



# ECONOMIC STRATEGY & TOURISM BRANCH NEWS



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## THE ROLE OF SUSTAINABILITY IN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

As a nation that is rich in prosperity, we can forecast that continued growth of economic development will be a huge focus for Canadians in the 21st Century so that our high standards of living are, at a minimum, maintained.

New initiatives are being undertaken by both the public and private sector to ensure that this economic growth continues and that it can be sustained over time by the available human, financial and natural resources we have.

The concept of sustainability thus becomes an integral part of the decision-making process on economic development matters. Sustainable development is not a stand-alone environmental or social program, but requires skilled leadership to

integrate the techniques and philosophies of sustainability into everyday decision making practices.

The sustainability performance of an organization should be assessed by its impact on the environmental, social, and economic future of the communities in which it operates whether that is the local town where the business is located or where their customers are located around the globe. Less is more.

New business processes and programs designed to resolve environmental problems and limit resource depletion will help maintain economically and environmentally sustainable economic growth. Waste reduction, energy efficiency and pollution prevention make economic sense.

Companies that practice sustainable business development can form 'niche' enterprises and product lines that provide more jobs and wealth, and assist in meeting new and evolving supplier requests. Sustainable product development increases value by providing benefits to customers who receive the same quality of product with fewer materials and less resources. Using renewable resources ensures that those ingredients will continue to be available in the years ahead.

Sustainable business development creates new jobs within our community. For example, recycling creates nine jobs for every one job created by traditional landfill operations. Sustainable business operations also enhance research and technology development, spur innovation, and may result in export opportunities. The

demand for new services by sustainable Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs) will assist in promoting diversification within the community.

At York Region, we are embarking on a series of initiatives that will enhance the sustainability of our economy and our businesses. Our foreign investment attraction efforts will be focused on US firms that operate as a sustainable enterprise or offer sustainable products/services. We will be supporting existing York Region firms with the "Guide to Greening Your Business" and a series of sustainability workshops. We will also be working with entrepreneurs to help them create new environmental sustainable businesses. ♦



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## ECONOMIC STRATEGY THE GUIDE TO GREENING YOUR BUSINESS

In response to the Economic Development Marketing and Communications Strategy, The Guide to Greening Your Business has been developed to encourage and facilitate the adoption of sustainable business practices by York Region companies.

The Guide provides the framework and resources for the implementation of sustainable business practices, and includes programs, resources and incentives available by different levels of Government and private organizations. The Guide promotes York Region's sustainability initiatives and recognizes the green initiatives of each local municipality.

At the end of The Guide is a comprehensive directory of environmental compa-

nies operating in York Region. It is anticipated that this directory will not only facilitate the implementation of sustainable business practices for local companies, but will incubate the opportunity for sharing information and ideas, and forming new networks within the sustainable business community.



Before it is disseminated to local businesses, a group of stakeholders has been identified to review a draft and provide comments. The comments received have

been very positive, commending this tool as an excellent resource guide, with an excellent purpose.

In February, The Guide will be distributed to the top 2000 businesses in York Region. Copies will also be sent to municipal Economic Development Offices, Chambers of Commerce and libraries to increase accessibility and facilitate wide-spread dissemination.

The environmental industry is evolving very quickly, and new programs, resources and incentives are being developed every day. In an effort to capture the most current information, this document will be avail-

able for download on the corporate website, and our municipal partners' websites. The online version will be updated as new information becomes available. ♦

## TOURISM CUSTOMER SERVICE PROGRAM

Being recognized for the delivery of superior customer service gives tourism businesses a competitive advantage and supports sustainability and growth. Understanding the customers' needs and having the skills to deliver superior customer service builds recognition and enhances the opportunity for employment opportunities.

The development of the Tourism Customer Service Program was based on a need identified by York Region tourism businesses through the Premier Ranked Tourist Destination research. The Tourism Program consists of

a Leadership Manual and three one hour training modules built upon the Character Community philosophy and principles, and includes a variety of resources to assist tourism operators to train employees on delivering superior customer service.

By using the Character approach, the intent is that service behaviours, attitudes and actions are developed to ensure that every customer 'Be Welcomed, Is Heard, Feels Valued, Departs Delighted and Will Return'.

The Program was designed to provide the employer all the

necessary resources to deliver the program in-house. This approach encourages a year round business enhancement philosophy and culture change, flexible staff training and sustainable performance metrics.

