



SUMMER 2020

YORK REGION MATTERS

AURORA | EAST GWILLIMBURY | GEORGINA | KING | MARKHAM | NEWMARKET | RICHMOND HILL | VAUGHAN | WHITCHURCH-STOUFFVILLE

Everyone has one more thing to remember when leaving the house



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 from a business in your community, tell us what you think about this edition and what you would like to see in the future at york.ca/yorkregionmatters

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York Region's e-newsletter helps us connect with our residents.

Subscribe at york.ca/enews



We continue to be in uncertain times, but thanks to everyone's continued efforts we are working to manage the effects of COVID-19 in our communities.

Residents, businesses, community agencies, the health-care sector and all levels of government have pulled together in ways never before seen to help stop the spread of COVID-19. Your efforts to stay at home, wear a mask or face covering and physical distance has brought us to Stage 3.

As part of Stage 3 re-opening:

- Indoor gathering limits are increased to a maximum of 50 people
- Outdoor gathering limits are increased to a maximum of 100 people
- Gathering limits are subject to physical distancing requirements

Public gathering limits apply to indoor and outdoor events, such as community events, concerts, live shows, festivals, conferences, sports and recreational fitness activities, fundraisers, fairs, festivals and open houses. A 2-metre distance must still be maintained at such events.

While we make strides towards recovery, we are still far from a vaccine. Continued diligence and patience is needed to protect ourselves and each other.

Good hand hygiene and physical distancing of 2 metres or more between yourself and those outside your social circle is essential to preventing the transmission of COVID-19. To further help stop the spread of the virus, York Regional Council has endorsed an [Instruction](#) from Medical Officer of Health Dr. Karim Kurji requiring operators of indoor retail establishments and organizations to have a policy in place

prohibiting persons from entering premises of the establishment if the person is not wearing a mask or face covering, subject to appropriate exemptions. Masks and face coverings are also required in common areas of condominium buildings, apartment buildings and other multi-residential buildings. More information on mandatory masks is available at york.ca/mandatorymasks

Remember to wash your hands often with soap and water for 20 seconds. If that's unavailable, use hand sanitizer.

Recognize the symptoms of COVID-19. If you're feeling ill, seek assessment at one of three COVID-19 Assessment Centres located in York Region: Mackenzie Health, Markham Stouffville Hospital and Southlake Regional Health Centre.

Please visit york.ca/covid19 for the most up-to-date and trusted information on COVID-19.

Connect with us at:

yrmatters@york.ca

1-877-464-9675

york.ca



Green has never looked so good - electric buses now in service



York Region Transit (YRT) is driving towards a greener way to travel with the purchase of six battery electric buses servicing routes 55 Davis and 44 Bristol in the Town of Newmarket.

As a trial program, these electric buses will provide a better understanding how YRT can move towards electrifying the transit fleet

Benefits include:

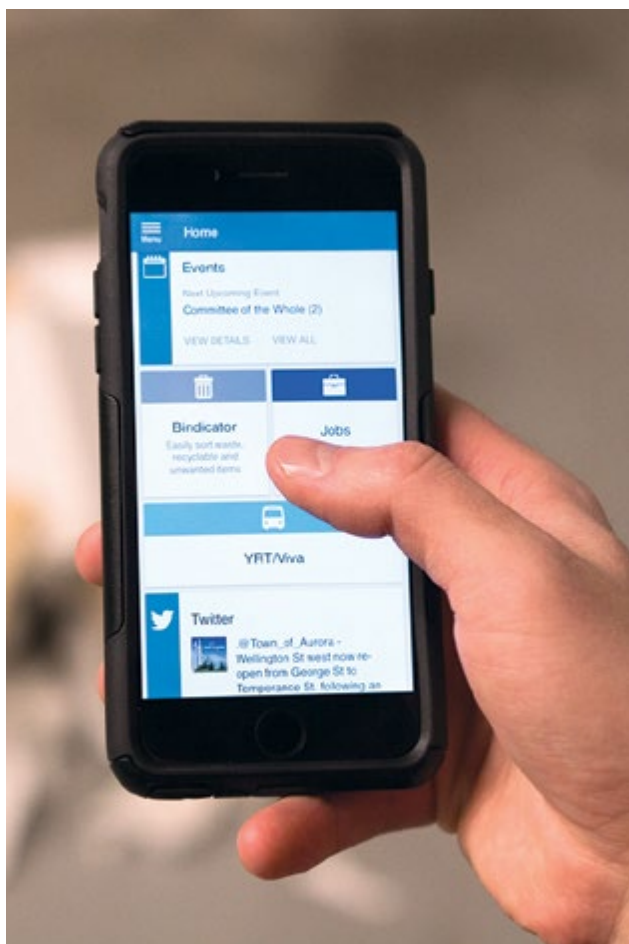
- Zero exhaust, making them neighbourhood-friendly
- State-of-the-art design with comfortable seating
- Quiet operation with a significant reduction in noise and vibration
- Lower vehicle maintenance and fuel costs

The Federal Government has funded a portion of the charging station located at the Newmarket Terminal.

