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Town of Aurora

Memorandum

Mayor's Office

Re: York Regional Council Highlights of October 24, 2024
To: Members of Council
From: Mayor Mrakas
Date: November 5, 2024

Recommendation

1. That the York Regional Council Highlights of October 24, 2024, be received for information.

COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



Tuesday, October 29, 2024

York Regional Council – Thursday, October 24, 2024

Livestreaming 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 available at [York.ca/councilandcommittee](https://york.ca/councilandcommittee)

York Region Chairman and CEO Wayne Emmerson announces retirement

At the October 24, 2024, meeting of York Regional Council, York Region Chairman and CEO Wayne Emmerson [announced his retirement](#) from The Regional Municipality of York, effective Friday, November 29, 2024.

Chairman Emmerson's retirement follows almost four decades of public service, including 27 years as a Member of Regional Council and the last 10 years as Regional Chair.

While addressing Regional Council, Chairman Emmerson extended gratitude to his past and present Council colleagues, Regional staff, the provincial and federal governments and the many community partners who have helped shape York Region's growth and development.

The Regional Clerk will bring a report to the November 7, 2024, York Region Committee of the Whole meeting outlining the procedural process and proposed timelines for appointing Chairman Emmerson's successor.

2025 budget tabled at Regional Council

York Region's proposed [2025 to 2026 budget](#) was tabled at the Thursday, October 24, 2024 meeting of Regional Council. The budget outlines how York Region will deliver core services to residents and businesses, including policing, public health, paramedics, social and community services, roads, transit and water and wastewater services.

The proposed \$4.6 billion budget includes a \$3.36 billion operating budget and a \$1.26 billion capital budget. Operating costs cover day-to-day expenses and provide funding for rehabilitation and replacement of existing infrastructure, while capital spending covers major infrastructure requirements.

The 2025 tabled budget focuses on three priority areas: investing in safer communities, enabling growth in our communities and keeping people, goods and information moving.

The proposed 2025 budget includes a 3.55% tax levy increase which will cost the average household an additional \$103.42 but will vary depending on individual property tax assessments. A separate 1% Rapid Transit and Infrastructure Tax Levy is proposed this year and will add a further \$29.13 per average household to help fund priority infrastructure projects.

The proposed tax levy outlook for 2026 was also tabled and includes a 3.22% tax levy increase and 1% Rapid Transit / Infrastructure Levy.

Proposed 2025 capital spending of \$1.26 billion is part of a record high \$12.2 billion 10-year plan, which includes projects to meet growth needs and renewal of existing assets.

Departmental presentations will be presented to Committee of the Whole on Thursday, November 7, 2024, with anticipated budget approval on Thursday, November 28, 2024.

York Region partnering with United Way to conduct the Point-in-Time Homelessness Count

York Region is partnering with the United Way Greater Toronto to conduct the [2024 Point-in-Time Count](#) of people experiencing homelessness. This will occur between Tuesday, November 26 and Wednesday, November 27.

Over a 24-hour period, staff supporting the Point-in-Time Count will visit locations throughout the Region and engage with people who may be experiencing homelessness, asking individuals to complete a brief, voluntary survey.

Point-in-Time Counts are completed in communities across Canada and are required by the federal government under the [Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy](#).

York Region will use data from the Point-in-Time Count to better understand the scope of homelessness and assist with service planning. A report of the results will be provided to Council in 2025.

York Region continuing actions to increase affordable and community housing supply

Regional Council received a [presentation](#) on actions the Region has taken and future options to increase affordable and community housing supply.

York Region has actioned several initiatives to increase affordable housing and community housing supply, including:

- Built two new transitional housing sites
- Added 557 community housing units since 2019
- Created a supply grant pilot to enable new units through partners
- Continued advocacy to senior levels of government for increased funding, program and policy changes

Continued approaches and actions to increase affordable and community housing supply include:

- Targeting financial incentives to directly support affordable housing development
- Coordinating and partnering with local municipalities, housing providers and non-profits
- Responding to new funding opportunities that will help increase the supply of affordable housing opportunities through Housing York Inc.
- Advocating to senior levels of government for increased and sustained funding

Affordable and community housing is a complex problem requiring significant investments from all levels of government. Recommendations for continued actions will be brought for Council consideration through future reports in 2025 and 2026.

For more information, visit york.ca/HousingAffordability

Solve the Crisis campaign aims to address homelessness, mental health and addiction

Regional Council endorsed the [Solve the Crisis Campaign](#), an advocacy campaign led by [Ontario's Big City Mayors Caucus](#).

The campaign aims to address homelessness, mental health and addictions crisis happening in communities across the province. It asks for provincial and federal governments to commit to immediate action to address the growing number of unhoused individuals, including creation of a task force and sustainable funding to ensure municipalities have the tools and resources to support individuals.

York Region will continue to work with partners and all levels of government to address issues arising from the housing crisis.

New strategy supports strong Agriculture and Agri-Food Sector

Regional Council continues to prioritize York Region's agriculture and agri-food sector with the release of the [2024 to 2027 Agriculture and Agri-Food Sector Strategy](#).

Following the success of York Region's first [Agriculture and Agri-Food Sector Strategy in 2017](#), the goals driving the 2024 to 2027 Strategy include:

- Strengthening business, entrepreneurship and innovation services
- Bolstering an already resilient and diverse value chain
- Continuing to educate and raise the profile of local agriculture and agri-food sector

Detailed actions in the 2024 to 2027 Agriculture and Agri-Food Sector Strategy will be supported by important partnerships with York Region's nine local cities and towns, the Agriculture and Agri-Food Advisory Committee and other key stakeholders.

