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Town of Aurora
Memorandum
Mayor's Office

Re: York Regional Council Highlights of February 26, 2026
To: Members of Council
From: Mayor Mrakas
Date: March 10, 2026

Recommendation

1. That the York Regional Council Highlights of February 26, 2026, be received for information.

Attachments

1. York Regional Council Highlights of February 26, 2026

COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



Tuesday, March 3, 2026

York Regional Council – Thursday, February 26, 2026

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

York Region Police Chief Jim MacSween announces retirement

York Regional Council extended appreciation and thanks to York Regional Police Chief Jim MacSween, who will [retire](#) on June 26, 2026, after 37 years of dedicated service, including six as Chief.

Since taking the role in May 2020, Chief MacSween has led York Regional Police through extraordinary challenges, including the COVID-19 pandemic, while modernizing services to meet the needs of a growing York Region. He has strengthened community trust, championed the well-being of members and fostered a people-first culture.

Chairman Jolliffe and Regional Council congratulated Chief MacSween on his remarkable career and extended best wishes for continued health, happiness and success in retirement.

York Region tables proposed 2026 Development Charges Bylaw update to support future growth

Regional Council [received an update](#) on two proposed development charges bylaws, the 2026 Region-wide Development Charges Background Study and Bylaw and the 2026 Nobleton Area-Specific Wastewater Development Charges Background Study and Bylaw.

This update outlined growth supported by the bylaws to 2051, required infrastructure costs and new development charges (DC) rates. The update also met the public meeting requirement under the *Development Charges Act, 1997*, beginning a minimum 60-day public consultation process during which feedback on the proposed bylaws can be submitted for consideration.

The Region's current [DC Bylaw](#) is set to expire in June 2027. Since the current bylaw came into effect in June 2022, the Province of Ontario has introduced several pieces of legislation that have driven the need for additional or accelerated infrastructure. In December 2023, Regional Council directed an advanced update of the Region's Development Charges Bylaw to help support funding challenges associated with municipal housing targets.

Regional Council will consider approval of the proposed Region-Wide and Area-Specific DC bylaws on Thursday, May 21, 2026.

More information is available at york.ca/DevelopmentCharges

Regional Council calls for fair and consistent blue box recycling across Ontario

Regional Council passed a [resolution](#) calling on the Province of Ontario to ensure fair, consistent and equitable recycling collection service levels under the Blue Box Extended Producer Responsibility framework. Under the new system, municipalities in York Region and across Ontario have experienced inconsistencies in collection frequency, accepted materials, missed-collection recovery and customer service standards. The resolution urges the Province to establish and enforce clear, province-wide standards and require prompt action from Circular Materials Ontario to address service inequities impacting York Region residents.

York Region remains committed to work with Province to address poverty and impacts on communities

Regional Council received an update on York Region's [submission](#) to the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services in support of Ontario's assessment of their current poverty reduction strategy and development of a new strategy.

The submission included information about Regional Council-approved programs, population trends, insights, current pressures and recommendations. The submission calls on the Province to take decisive action in the following areas:

- Strengthen income supports through living wage and basic income policies, increasing Ontario Works rates and making the Canada-Ontario Housing Benefit a permanent program
- Provide increased and sustainable funding for programs and services keeping pace with population growth and inflation
- Increase municipal financial resilience by covering revenue shortfalls from *Development Charges Act, 1997* changes
- Invest in community partners to build capacity and reinforce social infrastructure as essential collaborators in meeting resident needs

York Region will continue working with the Province and community partners to address the root causes of poverty and its impacts on communities.

Transfer of Yonge Street Watermain to Town of Aurora

Regional Council [authorized transferring ownership](#) of the Yonge Street Watermain to the Town of Aurora and paying \$114,000 to the Town for replacement of the existing valve chamber on Industrial Parkway South. Under the [Water and Wastewater Infrastructure, Regional Jurisdiction Policy \(2019\)](#), the watermain meets the criteria for local town infrastructure.

The Region replaced and rehabilitated the watermain in 2024 to bring infrastructure to a good state of repair and ensure reliable water servicing.

York Region's [Asset Management Program](#) reviews legacy ownership arrangements with municipalities and brings those inconsistent with the policy to Regional Council for recommendation.

Constructed in 1983 between Ridge Road and Edward Street to provide bulk water to the Town of Aurora, the watermain now serves local distribution as surrounding lands have developed and private services connect directly to it.

York Region and York University strengthen partnership

On February 5, 2026, York Regional Council and York University signed a five-year [Memorandum of Understanding](#) to formalize the long-standing partnership between the organizations. The agreement supports innovation, entrepreneurship, experiential learning and workforce development, including initiatives tied to York University's new medical school in the City of Vaughan, for which Council previously approved \$25 million in capital funding.

The MOU also fosters collaboration with local municipalities, drives talent development and advances economic growth and community well-being across the Region. Regional Council acknowledged this partnership as a key step in building a stronger, more sustainable and inclusive York Region.

York Region receives EDOC Award of Excellence

Regional Council extended congratulations to the [Agriculture and Agri-Food Advisory Committee](#) and Regional staff for receiving the Economic Developers Council of Ontario's 2025 Award of Excellence. The award recognizes the [2024 - 2027 Agriculture and Agri-Food Sector Strategy](#), led by Township of King Councillor Avie Eek and Town of Georgina Regional Councillor Naomi Davison, e for its innovative, collaborative and forward-thinking approach to economic development.

Regional Council also acknowledged the vital collaboration with all nine local municipalities and key industry and community partners that made this achievement possible.

York Region celebrates local athletes at Milano Cortina 2026

Regional Council extended congratulations to the Canadian athletes who competed at the Milano Cortina 2026 Winter Olympics.

Team Canada brought home 21 medals, with [York Region proudly represented](#) on the podium in five events. Highlights include gold and bronze for freestyle skier Megan Oldham, silver medals in men's and women's hockey from Erin Ambrose, Laura Stacey, Sam Bennett, Jordan Binnington, Mitch Marner and Connor McDavid and a bronze from ice dancer Paul Poirier.

Their dedication, perseverance and sportsmanship inspired communities across York Region and beyond. These athletes demonstrated what is possible when talent meets opportunity, showing the power of hard work and determination on the world stage.

Regional Council also looks forward to cheering on Team Canada at the upcoming Paralympic Games beginning March 6, 2026.

February Observances

Regional Council recognized the following observances in February 2026:

- [Black History Month](#)
 - [White Cane Week](#) – February 2 - 6, 2026
 - [Family Day](#) – February 16, 2026
 - [Lunar New Year](#) – February 17, 2026
 - [Pink Shirt Day](#) – February 25, 2026
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Next meeting of York Regional Council

The next Meeting of York Regional Council will be held on Thursday, March 26, 2026, 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 1.29 million residents and 57,000 businesses with more than 624,000 employees. More information about York Region's key service areas is available at york.ca/RegionalServices

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