

# WYORKS

YORK REGION

TRANSPORTATION AND WORKS NEWSLETTER

## RAPID TRANSIT A REALITY!

Since our last edition, exciting things have been happening for the York Region Rapid Transit Plan (YRTP).

The Government of Canada and the Government of Ontario have both matched York Region's \$50 million allocation to rapid transit in the region.

The \$150 million overall contribution will fund the first phase of rapid transit in fall 2004 - the Quick Start program.

Quick Start includes transit priority projects in four key corridors along Yonge St. and Highway 7, including: new transit stations, road improvements, purchasing rapid transit vehicles and installing a high tech fare system.



## YRT ASSUMES GO TRANSIT ROUTES

Beginning August 29, 2003, York Region Transit (YRT) will assume responsibility for the delivery of the Yonge "C" and Bayview services currently operated by GO Transit.

The transition will be seamless. Schedules and fares will remain the same, but buses will be converted to YRT colours.

## TRY THE YRT WONDERBUS!

"Wonderbus" is an express service to Paramount Canada's Wonderland, which operates on weekends and holidays, using Highway 400, Highway 407 and Highway 9.

Services will stop at designated locations in York Region. A new family rate of \$7.00 is available on this service.

For service information, visit  
[www.yorkregiontransit.com](http://www.yorkregiontransit.com)  
or call 1-866-MOVE YRT.



**Inside!**

Stay 'n' Play!  
Do your bit to help York Region  
businesses recovering from SARS!

## WATER RESTRICTIONS

In the event of prolonged hot, dry conditions, York Region's municipalities impose water restrictions (or bans), based on water levels monitored by Regional staff. The municipalities enforce restrictions, and can extend them at their discretion.

In 2002, the Region and the municipalities jointly agreed upon water restriction protocols. Some differences exist, but most municipalities have harmonized their by-laws to match these criteria:

A **Stage 1 Advisory** requests all persons refrain from using municipal water from a hose, pipe, sprinkler or permanent irrigation system for the purposes of watering lawns or gardens, washing vehicles, sidewalks or driveways, and filling or topping up swimming pools.

A **Stage 2 Ban** states no person shall use municipal water from a hose, pipe, sprinkler or permanent irrigation system for the purposes of watering lawns or gardens, washing vehicles, sidewalks or driveways, and filling or topping up swimming pools.

Should a water restriction be called, York Region will issue releases to the municipalities and media to inform the public. Information will also be available on the York Region Web site.

For more on enforcement and exemptions, please contact your local municipality. (See back page).

York Region's drinking water meets high quality standards set by the Ontario Ministry of Environment (MOE).

Water Quality and Compliance Reports are available for download at the York Region Web site. Click on "Departments", "Transportation and Works", "Water and Wastewater" at [www.region.york.on.ca](http://www.region.york.on.ca)

## TIPS TO REDUCE WATER USE

- Refrain from heavy lawn watering. Lawns only require 2.5 cm (depth of a tuna can) of water per week.
- To prevent evaporation, water your lawn late in the evening or early in the morning.
- When cutting your lawn, leave the grass at least 8 cm (3 inches) long to provide shade for the roots.
- Leave grass clippings on the lawn to increase organic matter. It is 80 per cent water and readily decomposes.
- If you need to wash your car, use a bucket and sponge and rinse quickly using a spray nozzle. Better still, go to a car wash - it's more environmentally friendly.
- Don't overfill pools. Fill to 15 to 20 cm (7 to 8 inches) from the top. Cover to prevent evaporation.
- Never leave a hose running. It can waste up to 180 litres (40 gallons) of water in just five minutes.
- Repair leaks in outdoor faucets, pipes and hoses.



Children from schools across York Region learn about water conservation at the annual York Children's Water Festival.

## BALES DRIVE GOES FORWARD

York Regional Council has reached an agreement with Miller Paving Limited for the design and construction of a material recovery facility (MRF), northern transfer station, weigh scales and associated works at the Bales Drive property in East Gwillimbury.

The MRF will process 20 tonnes of mixed blue box material per hour and allow new items to be added to the blue box.

The waste transfer station will process 300 tonnes per day of residual garbage and source separated organics (such as kitchen waste).

The \$26 million facility will allow more materials to be processed outside of the regular waste stream, helping the Region achieve its target of a 50 per cent diversion rate from landfills.

The building phase is estimated to take just under one year. With approvals taking place this summer, construction on the facility is anticipated to start as early as October 1st.

## SOURCING NEW TECHNOLOGIES

In an effort to remove as much material as possible from the waste stream and reduce dependency on landfills, York Region is issuing a Request for Expressions of Interest (REOI) to companies that offer new technologies for managing waste.

The REOI will take place this summer, with options presented to York Regional Council in September.

York Region will consider one or more solutions, including technology-based pilot projects, to establish a long-term solution to waste management.

