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Town of Aurora

Memorandum

Mayor's Office

Re: York Region Council Highlights of December 11, 2025

To: Members of Council

From: Mayor Mrakas

Date: January 13, 2026

Recommendation

1. That the York Region Council Highlights of December 11, 2025, be received for information.

Attachments

1. York Regional Council Highlights of December 11, 2025

COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



Monday, December 15, 2025

York Regional Council – Thursday, December 11, 2025

Live streaming 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

Paramedics continue to exceed target response times in life-threatening emergencies

York Regional Council received a report outlining paramedic response times exceeded nearly all targets in 2024. Council also [approved](#) the immediate expansion of Paramedic Services vehicles using York Region's dedicated bus lanes (rapidways) to help maintain response times for all calls, mitigate delays and support safer, more efficient emergency response.

Previously, Paramedic Services vehicles were only permitted to use rapidways when responding with both lights and sirens for high-priority incidents.

In addition to amending the existing bylaw, Regional Council also received an update on the 2024 York Region Paramedic Services response times. Highlights include:

- Responding to 95,511 incidents, a 3.3% increase from 2023; incidents are expected to continue to increase with a growing population
- Managing average hospital transfer of care times below a 30-minute target, with support from hospitals and the provincial Dedicated Offload Nurse Program
- Exceeding six of seven response time targets; achieving average response time for the most severe and life-threatening cases (sudden cardiac arrest or absence of breathing) of 5 minutes and 40 seconds, while least urgent cases (minor ailments or general pain) of 12 minutes and 6 seconds

Paramedic Services narrowly missed non-life-threatening response time average by 1%, an expected outcome of the [new Medical Priority Dispatch System](#) launched in November 2024. The dispatch system prioritizes and more effectively sends emergency services to life threatening patients, using lights and sirens. This results in clinically safe patients experiencing longer wait times for non-urgent calls. Since the introduction of this system, use of lights and sirens has dropped to 47% from 70%, reducing the risk of collisions, improving road safety for paramedics and the public during emergency responses.

York Region updates Signs on Regional Roads Bylaw

Regional Council approved the [Signs on Regional Roads Bylaw 2025-62 update](#) to enhance safety and compliance.

Key highlights of the Sign Bylaw update include:

- Addressing safety concerns like signs obstructing sightlines and interfering with transit stops and utilities, increasing non-compliance and deterring unapproved signs
- Defining sign types and size requirements for business, real estate, development and election signs
- Increasing permit fees to offset the cost of managing the temporary sign program, including removal blitzes and regular patrols
- Designating sign placement at approximately 700 designated intersections across York Region, with maps and printable guides available on york.ca
- Issuing mandatory identifier stickers on permitted signs to ensure visibility and compliance
- Changes to this bylaw follow extensive consultation with local cities and towns, industry stakeholders and the public, and respond to Council's direction to adopt a more progressive approach to managing signs on Regional roads

Between June 2024 and June 2025, York Region removed approximately 35,000 non-compliant signs and 3,100 signs were permitted during the same period.

The updated bylaw is effective January 1, 2026, and will be communicated further through newsletters, social media and outreach to residents, businesses and local partners. Existing permits under the previous bylaw will be valid until expiry. Learn more at york.ca/SignBylaw

Toronto and Region Conservation Authority Service Level Agreement for Expedited Review of Capital Projects

Regional Council authorized a [service level agreement renewal](#) with Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA), maintaining timely environmental reviews and approvals to advance key [Public Works](#) and [YorkNet](#) capital infrastructure projects.

A renewed agreement will ensure compliance with the *Environmental Assessment Act* and other regulatory requirements while supporting York Region's ability to deliver safe water, efficient transportation systems and environmentally sustainable services.

York Region and TRCA's agreement will maintain service continuity while provincial regulations under Bill 68 are finalized, with built-in flexibility for adjustments once new standards are confirmed.

The original 2004 service level agreement, renewed to December 31, 2025, has enabled TRCA to advance major initiatives by completing assessments, permits and consultations, fostering collaboration and predictability across planning processes.

