual budgets.

6. Local Municipal Impact

The Region continues to work closely with local municipal partners to ensure efficient and effective coordination of policies and programs that are supportive of the strategic goals of both the Region and the local municipalities.

7. Conclusion

The 2014 - 2018 Planning and Development section of Committee of the Whole and Council have continued to build on past successes and continue to position the Region for a future that is committed to excellent service to its residents and businesses. Council has made significant progress in the overall strategic growth management, building complete communities, and promoting economic development to successfully plan for the future.

For more information on this report, please contact Sandra Malcic, Manager, Long Range Planning at 1-877-464-9675 ext. 75274.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.

April 27, 2018

Attachments (2)

8419554

Accessible formats or communication supports are available upon request

Planning and Economic Development ACCOMPLISHMENTS

2014 to 2018

STRENGTHEN THE REGION'S ECONOMY

- June 2016, YORKLINK Launches
- March 2017, Council Creates YTN TELECOM NETWORK INC
- January 2018, GENERAL MOTORS opens automotive innovation hub in Markham with 700 staff by 2019
- 2021, YORK UNIVERSITY CAMPUS to open in Markham



MANAGE ENVIRONMENTALLY SUSTAINABLE GROWTH

NOV 2015 York Region Official Plan receives final approval through the OMB process

6 of 9 Local Official plans are approved and in conformity with the Region's Official Plan

1.79 Million residents / **900 Thousand** jobs
ARE FORECAST IN YORK REGION BY 2041

PROVIDE REponsive AND EFFICIENT PUBLIC SERVICE

- December 2014, Council appoints Chief Planner
- November 2017, Council establishes the Region's First Planning Advisory Committee
- The development review process is streamlined to better respond to Council inquiries and provide improved customer service



SUPPORT COMMUNITY HEALTH AND WELL-BEING



December 17, 2017
FIRST SUBWAY OPENS
in York Region

The **CENTRES AND CORRIDORS** continue to evolve:

4.3% of the Region's population live in the Centres and Corridors

76% of Centres and Corridors residents live in high density developments

21% of all residential unit starts occur in the Centres and Corridors

- Over **118,000** people are employed in **7,900** Businesses in the Centres and Corridors
- Centres and Corridors program partners with **YorkLink**

COUNCIL ADVOCATES for
AFFORDABLE HOUSING
OPTIONS



KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN THIS TERM OF COUNCIL INCLUDE:

YORK UNIVERSITY CAMPUS



York University Campus approved for Markham

- Council's support and commitment of up to \$25 million in funding is instrumental in the Province's approval of a York University Campus in Markham Centre
- The new campus is scheduled to open in the fall of 2021

ENHANCED SERVICE



Enhanced Planning and Economic Development Service Delivery to improve customer service

- Council appoints a Chief Planner to provide strong leadership to Planning and Economic Development
- The Region's first Planning Advisory Committee is appointed to provide advice to Council on planning matters
- A streamlined development tracking system is implemented (YorkTrax)

NEW OFFICIAL PLAN



New Official Plans Approved

- Resolution of Regional Official Plan appeals through the Ontario Municipal Board process
- 6 of the 9 lower-tier Official Plans are in conformity with the Regional Official Plan
- Approval of lower-tier Official Plans sets the stage to realize the desired urban structure of Centres and Corridors and complete communities

TRANSIT-SUPPORTIVE



Regional Centres and Corridors evolve into vibrant transit-supportive mixed use communities

- Council worked with the Federal and Provincial Governments to realize the subway to the Vaughan Metropolitan Centre as a multi-modal transit hub
- The Spadina subway extension opened on December 17, 2017
- Council continues to advocate for the extension of the Yonge subway as essential to advance development in the Richmond Hill/Langstaff Gateway

BROADBAND STRATEGY



The Regional Broadband strategy to promote on-going economic development

- The Council approves a Regional broadband strategy
- YorkNet is created as a separate business entity
- High-speed connectivity is recognized as a business enabler and positions the Region as a location for knowledge based business investments

Awards and Achievements

York Region's significant achievements were recognized with the following awards:

- 2016 American Water Works Association Exemplary Source Water Protection Award for Metropolitan Systems (joint with Environmental Services - Source Water)
- 2017 International Economic Development Council (IEDC) 'Silver' Award for the 'York Link' strategy
- 2017 Economic Development Association of Canada's (EDAC) Award for 'York Link' social media (Twitter)
- 2018 Intelligent Community Forum Canada SMART21 Intelligent Community of the Year Award

Publications

Council continues to demand excellence in monitoring and reporting on significant public advancements through the following annual publications:

- Growth and Development Review
- Employment and Industry Report
- Affordable Housing Measuring and Monitoring
- Centres and Corridors Monitoring
- Development Activity Report
- Economic Development Year in Review