As part of this process, the Region will be participating in a forum with other municipalities in the Greater Toronto Area, to work together and implement some of the long-term solutions recently discussed by the Provincial Smart Growth Panel.

This fall, York Region will be introducing a one-year reuse pilot project at the Solid Waste Transfer Station in Georgina.

The reuse centre will allow York Region residents to drop off unwanted goods for re-distribution to others.

A complete list of acceptable materials will be established prior to the fall opening.



An artist's conception of the Bales Drive Material Recovery Facility and Transfer Station in East Gwillimbury.

## CONSERVING OUR FORESTS

With changes to the Municipal Act, York Region is considering updating its Tree By-law to a Forest Conservation By-law. Items under consideration include:

**Harmonization with local municipalities** - York Region would be responsible for areas over one hectare (over 98 percent of the region's forest cover), leaving smaller areas to the local municipalities.

**Preventing unauthorized tree clearing** - The new By-law provides the opportunity for a notification process. Those who wish to clear trees would have to give formal notification. Stop work orders could also be issued to prevent non-permitted clearing.

**Better enforcement** - In addition to fines associated with charges, a Forest Conservation By-law provides for ticketing of offenses and associated fines.

**Making the application process easier** - In certain circumstances, permits could be issued instead of an application process to York Regional Council.

The objective of a potential new By-law is to conserve and protect the natural environment. Tree by-laws are one of many tools to achieve this as the Region strives to increase green space to 25 per cent and secure a Green York Region.

The proposed Regional Forest Conservation By-law is scheduled to be sent to York Regional Council in autumn or winter 2003 for approval.



The York Regional Forest, pictured above, plays host to a number of events throughout the year.

## FALL FOREST FESTIVAL

**Come discover the beauty and excitement of the York Regional Forest at the Fall Forest Festival!**

**When:** Saturday September 20, 2003

**Where:** York Regional Forest, North Tract  
17054 Hwy. 48 (south of Davis Drive)

- Take a ride on a horse drawn wagon
- Howl along with a wolf researcher
- Discover how animals and plants get ready for winter
- Learn about hunter safety from the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters, and more!

Staff at the York Regional Forest host a variety of public events, including guided walks that take place:

- July 19th at the Mitchell Tract
- August 16th at the Bendor and Graves Tract
- October 18th at the Headquarters Hollidge Tract
- November 15th at the Headquarters Hollidge Tract
- December 20th at the Headquarters Hollidge Tract

For information please call (905) 895-1200 ext. 5274.

FOR INFORMATION ON FOREST EVENTS - (905) 895-1200 EXT. 5274

## 16TH AVENUE RAMP OPEN

On June 18th, politicians from the Government of Ontario, York Region, Richmond Hill and Markham met to officially open the newly constructed ramps at 16th Avenue, to and from the north, at Highway 404.

The interchange project started three years ago, when York Region agreed to partner with the Province to help move construction forward.

The Region agreed to finance \$2 million of the overall \$4.5 million cost, and after negotiations with the Province concluded, the project was completed in less than a year.

This interchange project is one of many undertaken by the Region - with and without Provincial and municipal partners - to ensure that people and goods can move efficiently through the region.



Demonstrating excellence in construction workmanship, York Region staff won first prize at the annual "York Municipalities National Public Works Week Challenge" on May 18-24 in Richmond Hill.

## WORKING FOR YOU

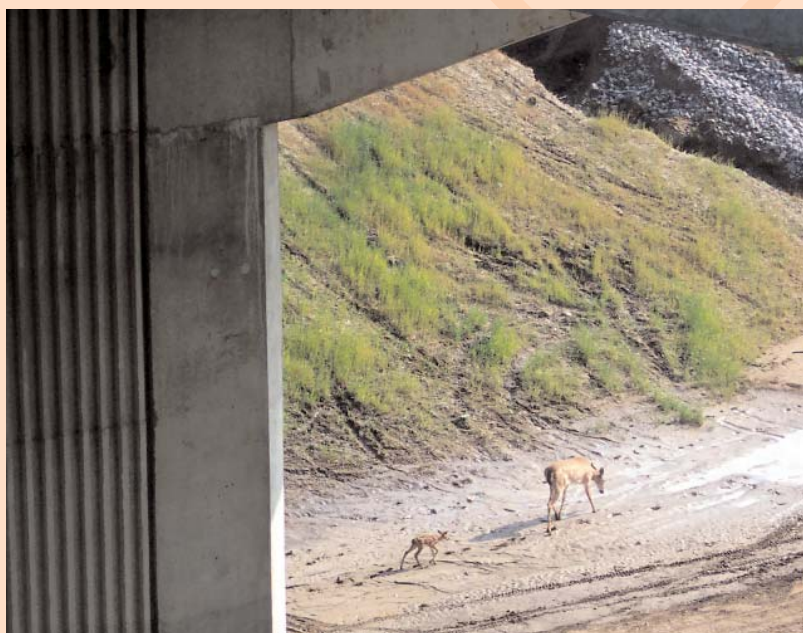
York Region's Transportation Master Plan calls for road improvements in key areas to accommodate the rapid growth experienced by the community.