Learn more about York Region's growing agriculture and agri-food sector at york.ca/AgriFood

Regional Council approves new large office incentive program

Regional Council [approved a new large office incentive program](#) targeting office buildings 75,000 square feet or larger and built in Regional growth centres, Major Transit Station Areas or specific local centres.

The large office incentive program includes a Development Charge (DC) deferral of up to 20 years and a potential DC discount to be implemented through the 2026 DC Bylaw. These incentives were commended for fostering long-term growth in office development by the Building Industry and Land Development Association.

Through this program, York Region continues bolstering the economy by utilizing urban growth centres accessible by transit, attracting a highly talented work force and growing the employment sector.

Visit york.ca for more information on development incentives.

Regional Council appoints members to the Administrative Penalty Tribunal

Regional Council has [appointed eight Administrative Penalty Tribunal Hearing Officers](#) to enable hearing appeals of administrative penalty orders resulting from speeding and red-light camera infractions on Regional roads.

To dispute a penalty order, a screening review request is submitted and reviewed by a screening officer. If the defendant is not satisfied with the screening decision, an online hearing review can be requested.

The role of the Hearing Officer is to conduct reviews of Screening Officer decisions, not new evidence. They can cancel, confirm or allow more time to pay the penalty order.

The Administrative Penalty Tribunal is expected to reduce backlog of traffic violation cases in the traditional court system, leading to faster and less costly resolutions.

Regional Budget awarded Distinguished Budget Award for 20th consecutive year

Regional Council received the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) Distinguished Budget Presentation Award for the Region's [2024 budget](#). This marks the 20th consecutive year the Region's Budget presentation has been recognized with this award. The 2024 budget also received Special Recognition for Strategic Goals and Strategies.

Earlier this year, York Region was also awarded a special Triple Crown medallion by the GFOA in recognition of receiving all three GFOA awards for the 2022 fiscal year.

Receipt of these prestigious financial awards reflects Regional Council's ongoing commitment to meeting the highest principles of governmental budgeting and publishing high quality budget documents satisfying national guidelines.

Procedure Bylaw Updated

Regional Council approved the new [Procedure Bylaw \(Bylaw 2024-52\)](#). This updated bylaw replaces Bylaw 2018-59 and outlines how meetings of Council are conducted.

The provincially-required bylaw underwent more than 350 revisions to:

- Improve readability and structure
- Remove unnecessary and antiquated provisions
- Consolidate duplication
- Clarify current practices for deputations and timelines for correspondence
- Reduce length of the bylaw by approximately 20%

Staff compared other procedure bylaws, including those of York Region's nine local cities and towns, other Regional municipalities and the [Municipal Act, 2001](#), to ensure consistency and limit the impact of changes.

Periodically assessing the bylaw helps ensure meetings are efficient and promotes good governance.

York Region Appoints Medical Officer of Health

Chairman Emmerson [announced](#) that in September 2024, Regional Council endorsed the appointment of Dr. Fareen Karachiwalla as the permanent full-time Medical Officer of Health for York Region, pending final approval from the Ministry of Health. Dr. Karachiwalla is expected to resume this role following the completion of her maternity leave.

In the interim, Dr. Sarah Erdman will step in as Acting Medical Officer of Health, effective September 30, 2024. Since joining York Region Public Health in January 2023, Dr. Erdman has demonstrated exceptional leadership in the Infectious Diseases Control Division. Her extensive experience, including key roles at Ontario's Office of the Chief Medical Officer of Health and Ottawa Public Health during the pandemic, makes her well-suited for this temporary position.

York Region Celebrates Local Government Week

Regional Council recognized October 20 to 26, 2024, as [Local Government Week 2024](#), acknowledging the essential role municipal governments play in the daily lives of residents across all nine local cities and towns.

Local Government Week is an opportunity to raise public awareness of the [vital services](#) York Region provides, from public health and transit to infrastructure and community safety. It also highlights the dedicated work of municipal employees who ensure the smooth delivery of these services.

Council encourages residents to take part in the celebration by learning more about local government operations and exploring ways to get involved in shaping their community.

September Observances

Regional Council recognized the following observances in October 2024:

- [National Disability Employment Month](#)
 - [Small Business Week](#) – October 20 to 26, 2024
 - [Waste Reduction Week](#) – October 21 to 25, 2024
 - [National Seniors Day](#) – October 1, 2024
 - [World Mental Health Day](#) – October 10, 2024
 - [World Homeless Day](#) – October 10, 2024
 - [Thanksgiving](#) – October 14, 2024
 - [United Nations Day](#) – October 24, 2024
 - [World Cities Day](#) – October 31, 2024
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Next meeting of York Regional Council

York Regional Council will meet on Thursday, November 28, 2024, at 9 a.m. in the York Region Administrative Centre Council Chambers, located at 17250 Yonge Street in the Town of Newmarket. The meeting will be streamed on york.ca/live

The Regional Municipality of York consists of nine local cities and towns and provides a variety of programs and services to over 1.25 million residents and 57,000 businesses with more than 629,000 employees. More information about York Region's key service areas is available at york.ca/RegionalServices

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