Over the next five years York Regional Council has committed to \$14 million in energy conservation initiatives. Strategies to reduce corporate emissions focus on transit, buildings, non-transit fleets and water and wastewater processes. Electrification of the transit fleet is one of many ways York Region is working towards reducing its carbon footprint and reaching the goal of producing zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2051.

For more information about YRT visit yrt.ca

Connect with us, anytime, anywhere through the York Region mobile app



Features of the app include:

- **News:** Stay connected to the latest news from York Region
- **Report a Problem:** Easily report problems on Regional roads, complete with location coordinates and the option to include a photo
- **YRT/Viva:** Connect to YRT/Viva's mobile app
- **Events:** Hear about York Region events and set a reminder
- **Bindicator:** A tool to help you determine how to sort your waste or where to take recyclable or unwanted items
- **Jobs:** Find York Region's latest job postings and sign up for alerts
- **Facebook and Twitter:** View the latest York Region posts, even if you don't have an account
- **Contact:** Find contact information for York Region and simply tap to call or get directions

Download on the App Store or get it on Google Play.



Feeling overwhelmed with parenting?

York Region Public Health can help



Being a new parent is tough at the best of times. Doing it while trying to navigate a pandemic adds a whole new layer of stress.

We are here to help. Talk or chat live with a York Region registered nurse. Ask questions about feeding, caring for your baby and coping as a new parent confidentially at york.ca/nursechat or call 1-800-361-5653 and press 2.

Transforming travel in York Region

The first phase of York Region's rapid transit plan is more than 80% complete. Over the past several months, 15 more kilometres of rapidway — dedicated bus lanes — opened for service in Vaughan, Richmond Hill and Newmarket. This provides faster transit options for customers by avoiding traffic along some of York Region's busiest streets.