### Here are a few projects currently underway:

- Bathurst Street/Green Lane from Hwy. 9 - Yonge St.
- Rutherford Rd. widening - Weston Rd. to east of Hwy. 27
- Markham Bypass completion

### Other projects slated for completion in 2003:

- Widening Dufferin St. from Rutherford Rd. to Major Mackenzie Dr.
- Elgin Mills Rd. widening/interchange improvements
- St. John's Sideroad widening from Yonge St. to Bayview Ave.



Deer cross safely under the bridge that York Region constructed over the dry valley on Bayview Avenue north of Stouffville Road. The Region puts a strong emphasis on the environment in its construction projects.

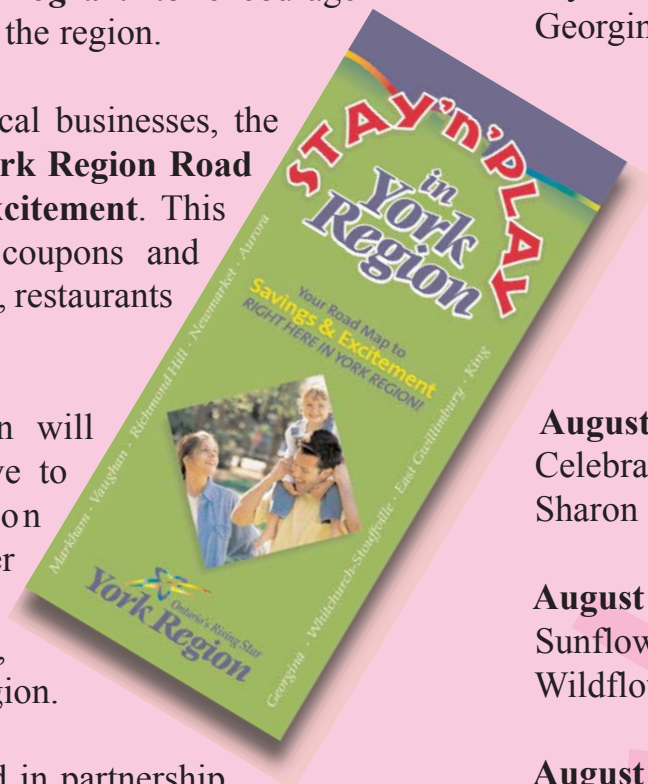
**STAY AND PLAY IN YORK REGION**

York Region is partnering with local businesses as part of its *SARS Recovery Program* to encourage people to Stay 'n' Play in the region.

In an effort to bolster local businesses, the Region has issued the **York Region Road Map to Savings and Excitement**. This fold out map contains coupons and special offers from retailers, restaurants and attractions.

A promotional campaign will complement this initiative to encourage York Region residents, as well as Greater Toronto Area and Ontario consumers to dine, shop, stay and play in York Region.

Copies will be distributed in partnership with the York Region Newspaper Group on July 12th and 13th in the Era Banner, Liberal, Vaughan Citizen, Markham Economist & Sun, Stouffville Tribune and Stouffville Sun. If you did not receive a copy, please call (905) 883-3442 or 1-888-448-0000.



**FUN FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY**

**July 15 - August 25**

My Creative Nature  
Georgina Arts Centre and Gallery

**July 19**

Fiddle and Step Dance Festival  
Newmarket

**August 1 - 4**

Woodbridge Italian Festival

**August 9 - 10**

Celebration of the Arts  
Sharon Temple

**August 17**

Sunflower Celebration  
Wildflower Farm

**August 22 - 24**

Eaglewood Folk Festival  
Pefferlaw

**September 6**

Kleinburg Binder Twine Festival

**September 6**

Kettleby Fair

**RIDE FOR FREE ON YRT!**

As a part of Stay 'n' Play, York Region Transit (YRT) will be offering free service on two long weekends this summer (August 2-4 and August 30-September 1).

Take transit to one of the many attractions York Region offers. Just show your Stay 'n' Play card (included in the York Region Road Map to Savings and Excitement) to the driver, and enjoy the ride!

## YOUR QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS

**I enjoy York Works, but I had a hard time reading some pages in the last edition. I found the colour on colour combinations particularly difficult. Can you do something to make York Works more readable?**

Yes we can. In response to reader feedback, we have changed the York Works layout to be more readable. We faded the background colour of the inside pages and now use only black text on these backgrounds.

