

FALL 2021

# YORK REGION MATTERS



*York Region*

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Celebrating with fully  
vaccinated family  
and friends

# P2

# YORK REGION MATTERS

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Chairman & CEO

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York Region's e-newsletter helps us connect with our residents. Subscribe at [york.ca/enews](http://york.ca/enews)

## MESSAGE FROM YORK REGION CHAIRMAN AND CEO

As we approach the end of 2021, we have many accomplishments to proudly look back on.

This time last year COVID-19 vaccines in Canada were not yet approved, and the end of the pandemic seemed very far off. One year later, more than 86% of York Region eligible residents have received two doses of vaccine and more than 88.5% have received their first dose.

Our residents over the age of 70, health care workers and those most at-risk are being offered an additional vaccine booster. Children age

5 to 11 are also now eligible to receive a COVID-19 vaccine.

By all appearances, we are seeing light at the end of the tunnel. Please, if you haven't already, do your part to help Ontario achieve a complete reopening by being fully vaccinated against this virus.

On behalf of York Regional Council, please accept my best wishes for a peaceful holiday season and a happy and very healthy 2022.



Wayne Emmerson



Wayne Emmerson  
York Region Chairman  
and CEO

## ON THE COVER



A great deal of planning occurs as the holidays grow closer, but thanks to the vaccination efforts over the past year, it looks like we will be able to celebrate with family and friends.

Vaccines remain the best protection against COVID-19. We are making great strides in protecting ourselves,

our loved ones and our communities. If you or a member of your family are eligible for a first, second or booster/third dose of a COVID-19 vaccine, view walk-in clinic options or book an appointment today at [york.ca/COVID19vaccine](http://york.ca/COVID19vaccine)

With colder weather comes the usual seasonal flu viruses in addition to COVID-19 and the highly transmittable Delta variant circulating in our communities. Be vigilant about your health and the health of others. Wash your hands frequently and wear a mask in public. If you feel ill, stay home.

When heading out this holiday season, proof of vaccination is required in many settings. Whether or not you agree with the public health measures in place, it's important we remain kind and respectful to our fellow community members, especially those who are following the mandates put in place; we need kindness more than ever right now.

Thank you for your ongoing efforts to keep our communities safe. Enjoy a safe and healthy holiday season!

## Tell us what you think

We always look for ways to enhance our publication and include information you are interested in.

For a chance to win a \$50 gift card, tell us what you think about this edition and what

you would like to see in the future at [york.ca/yorkregionmatters](http://york.ca/yorkregionmatters)





# Keeping your money local this holiday season

Businesses are an integral part of York Region communities and are the cornerstone of our local economy.

As we approach the holiday season of shopping and gift-giving, consider how the value of your dollar impacts your community when you shop local.

Here are a few benefits:

- Grows the local economy by recirculating money back into the community; about \$68 remains in the community for every \$100 spent at a local business
- Small businesses are large employers in our

communities and often account for a significant portion of jobs in our communities; buying local helps keep employment levels stable and provides more employment opportunities for our residents

- Local owners support local by contributing to local charities and fundraisers; local businesses have a vested interest in a better future for our communities

Please continue to support our local businesses while continuing to follow all public health measures. This includes wearing a proper-fitting face covering

or mask and following the rules set out by the business. Remember to be kind; your local establishments are working hard to stay afloat while keeping you and their employees safe.

For more information on how you can support local businesses in York Region, visit [york.ca/shoplocal](http://york.ca/shoplocal)

## Did you know?

Small businesses make up the largest share (about 84%) of all businesses in York Region and employ approximately 151,000 people, 10% of York Region's total population.



## York Region news delivered to your inbox

#YRMatters, York Region's electronic newsletter, delivers news and information about York Region programs and services right to your inbox every two weeks.