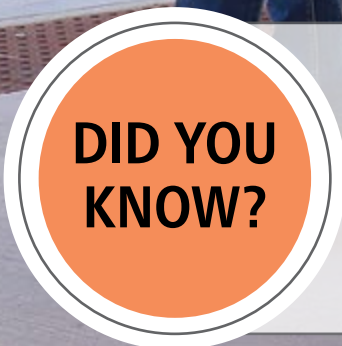
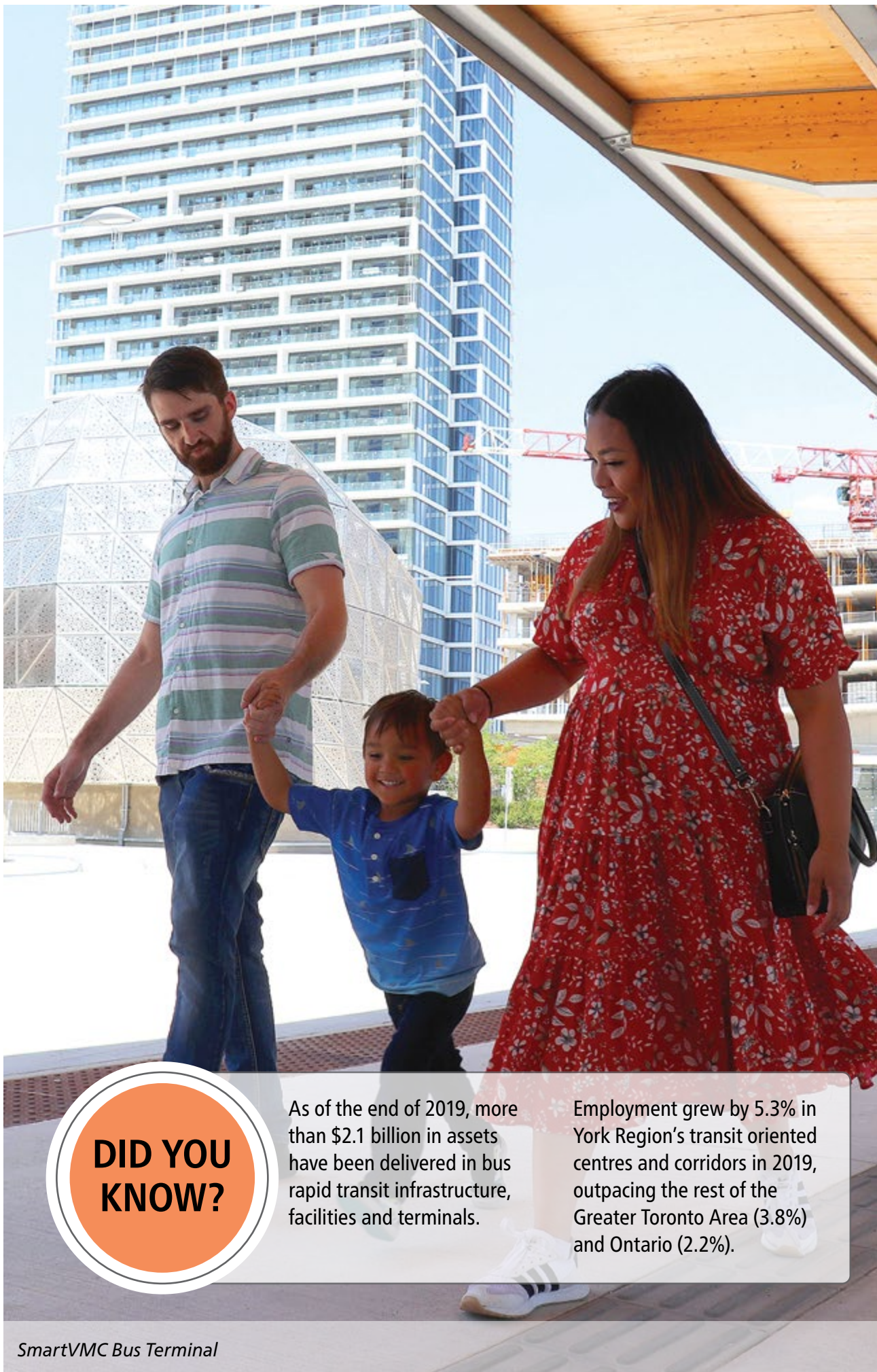
Rapidway projects include upgraded utilities and infrastructure, tree-lined sidewalks and bike lanes. In Vaughan, there's a new multi-use path separated from traffic, bringing pedestrians and cyclists away from the outside of the bridge over Highway 400.

The SmartVMC Bus Terminal opened last fall, adding a key transit connection point to Vaughan Metropolitan Centre's transportation hub. This bright, welcoming terminal connects people through a pedestrian tunnel to Viva buses and York Region's first subway extension to Highway 7.

More connections are coming with the Cornell Bus Terminal opening for service in Markham and 6.5 kilometres of rapidway to open along Yonge Street in Richmond Hill by December 2020.

The next phase of rapid transit includes adding the Yonge Subway Extension and more Bus Rapid Transit to complete the rapidway network. The new subway will provide the missing link to travel in the Greater Toronto Area, bringing more than 88,000 new residents and 60,000 new jobs along the subway extension corridor. Infrastructure investment is an essential part of any stimulus plan and securing funding for infrastructure projects will attract more businesses, jobs and residents and shape our future with assets needed for generations to come.

Learn more at vivanext.com



As of the end of 2019, more than \$2.1 billion in assets have been delivered in bus rapid transit infrastructure, facilities and terminals.

Employment grew by 5.3% in York Region's transit oriented centres and corridors in 2019, outpacing the rest of the Greater Toronto Area (3.8%) and Ontario (2.2%).

SmartVMC Bus Terminal



#spiritofyr

DEDICATED

COMMITTED

COURAGEOUS

CARING



York Region residents and front-line workers are turning their lives upside down to help reduce the spread of COVID-19. It's no surprise at all we are meeting the challenge and are showing the true #SpiritofYR.

Across York Region, residents and business owners continue to answer the calls for assistance. Whether it is delivering groceries to those unable to leave their homes or donating critical personal protection equipment to front-line workers, the #SpiritofYR shines through.



THANK YOU!

York Regional Council goes online

On March 19, 2020, the Ontario government passed legislation to give municipal councils the flexibility to continue operations while maintaining physical distancing.

In a special meeting of York Regional Council held on Thursday, April 2, 2020, Regional Council amended Procedure Bylaw 2018-59 to permit electronic participation in meetings during a declared emergency. Meetings remain online until further notice. Watch at york.ca/live



Bag half full

Realizing there was an entire population unable to shop or pick up groceries for themselves, Bag Half Full stepped up to meet the demand.