Also, each edition of York Works is now online as Adobe PDF files. Issues are available in colour and high-contrast black and white at [www.region.york.on.ca](http://www.region.york.on.ca) under “publications”.

**Is Red E. Fox from the Kids Zone a real mascot? If so, is he available to do appearances?**

Red E. Fox, the 9-1-1 for Kids mascot and host of the Kids Zone is a real character. He makes public appearances at schools and safety related public events. Unfortunately, as Red E. has numerous public appearance commitments throughout the year he is not available for private functions.

**What do you do at intersections where the traffic signals are off?**

If there is no police officer directing traffic, treat intersections as four-way stops where a power outage has turned traffic signals off. If cars arrive at the same time, the vehicle on the right has right of way.

Has York Works given you a better understanding of Transportation and Works and York Region activities?

Let us know. E-mail [yorkworks@region.york.on.ca](mailto:yorkworks@region.york.on.ca) or call (905) 830-4444 extension 1234.

**Last issue, you talked briefly about pedestrian signals. Could you explain them a bit more?**

Sure. We receive a lot of calls about types of pedestrian signals, how they work, and what the different symbols mean.

Here is a breakdown of the signals used by the Region:

**Traditional signals** have three symbols: a walking person indicates when you can cross; a halting hand indicates no crossing; and a flashing hand means that if you have not started walking, there is not enough time to cross.

**Pedestrian countdown signals**, mentioned last issue, are similar to the traditional signals, except that there is a digital display that counts down how much time you have to cross.

**Audible pedestrian signals** assist those with visual difficulties. A cuckoo sound indicates you can cross north/south; a chirping sound indicates your can cross east/west; and no sound means do not cross.

It is important to note that unless the pedestrian signal button is pressed, traffic signals will remain timed for cars, not pedestrians. Pressing and holding the pedestrian signal button for three seconds is necessary to change the timing of the various types of signals.



Pedestrian countdown signals like this one can be found in Newmarket and Aurora.



Regional Chair and  
CEO  
Bill Fisch



Mayor  
Tim Jones  
Aurora



Mayor  
James Young  
East Gwillimbury



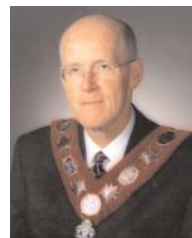
Mayor  
Jeffrey Holec  
Georgina



Regional Councillor  
Danny Wheeler  
Georgina



Mayor  
Margaret Black  
King



Mayor  
Donald Cousens  
Markham



Regional Councillor  
Frank Scarpitti  
Markham



Mayor  
Tom Taylor  
Newmarket



Regional Councillor  
Diane Humeniuk  
Newmarket



Mayor  
William F. Bell  
Richmond Hill



Regional Councillor  
Brenda Hogg  
Richmond Hill



Regional Councillor  
David Barrow  
Richmond Hill



Mayor  
Michael Di Biase  
Vaughan



Regional Councillor  
Joyce Frustaglio  
Vaughan



Regional Councillor  
Gino Rosati  
Vaughan



Mayor  
Wayne Emmerson  
Whitchurch-Stouffville



Regional Councillor  
Bill O'Donnell  
Markham

## YORK REGION COUNCIL CONTACT INFORMATION

Town of Aurora  
Town of East Gwillimbury  
Town of Georgina  
Township of King  
Town of Markham  
Town of Newmarket  
Town of Richmond Hill  
City of Vaughan  
Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville

Regional Municipality of York

(905) 727-1375  
(905) 478-4282  
(905) 476-4301  
(905) 833-5321  
(905) 477-7000  
(905) 895-5193  
(905) 771-8800  
(905) 832-2281  
(905) 640-1900

(905) 830-4444  
1-877-464-9675



Regional Councillor  
Gordon Landon  
Markham



Regional Councillor  
Tony Wong  
Markham

### New at The Kids Zone

Thanks for all your e-mail suggestions for the Kids Zone.

T. Marinzal was the winner of the Kids Zone prize pack - a baseball cap, t-shirt and a \$50 gift certificate from Mastermind Toys.

One e-mail mentioned having safety information for kids on the Kids Zone site. Well, you asked for it, so we put it online. Check it out at [www.region.york.on.ca/kidszone](http://www.region.york.on.ca/kidszone) More changes will be coming soon!



### Questions for York Region staff?

**General inquiries:** (905) 895-1231  
**Toll free:** 1-877-GO-4-YORK (464-9675)  
**e-mail:** [info@region.york.on.ca](mailto:info@region.york.on.ca)

**York Region Transit** (905) 762-2100  
**Toll free:** 1-866-MOVE YRT (668-3978)  
**e-mail:** [transitinfo@region.york.on.ca](mailto:transitinfo@region.york.on.ca)

**Trans. & Works:** (905) 895-1200  
**e-mail:** [twgeneral@region.york.on.ca](mailto:twgeneral@region.york.on.ca)