Keep up to date on what's happening across York Region and always be connected to what matters. Sign up today at [york.ca/enews](http://york.ca/enews)

## Connect virtually to the justice system

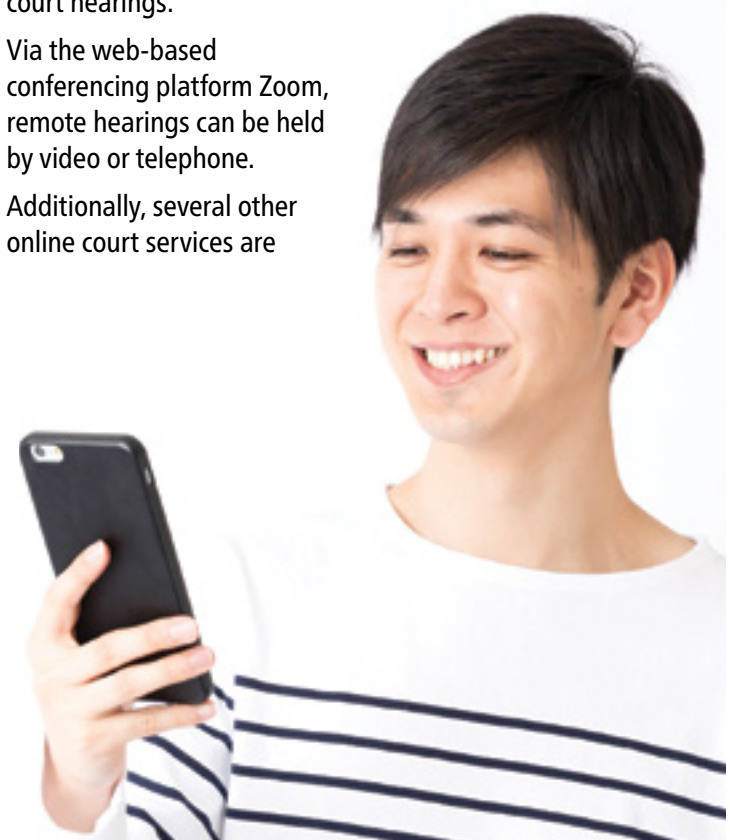
To maintain and enhance access to the justice system throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, York Region Provincial Offences Courts are now holding virtual court hearings.

now available, so you do not necessarily need to attend a court location in-person.

For more information or to access online services, please visit [york.ca/courts](http://york.ca/courts)

Via the web-based conferencing platform Zoom, remote hearings can be held by video or telephone.

Additionally, several other online court services are





# A waste-free guide to the holidays

1

## MAKE A LIST: CHECK IT TWICE

Lists help keep you focused and on track and can apply to gift giving, meal planning, grocery shopping or even just getting chores done around the house.

2

## GIVE THE GIFT OF TIME

Instead of a gift or card, regular calls or offering to run errands for those who need support can help them stay healthy and safe.



## GIVE AN EXPERIENCE

This could be virtual cooking classes, online language classes or a music or book subscription; you could also print a photo of your favourite memory or experience together!



4

## RETHINK 'USED'

Old can be new to a new owner; second-hand shopping is still going strong with sites and sellers available.



5

## SWAP AND SHARE

Do you have a one-time need for an appliance or dish? Why buy new if a friend or family member can share?



6

## REUSE AND REPURPOSE

Avoid buying gift tags and decorations by using what you already have; these can be made using greeting cards, ribbons and bows kept from previous years.



7

## SHOP LOCAL

Help support your local businesses and reduce how far your items have to travel.



8

## WRAP FAB

Use something reusable for wrapping, like a fun patterned fabric or a tea towel as part of the gift; try furoshiki, a Japanese practice of wrapping.



9

## LEAVE NO GOOD FOOD BEHIND

Plan well, waste less and freeze or pack up any extras to share with family and friends; learn more at [york.ca/goodfood](http://york.ca/goodfood)

10

## KNOW BEFORE YOU THROW

Before you recycle any gift wrap or packaging make sure it can go in the blue box

Explore other ways you can reduce more at [york.ca/SM4RTLiving](http://york.ca/SM4RTLiving)

York Region has wrapped up 10 tips to help you reduce your waste. So, fill your holidays with joy, not waste, by following these simple ideas.



# We're ready for your input!

York Region's Official Plan manages growth by guiding how land in our communities should be used, now and in the future. Following ongoing public engagement, an updated draft Region Official Plan is now available for review.

The draft is based on input we've received from Regional Council, the community, local municipalities, Indigenous communities and stakeholders. Now we would like your feedback on the policies in the draft plan.