Bag Half Full is a non-profit organization working to bridge the gap of accessibility for those who need it most during COVID-19. It provides free grocery shopping and delivery services for vulnerable residents in the City of Vaughan and City of Richmond Hill.



Richmond Hill retirement residence gives thanks



How do you convey thanks to a team of professionals working around-the-clock to keep our communities safe? That was the question residents of Richmond Hill Retirement Residence put to local henna artist Attiya Fazal.

Now, two doors of their home have a giant love letter to essential workers, reminding them of their value to everyone they keep safe.

Contact tracing

When someone tests positive for COVID-19 York Region Public Health steps in to start contact tracing. It's our most effective tool to slow the spread of COVID-19 by helping identify the close contacts or ring of people around an infected case. In turn, we are preventing these people from passing on the virus to others around them. It's time consuming and meticulous work – and it's helping keep our residents and businesses safe.

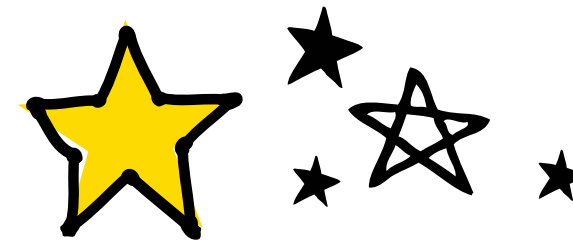
Champion Swimming and Aurora Ducks Swimming Club Inc.

Champion Swimming and Aurora Ducks Swimming Club Inc. in the Town of Aurora partnered with Makerwiz to create and donate 100 face shields to our dedicated front-line staff and health care workers.

The face shields were delivered to York Region Paramedic Services and donated directly to front-line staff and health care workers.

Dressed for success

What do some York Region staff do after working a full shift? They start sewing to provide front-line medical staff with scrub caps and face coverings. With hundreds of caps and face coverings sewn, work continues to ensure those in need are outfitted in style.



Willow Springs Winery

With a 50-year history in York Region, Willow Springs Winery values the health and safety of the community. When medical supplies were running in short supply, the Willow Springs Winery family stepped up to donate 50,000 nitrile medical gloves. Their goal was to make sure these important pieces of personal protective equipment would make it right into the hands of health-care workers on the front lines to help protect and keep them safe.



COVID-19 has truly shown us not all heroes wear capes.



Every day, we work to keep our long-term care residents safe.

Thank you to every member of our front-line staff for ensuring the health and safety of our most vulnerable residents.

York Regional Forests are open with strict rules to keep you safe

To keep you and other forest users safe, the following rules are in place at the York Regional Forest:

- All dogs must be leashed at all times
 - Wear a 2-layer cloth mask where physical distancing of at least 2 metres on the tracts and common parking areas is a challenge
 - Do not litter – this includes garbage, personal protective equipment and pet waste
 - Please be kind and act responsibly
- Staff continue to monitor the trails and remind people of the rules.

The York Regional Forest is open to the public 365 days per year with no cost to enter. The York Regional Forest is made up of 2,300 hectares of protected land located in different parts of the Region with 18 properties and more than 120 kilometres of trail available to the public.

Visit york.ca/yrf for a full list of forest tracts.



Waste tips to help stop the spread of COVID-19

You can protect your health and keep your family safe by properly handling waste in your home and in the community. Let's work together to reduce potential risks and further spread of COVID-19.

Handle waste properly in your home

- Throw used tissues, latex gloves, wipes and masks in a wastebasket lined with a plastic bag; do not place these items in with your blue box or green bin
- Tie all your waste bags securely and put out with your regular trash
- Wash your hands with soap and water after throwing those items away, as well as before and after placing your bins at the curb
- If you have tested positive for COVID-19 place all disposable items that have come into contact with your mouth, nose or eyes into the garbage – this includes recyclables such as plastic water bottles, pop cans or milk cartons or compostables such as facial tissue or paper napkins

When setting your waste out at the curb on collection day, please ensure all garbage and green bin materials are bagged and tied securely for the health and safety of the collection workers. If loose materials are in your garbage cans or green bins, the bins may be left behind.

Do not litter

When out in the community please be respectful of others and do not litter. Place used gloves, masks and wipes in a trash can.

Littering these materials on the ground is unacceptable and poses a risk to you, your community and the environment.

Picking up litter in these unprecedented times should be done with caution. If you choose to pick up litter, please wear puncture-proof gloves and immediately wash your hands with soap and water for 20 seconds or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if you can't wash right away.