2025 Servicing Capacity

Regional Council approved the [2025 Servicing Capacity Assignment](#), enabling growth of up to 96,000 new homes to be built to meet the Province's overall housing target of 150,000 homes by 2031. This assignment adds approximately 88,348 people (or 30,000 additional homes) in cities and towns served by the York Durham Sewage System, bringing the total available capacity to 286,992 persons and up to 13 years of growth.

As part of the assignment, York Region also recommended merging the Not-for-Profit and Rental Housing program reserves so municipalities may have more flexibility to use available capacity (up to 4,000 persons) for affordable housing projects.

York Region, along with local municipalities, continue to develop digital tools for real-time tracking of development and servicing allocations to better align growth with infrastructure availability.

Exploring temporary emergency housing facility options

The Housing and Homelessness Committee received a [presentation](#) outlining three options for [temporary emergency housing facilities](#) being used in the Greater Toronto Area and in Fredericton, New Brunswick, including cabins, modular trailers and tension fabric structures. The Region is exploring alternative options to support the growing need for emergency housing.

Increasing housing unaffordability is resulting in people staying longer in emergency housing. In 2024, 2,252 people were experiencing homelessness, up 35% from 1,868 in 2023.

As of October 2025, York Region has approximately 300 emergency and transitional housing beds and 110 seasonal shelter beds available. These beds are often at or near full capacity. In 2025, almost 900 people have been supported in finding and/or keeping housing.

York Region will continue to explore feasibility of temporary housing facilities, monitor facility projects across the province and work closely with provincial and federal governments to advocate for more longer-term housing solutions for people experiencing homelessness.

Toronto Pearson Annual Update

Regional Council received the [Toronto Pearson Annual Update](#), which highlighted strong passenger growth and increased airport activity over the past year. Representatives from Toronto Pearson International Airport and the Greater Toronto Airport Authority outlined major capital and modernization projects designed to enhance capacity, improve terminal efficiency and support long-term service needs.

The update emphasized Pearson's collaboration with municipal partners on planning, noise management and environmental initiatives, including work to reduce emissions and continued community engagement. Representatives noted strategic investments and partnerships remain essential as the airport prepares for future growth across the Greater Toronto Area.

Pearson International Airport remains a significant economic driver for York Region, supporting jobs, supply chains and global connectivity for local businesses and residents.

York Region Commissioner Lisa Gonsalves Receives Provincial Honour

Regional Council congratulated Community and Health Services Commissioner Lisa Gonsalves on receiving the [Lieutenant Governor's Medal of Distinction in Public Administration](#), Ontario's highest honour for public servants. Lisa's leadership across housing, public health, seniors' services, emergency response, inclusion and community well-being has made a lasting impact on the community.

Reflecting on a Year of Progress

At its final meeting of 2025, Regional Council reflected on a year marked by progress, collaboration and service to the community. Key achievements included celebrating the [25th anniversary of York Region Paramedic Services](#), establishing the [Housing and Homelessness Committee](#) and advancing the [Yonge North Subway Extension](#). Families benefited from expanded access to the [Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care Program](#) and staff navigated significant challenges such as [tariff implications](#) and the discontinuation of [Automated Speed Enforcement](#). Council also approved [the \\$5.2-billion 2026 Budget](#), ensuring sustainable funding for essential regional services and infrastructure.

Council extended its appreciation to staff and reaffirmed its commitment to building a stronger, safer and more vibrant York Region.

Holiday Greetings

Regional Council closed its December 11, 2025, meeting with warm wishes for the holiday season, recognizing December as a time of celebration across many cultures and traditions. Council extended heartfelt hopes for peace, joy and connection to staff, Council members and residents, and offered best wishes for 2026. Looking ahead, Council expressed its commitment to continuing the important work of supporting a vibrant, sustainable and inclusive York Region in the year to come.

December Observances

Regional Council recognized the following observances in December 2025:

- [Christian Heritage Month](#)
 - [World AIDS Day](#) – December 1, 2025
 - [International Day of Persons with Disabilities](#) – December 3, 2025
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Next meeting of York Regional Council

The next Meeting of York Regional Council will be held on Thursday, January 29, 2025, at 9 a.m. in the York Region Administrative Centre Council Chambers, located at 17250 Yonge Street in the Town of Newmarket. The Council 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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