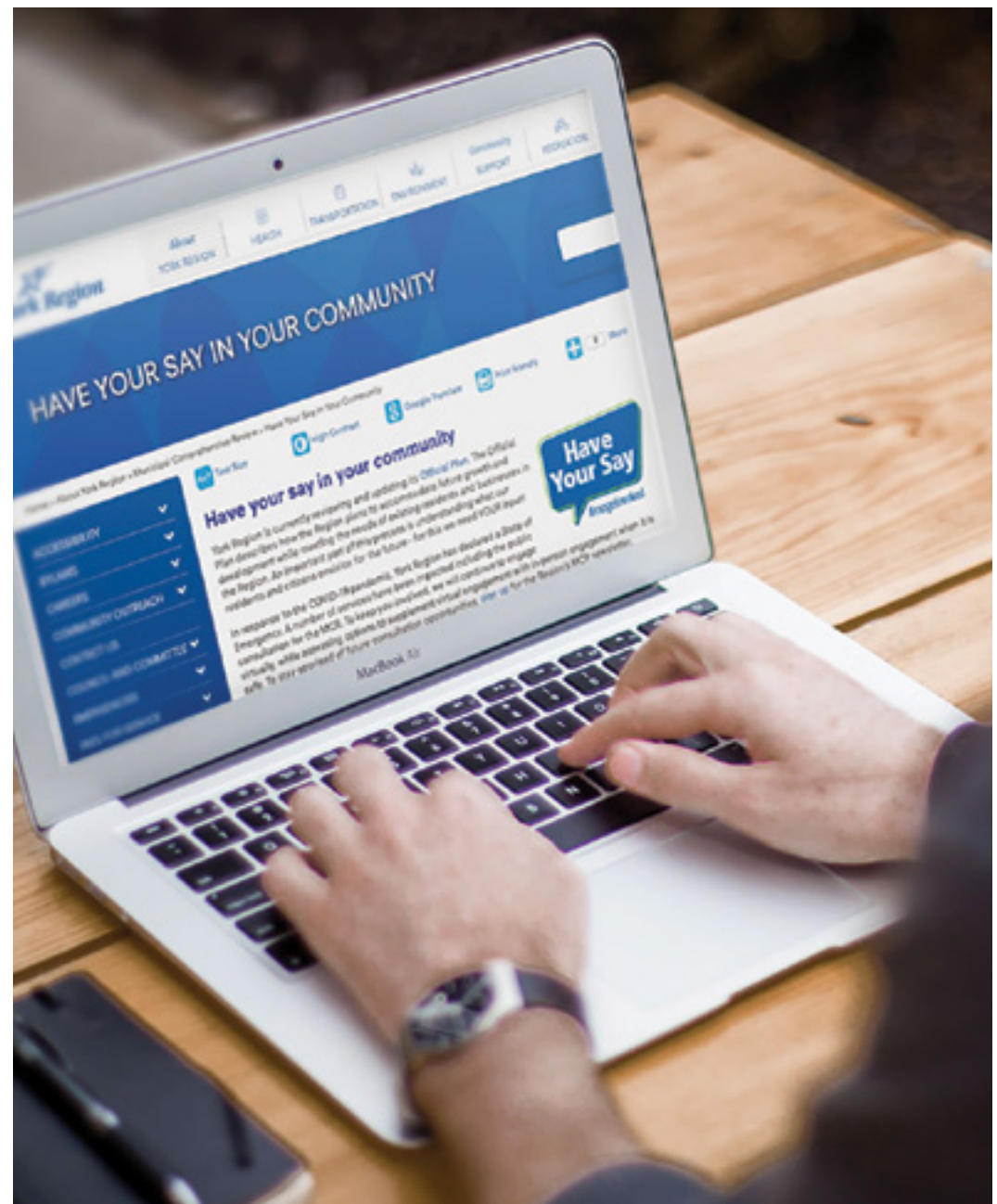
Since the last update in 2010, many provincial plans have been changed, resulting in the need to update the Regional Official Plan to align with revised provincial requirements, including planning for unprecedented growth for a population of 2 million people and 900,000 jobs in 2051.

## What's new?

- Directing more growth to lands surrounding transit stations or stops to align growth with transit infrastructure investments and ensure easy access to transit
- Promoting affordable housing choices through Regional targets for purpose-built rental units in each municipality
- Establishing Regional employment area boundaries for long-term protection of land for industrial, business, transportation and warehousing uses

## How to participate:

- Take the survey at [york.ca/haveyoursay](http://york.ca/haveyoursay)
- Join a virtual meeting in early 2022
- Email [futureyork@york.ca](mailto:futureyork@york.ca)
- Mail: York Region Administrative Centre Attention: Draft Regional Official Plan 17250 Yonge Street, Newmarket, ON L3Y 6Z1



# It starts with kids

Living through a pandemic has been difficult for everyone, especially children. Through a range of high-quality services and programs, York Region supports children and families to help kids have the best start in life.

