

Media Backgrounder

York Region recognized with 2020 Esri President's Award

About the Esri President's Award:

- Esri Inc. is the global market leader in GIS (geographic information systems); York Region is one of Esri's more than 350,000 customers internationally
- The President's Award is the highest honour given by Esri, recognizing one organization annually for using data-informed decision-making to impact the world in a positive way
- Recipients are personally chosen by Esri's President and Founder, Jack Dangermond
- This is not an award that can be applied for
- The award recognizes York Region's commitment to continuous improvement and using trusted data to inform decisions
- The recognition is the result of a 25-year focus on working collaboratively with our partners and using data to solve problems and make a difference in our communities

About York Region's data-related work:

- York Region has a history of being committed to collaboration and continuous improvement and is proud to be a leader in how local governments use and manage data
- In 2018 the Region established a Data and Analytics Master Plan, a cross-departmental, collaborative plan to use data more effectively and strategically
- The initiatives York Region is driving forward through its Data and Analytics Master Plan are strengthening our data-informed culture to make better decisions, design better programs and deliver more effective services to our communities
- York Region works closely with our external partners to strengthen capacity and capability; an example of this is the YorkInfo Partnership, which has 14 members including York Region, its nine municipalities, two district school boards and two conservation authorities
- The YorkInfo Partnership helps all partners benefit from collective investment in technology, data and people through reciprocal data-sharing and group purchasing
- York Region's DATA (Data, Applications, Tools, Academy) Co-op is an online "marketplace" that lets data professionals from each municipality access and share data, code, technology and training – enabling them to leverage each other's resources, accomplishments and insights to better meet local needs
- The DATA Co-op supports collaboration among the partners' web GIS implementations so municipal staff can provide programs and services to residents and businesses more efficiently
- York Region and our partners depend on good quality data to deliver services to our residents; the Region provides "open data" to the public at york.ca/opendata; data is presented in an easy-to-use format and can be used for any purpose by residents, professionals, local business and partners

About GIS:

- A geographic information system (GIS) is a platform for gathering, managing and analyzing data
- GIS technology uses geography to organize and integrate data, revealing patterns and relationships to help users make smarter decisions, develop partnerships and communicate more effectively
- York Region was an early adopter and pioneer in the use of GIS to support Regional planning and development; GIS is now used in essentially all Regional service areas to support governance, housing, transportation, environmental protection, land use, forestry, economic development, public health, water and wastewater

Using GIS to support the Region's COVID-19 response:

The robust GIS within York Region has been relied on in the response to COVID-19

- Developed a tool for the emergency operations team to access an inventory of where people live in congregate settings to help with the supply of equipment and planning for health professionals to assist
- Deployed a public survey and tracking dashboard to assess economic and business impact; data is used to inform the recovery efforts as well as future programs and services available to the business community
- Developed and published mapping insights on the residential location of confirmed COVID-19 cases, to support planning in public health and related municipal and health sector partners, including:
 - Understanding areas with increased burden of illness
 - Monitoring changes over time in the rates of cases (cases per 100,000 population)
 - Relating case rates to hospital catchment areas and supporting development of Ontario Health targeted testing strategies
- Developed mapping insights on case counts at the household level to inform self-isolation education and to monitor secondary transmission within families and households
- Developed mapping insights on where people live that have jobs posing a higher risk (essential workers)
- Developed a tool for public health staff to access an inventory of manufacturing facilities to help with the development of mitigation and response plans
- Completed mapping analysis to determine where best to open dedicated child care resources for health care professional and other essential workers
- Provided York Regional Police with readily available trail and parks data to support their efforts in helping the public comply with physical distancing guides

About York Region:

- York Region stretches north from Toronto to Lake Simcoe and includes many hectares of protected Greenbelt
- With a population of 1.2 million residents, The Regional Municipality of York (York Region) is one of Canada's largest municipalities; and, with more than 54,000 businesses and 650,000 jobs, York Region is the second largest business centre in Ontario
- York Region is a two-tier municipality; the upper-tier municipality (The Regional Municipality of York) delivers specific services for its nine lower-tier municipalities: Aurora, East Gwillimbury, Georgina, King, Markham, Newmarket, Richmond Hill, Vaughan and Whitchurch-Stouffville
- York Region's diversity is evident in our nine local municipalities, geography, economic development and population
- York Region provides a broad selection of services and resources to its residents and businesses, in support of its vision of creating "Strong, Caring, Safe Communities"
- More information about York Region's key service areas is available at york.ca/regionalservices

Media Contact: Stephanie Crowley, Corporate Communications, The Regional Municipality of York
Phone: 1-877-464-9675, ext. 77272 Cell: 905-251-6416 stephanie.crowley@york.ca