



Memorandum

TO: Committee of the Whole

FROM: Daniel Kostopoulos
Commissioner of Transportation Services

DATE: April 7, 2016

RE: **2015 Smart Commute Gold Workplace Designation**

York Region has been recognized for its outstanding commitment to promoting sustainable travel.

Background

Smart Commute is a program of Metrolinx and the municipalities in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area. The program helps residents and employees explore and compare sustainable travel options such as walking, cycling, transit and carpooling. The goal of the program is to ease congestion while helping people save time and money.

The Smart Commute Workplace Designation Program recognizes an employer's efforts in providing investments, infrastructure and end-of-trip facilities to support commuting options for employees. Organizations may be independently recognized for one of three designation levels on an annual basis. Gold is the highest achievement possible and is awarded to workplaces that demonstrate innovation, focus on measuring success and achieve significant positive outcomes in enabling employees to choose ways to get to work other than driving alone.

York Region is one of only two Smart Commute Central York workplaces, the other being the Town of Aurora, to achieve Gold every year since the Workplace Designation Program began in 2012

York Region received a Gold Workplace Designation at an awards reception held January 21, 2016, by Smart Commute Central York. The framed certificate is on display in the Transportation Services Department reception area at the Administrative Centre.

In August 2015, York Region conducted a survey of staff commuter habits and received more than double the minimum required response rate for statistical validation of the data. Survey results were also used to achieve full points in sustainable commuting

toward the LEED application to the Canadian Green Building Council for the Administrative Centre. York Region achieved an 86 per cent response rate at this location. Overall survey results demonstrate an increase in mode split among carpooling, transit and active transportation. Highlights of the survey include:

- Average one-way commute time is 34.4 minutes
- Average one-way commute distance is 28.2 kilometres
- Primary mode of travel to work (see Table 1)
- Secondary mode of travel indicated almost 50 per cent used sustainable transportation

Table 1
Primary Mode of Travel to Work

Mode of Travel	2006 %	2015 %
Drive Alone	91.0	84.2
Carpool	1.9	7.2
Public Transit	2.7	4.2
Walk or Bike	2.5	1.6
Get Dropped Off	1.6	1.4
Other*	0.3	1.4

*Other includes modes not listed, such as multi-modal, telework, taxi and scooter

Results also provide information on the willingness of employees to change travel habits and identify potential obstacles and motivators to changing behaviour.

York Region offers many programs and incentives to encourage employees to reduce their single occupant vehicle trips to work

Programs and incentives offered by the Region include:

- Free ride-matching tools and preferential carpool parking spots at various Regional locations
- ECO transit pass program available to employees as a taxable benefit
- Emergency Ride Home Program
- Outdoor bike racks, indoor bike storage facilities, showers and lockers at various Regional locations

- Bicycle User Group to promote and support staff cycling
- Teleconferencing and videoconferencing equipment to support telecommuting
- Flexible working arrangements
- Participation in events such as Bike to Work Day, Smart Commute Week, Carpool Week and other campaigns throughout the year
- Training new staff about commuting options
- Support for staff wishing to try a sustainable transportation mode to travel to work

The Region works closely with the three Smart Commute Transportation Management Associations operating in York Region (Smart Commute Central York, Smart Commute Markham-Richmond Hill and Smart Commute North Toronto Vaughan) to promote sustainable travel options

The Smart Commute program aims to help commuters save money, reduce stress levels and improve health. Adding the Smart Commute program to a suite of human resources tools may increase an employer's ability to recruit and retain high-quality employees. In addition, parking demands can be alleviated by diverting trips to other modes of transportation.

Trip reduction and shifting trips to active and sustainable modes are key goals of the Regional Official Plan. The Smart Commute program further demonstrates and supports the Region's commitment to sustainable mobility, healthy communities and a high quality of life.

Daniel Kostopoulos, P.Eng.
Commissioner of Transportation Services

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Attachment (1)

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Office of the President and Chief Executive Officer

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January 8, 2016

Bruce MacGregor
CAO
The Regional Municipality of York
17250 Yonge St.
Newmarket, ON L3Y 6Z1

Dear Mr. MacGregor,

On behalf of Metrolinx and your local Smart Commute office, I would like to offer my congratulations on your achievement of the *Smart Commute Gold Workplace* designation for 2016.

This is a testament to the effort and resources you and your Smart Commute representative Shawn Smith have dedicated to ensure the program is a success. Your commitment to promoting and supporting sustainable travel options for your organization positions you as a leader in corporate social responsibility and highlights the alignment of your corporate values and your sustainability efforts.

In the summer of 2015, we had an unprecedented opportunity to leverage the knowledge base of the Smart Commute network, increasing awareness of transportation options and ensuring business continuity during the TORONTO 2015 Pan Am and Parapan Am Games. Games travel initiatives included creating travel plans and encouraging employees to Reduce, Re-mode, Re-route or Re-time their commutes. Those workplaces that made extraordinary efforts will be recognized with a special "Games Champion" seal for their 2016 workplace designation certificate.

Thank you again for your ongoing commitment to the Smart Commute program. Your involvement in this region-wide network is making a positive impact on air quality and reducing the number of cars on the roads – critical elements of the health of the communities where we live, work and play.

Sincerely,

Bruce McCuaig
President and Chief Executive Officer