Supports and services are available in-person, virtually, by phone or email or in partnership with community agencies.

## Programs include:

- Providing fee subsidy for eligible families to help with the cost of child care
- Recreation subsidies for eligible families to access programs in their communities
- Early Intervention Services to help children with special needs, their families and early learning and child care professionals develop skills and strategies to support growth and development at home and in child care
- Working with EarlyON Child and Family Centres to offer free programs to all parents, caregivers and children from birth to six years old

Call the Kids Line at 1-888-703-KIDS (5437) for more information or visit [york.ca/children](http://york.ca/children)







# Welcome back to YRT

For 20 years, York Region Transit (YRT) has taken travellers to the important places and people in their lives.

You can feel safe coming back to YRT. During the pandemic, we have increased the cleaning of all buses, vehicles and terminals, and implemented COVID-19 safety measures to protect everyone on board.

We are supporting communities by safely connecting people to businesses and front-line workers to essential jobs. Extra staff are on the road to help travellers and ensure there are enough buses to

accommodate riders. Learn more about our initiatives at [yrt.ca/LoveYourBus](https://yrt.ca/LoveYourBus)

YRT is happy to welcome back travellers from across the Greater Toronto and Hamilton (GTHA) area. We proudly work with our transit agency partners to ensure a seamless transit experience. YRT accepts fare transfers from neighbouring 905 GTHA transit agencies through the PRESTO card.

We continue to expand our Mobility On-Request service

which provides an efficient transit service in areas with lower transit demand. Visit [yrt.ca/MOR](https://yrt.ca/MOR) for details.

Plan your YRT trip at [yrt.ca](https://yrt.ca)

## Have your say!

York Region's Transportation Master Plan is reviewed every five years to ensure the changing needs of travellers and communities are met. Help York Region provide transportation options that fit your life. Visit [york.ca/TMP](https://york.ca/TMP)



# Safe travels begin by being prepared

York Region road crews and a fleet of 123 snow plows are ready to deliver the Region's winter maintenance program, including snow removal, sanding and salting.

Travellers can do their part to stay safe during colder months by adjusting driving habits to weather conditions. Slow down, allow for extra time, watch for pedestrians and leave space around large vehicles, including snow plows, buses and transport trucks.

The Region's large road network carries more than 2.6 million trips every day.

Stay updated on York Region's road conditions and transit services by:

- Viewing live camera footage of 285 intersections at [york.ca/traffic](https://york.ca/traffic)
- Checking snow plow updates on Twitter (@YorkRegionGovt)
- Using the York Region Transit app for real-time service updates and following Twitter using #RiderAlert

Walking or taking transit? Wear visible and warm clothing, stand a safe distance from the road and plan your trip in advance.

Visit [york.ca/roads](https://york.ca/roads) for information.

# Where do your water dollars go?

From its source, water is collected, treated, pumped, stored, continuously tested and monitored – all before reaching your tap. When you pay for water, you are covering the cost of each step it takes to deliver clean, safe drinking water to your home and for the collection and treatment of your wastewater.

Your water dollars go towards protecting our water sources, testing and monitoring your water quality, repairing and maintaining our pipes and sewers and so much more.

We all play a vital role in maintaining a safe, reliable and resilient water and wastewater system now and for future generations. Minimize your water footprint by:

- Turning off the tap while you brush your teeth – this can save up to 16 litres of water each time
- Keeping a cold jug of water in the fridge or use a few ice cubes to cool your water instead of running the tap until the water is cold

- Only running the dishwasher and washing machine with a full load
- Conducting a whole home leak test to check for large or several small leaks; for example, a leaking toilet can waste up to 200,000 litres of water per year but can go almost unnoticed

## Did you know?

One litre of tap water costs about \$0.01. One litre of bottled water costs about \$1.50, plus the cost to dispose the bottle. Learn more about water at [york.ca/wateris](http://york.ca/wateris)



## Spending \$1 on water gets you:



**1** plastic bottle of water

OR



**630** bottles of tap water