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To: Committee of the Whole  
Meeting Date: April 10, 2025  
From: Laura McDowell  
Commissioner of Public Works  
Re: **National Public Works Week, May 18 to 24, 2025**

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This memo provides an overview of National Public Works Week (NPWW) planned activities.

The Regional Municipality of York celebrates NPWW annually by engaging and educating residents about the value of Public Works in their communities. Across North America, and in coordination with Canadian and Ontario Public Works Associations, NPWW is celebrated annually the third week of May.

### **National Public Works Week, May 18 to 24, 2025**

This year's theme, "People, Purpose, Presence," underscores the driving forces behind the dedication of Public Works' professionals in serving their communities. The commitment to meeting the needs of people is what inspires Public Works with its profound sense of purpose.

Staff continuously work behind the scenes to enhance the quality of life for York Region residents and businesses. The success of Public Works is marked by the seamless functioning of programs and services in partnership with our nine local cities and towns (see Appendix A).

### **In 2024, Public Works staff ensured critical services were delivered by building infrastructure, safely operating systems and responding to community needs**

Highlights from the past year include:

- Continued to protect source water and provide safe and clean drinking water to the residents and businesses of York Region; scored 100% in Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks 2024 drinking water system inspection report
- Operated and maintained over 130 water and wastewater facilities and over 720 kilometres of water and wastewater mains

- Received multiple industry awards for the Transit Automated Transit Facility Inspection Program as outlined in the York Region Transit 2024 System Performance Report
- Launched the [York Region Vision Zero - Traveller Safety Plan](#) that aims to reduce severe collision by 10% over five years; highlights of the Plan include the [Automated Speed Enforcement Program](#) with 20 new fixed cameras installed throughout the Region
- Monitored 894 Regional and Local Municipal traffic control and signal operations and built, operated/maintained 4,406 lane kilometres of Regional roads and infrastructure
- Completed 150 intersection improvements, including adding pedestrian crosswalks with audible signals and other accessibility features
- Began construction on the new Southeast Operations Centre in the City of Markham, scheduled to open at the end of 2025
- Executing almost 100% complex large capital infrastructure projects across the region to support housing targets and growing needs of our communities, including the Yonge Street expansion from Davis Drive to Green Lane in the Town of Newmarket, and Northeast Vaughan Water and Wastewater projects to name a few
- Council approved the 30-year Wastewater Energy Transfer Agreement with Markham District Energy, currently projected to be the largest wastewater energy transfer system in the world
- Council approved the [2024 Corporate Energy Conservation and Demand Management Plan](#) that identifies initiatives for Regional service delivery to reduce energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions, helping York Region move toward its goal of net-zero emissions by 2050
- Council approved the [2024 Corporate Asset Management Plan](#) that outlines how York Region will provide safe, reliable and cost-effective services, and maintain and care for the assets that deliver these services and ensure sustainability
- Broke ground on the [Convertus Biofuel Facility](#) in the Town of East Gwillimbury. The state-of-the-art facility will process up to 140,000 tonnes of green bin waste per year when fully operational in 2027, meeting the Region's processing needs until 2047
- Continued to operate and expand York Region Transit, Viva, On-Request and Mobility On-Request services with 2024 ridership reaching 23.7 million revenue riders, the highest ridership ever achieved, surpassing pre-pandemic levels
- Participated in launching Ontario's One Fare Program, providing transit riders with free transfers when connecting to and from YRT and TTC, GO Transit, Brampton Transit,

Durham Region Transit and MiWay making transit more seamless and affordable for all travellers

- Maintained a 90% landfill diversion rate, facilitating transition to full producer responsibility for blue box programs
- Celebrated the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the York Regional Forest with a Community Tree-Planting in May at Centennial Tract and a special Tree-Planting Ceremony in September at Hollidge Tract which included The Chippewas of Georgina Island First Nation, and members of Regional Council and Provincial Parliament
- Continued expansion of the York Regional Forest with development of the 142-hectare Centennial Tract property scheduled to open late 2025 at McCowan Road and Queensville Sideroad in the Town of East Gwillimbury
- Planted 123,000 trees and shrubs contributing to the Region's goal of a healthy and sustainable natural environment
- Participated in over 110 community outreach events to promote the vital work, programs and services operated by Public Works

## **Activities and events are planned for the community to celebrate National Public Works Week in 2025**

- **Family Fun Day:** Saturday, May 24, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., in partnership with Paramedic Services, residents can learn about the Region's Public Works services and participate in demonstrations at 80 and 90 Bales Drive in the Town of East Gwillimbury; and tour the YRT bus wash at 18106 Yonge Street in the Town of Newmarket
- **Paint-a-plow contest:** Grade five students are invited to design and paint a snow plow blade aligned with the NPWW theme; voting for the best snow plow blade takes place at Family Fun Day and online
- **Virtual toolkits:** Building on success from previous years and aligning with Ontario's curriculum, Public Works-themed education materials will be available for self-guided learning and fun on [york.ca](http://york.ca); webpages have been viewed more than 11,700 times and activity books have been downloaded 400 times since this feature was first offered in 2020
- **School tours:** Students in grades five and eight from both the York Region Public and Catholic School Boards will be invited to tour the YRT Operations and Maintenance Facility in Newmarket, Roads and Traffic Operations Centre in the Town of East Gwillimbury (including the Sign Shop, Traffic Signal Lab, and snow plow simulator), and a York Regional Forest guided tour. Tour bus charters provided by YRT

- **Partnership opportunities:** Supporting our strong sense of community and partnership, staff from York Region departments and local municipalities are invited to participate in the planning and attend activities and events throughout the week

National Public Works Week continues to emphasize the importance of Public Works in our communities and supports the Region's mission of serving our thriving communities – today and tomorrow.

For more information on this memo, please contact David Szeptycki, Director, Sustainability, Communications, and Innovation at 1-877-464-9675 ext. 75723. Accessible formats or communication supports are available upon request.



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Laura McDowell, P. Eng.  
Commissioner of Public Works



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Erin Mahoney  
Chief Administrative Officer

March 24, 2025  
#16559817

Appendix A - York Region Public Works 2024 Highlights

## York Region Public Works 2024 Highlights