**DO NOT PUT
GLOVES, MASKS AND
WIPES IN RECYCLING**



Keep your distance

Please practice physical distancing when putting waste at the curb. Help keep our waste collectors safe. You must keep a distance of 2 metres from waste collectors at all times.

For more information about garbage and recycling, visit york.ca/waste

Learn more about York Region's emergency response to COVID-19 at york.ca/covid19

Fight the Bite!

With increasingly warmer temperatures comes the risk of the dreaded bug bite.

Surveillance conducted in 2019 shows continued West Nile virus and Lyme disease activity circulating in York Region.

Protect yourself and your family from bug bites and prevent the spread of Lyme disease and West Nile virus. Mosquitos can spread West Nile virus and are most active at dusk and dawn. Blacklegged ticks that spread Lyme disease are found in wooded, natural areas and have been found in York Region.

Reduce the risk:

- Remove standing water around your home where mosquitoes breed
 - › Clean pools and pool covers
 - › Turn over wading pools
 - › Empty out flower pots
 - › Clear eavestroughs, storm and roof gutters
 - › Clean bird baths
 - › Empty water in old tires
- Cover up with light-coloured clothing
- Use insect repellent containing DEET or icaridin when outdoors
- Check yourself and your children for ticks and remove any that are attached as quickly as possible.

For information about West Nile virus and Lyme disease contact:

York Region Health Connection at 1-800-361-5653, TTY 1-866-512-6228 or visit york.ca/westnile and york.ca/lymedisease



Wear light-coloured pants and long-sleeved tops to help spot ticks.

Don't forget to check your pet

Choose closed footwear

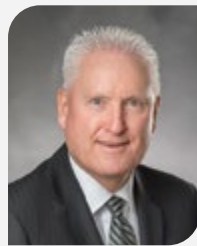
York Region Chairman and CEO and Members of Regional Council



Chairman & CEO
Wayne Emmerson



Mayor
Frank Scarpitti
City of Markham



Regional Councillor
Don Hamilton
City of Markham



Regional Councillor
Jack Heath
City of Markham



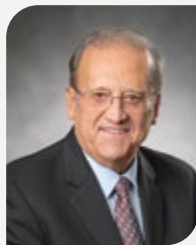
Regional Councillor
Joe Li
City of Markham



Regional Councillor
Jim Jones
City of Markham



Mayor
Maurizio Bevilacqua
City of Vaughan



Regional Councillor
Mario Ferri
City of Vaughan



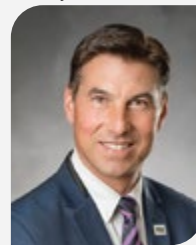
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Gino Rosati
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Regional Councillor
Linda Jackson
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David Barrow
City of Richmond Hill



Regional Councillor
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Carmine Perrelli
City of Richmond Hill



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John Taylor
Town of Newmarket



Regional Councillor
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Town of Newmarket



Mayor
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Town of Georgina



Regional Councillor
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Town of Georgina



Mayor
Tom Mrakas
Town of Aurora



Mayor
Virginia Hackson
Town of East Gwillimbury



Mayor
Steve Pellegrini
Township of King



Mayor
Iain Lovatt
Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville

Connect with your community at york.ca/municipalities

Message from York Region Chairman and CEO


I take a moment to thank each and every one of our 1.2 million residents for doing your part over the past months to help slow the spread of COVID-19. Through your efforts we are all helping to keep our communities strong, caring and safe while still celebrating our #SpiritofYR.

Since we first learned of COVID-19, York Regional Council and The Regional Municipality of York have continued to collaborate with all levels of government. Throughout this time of uncertainty and rapid changes, our top priority continues to be the health and safety of those who call York Region home. That is why York Regional Council voted unanimously in favour of Public Health's instruction on the wearing of face masks or coverings.

We have spent much time to be prepared for the recovery of our local economy and the re-opening of businesses, programs and community services. In this issue of York Region Matters you see examples of the actions taken to protect our communities, including our most vulnerable residents, and our next steps as we navigate what will be our next normal.

I encourage our residents to stay safe, continue practicing physical distancing and good hand hygiene, wear a mask and visit york.ca/covid19 as a trusted source of information and updated daily.

We are better, together, and we are getting through this.


Wayne Emmerson



ECONOMIC
VITALITY



HEALTHY
COMMUNITIES



SUSTAINABLE
ENVIRONMENT



GOOD
GOVERNMENT

The 2019-2023 Strategic Plan guides York Region's vision of strong, caring and safe communities. For information visit york.ca/strategicplan

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