The Tourism Customer Service Program has been recognized by external organizations as an innovative model to support business competitiveness. At the Ontario Tourism Marketing Summit on October 7, 2008 in Toronto, York Region Tourism received Honourable Mention as one of two finalists for the Ontario Ministry of Tourism

Employee Attraction and Retention Award.

Building upon the framework of the Customer Service Program and the Character philosophy, three cultural sensitivity training modules will be developed for front line employees, and the fourth module will provide tools to assist business owners and operators create a culture of inclusiveness within their organization. The cultural module is proposed for completion by the end of 2008 and will be vetted through various cultural organizations in early 2009 prior to launching to the tourism industry. ♦

## YORK REGION EXPORT DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM WORKSHOP: DOING BUSINESS IN MEXICO

On November 21 2008, in partnership with the Ontario Ministry of International Trade and Investment, the York Region Export Development Program offered a roundtable meeting on export opportunities to Mexico.



Key representatives in attendance included: Gabriela Esquinca, In-Market Trade Consultant for the Ontario Ministry of International Trade and Investment; David A. Valle, Trade Commissioner from the Consulate of Canada, Monterrey, Mexico; and, Fred Sheehy, International Marketing Consultant for Mexico & Central America, Ontario Ministry of International Trade & Investment.

Thirteen York Region companies attended the meeting, ranging from automotive supply, to food processing, to consumer products, to construction equipment.

Two presentations outlined the Mexican economy with an emphasis on the sectors with growth potential. The presenters also explained Mexican culture from a business perspective.

The presentations evolved into an interactive discussion of each company's current situation and hopes for exporting, followed by directions and action plans from the government consultants.

This meeting will be followed up by joint federal/provincial mission to Mexico in March, which several companies signed up for. ♦

## YORK SMALL BUSINESS ENTERPRISE CENTRE 'SALES FUSION' WEBINAR SERIES

**REGISTER NOW**



The York Small Business Enterprise Centre "Webinar Series on Marketing and Sales", was implemented with rural outreach funding provided by the Ministry of Small Business and Consumer Services.

Michael Woodbeck of the Summit Group hosts the highly successful pilot series. At the Ministry of Small Business and

Consumer Services Annual Meeting on December 4, 2008, the successful series was highlighted. York Region is a first amongst the 46 Small Business Enterprise Centers in developing online workshops.

The first webinar 'Super Strategies for Growth' was held on November 25 and covered effective communications, and marketing weapons that attract clients. The second webinar 'The Best Buyer Concept' gave a step-by-step strategy on how to get the "best buyers" in the fastest,

least expensive way. There are three more webinars scheduled for spring 2009 which will complete the 5-part Sales Fusion series: 'The Seven Musts of Marketing' on January 13, 'Detailing and Perfecting Your Sales Process' on February 10, and 'How to Keep Clients Forever and Dramatically Increase Your Profits' on March 10.

The webinars are open to all York Region entrepreneurs, and are free. For more information and registration, visit [www.yorksmallbusiness.ca/events](http://www.yorksmallbusiness.ca/events). ♦

## JOB HIRING INDEX YEAR END REVIEW

Job hiring data for 2007 - 2008 has been completed, with the first year over year comparison.

There were 52,491 job postings in 2007 in York Region distributed quite evenly across each quarter. 2008 saw 49,361 postings evenly dispersed across the first three quarters, with a drop of - 31% vs. 2007 in the fourth quarter. Overall, job postings were down 6% in 2008.

Markham, Vaughan, and Richmond Hill

had the majority of job postings by identified employer, but the northern six municipalities showed significant increases with Georgina, Whitchurch-Stouffville and East Gwillimbury.

The private sector accounted for seven of the top 10 hiring employers in 2008, and the top five job postings by category

in both 2007 and 2008 are all in the service industry. ♦



## FEATURE STORY: THE 2009 YORK REGION TOURISM PROGRAM

**... to deliver innovative, integrated, research-driven marketing, public relations and promotional initiatives in partnership with industry stakeholders to inspire growth in visitation and economic spend.**

The most recent available statistics report that York Region welcomed 2.7 million visitors in 2006, spending \$248.4 million on tourism activities and services, and 2,850 tourism-related jobs were generated.

The Regional mandate is to support the business of tourism throughout York Region by working in collaboration with local municipalities and industry stakeholders to increase visitation and generate economic activity.

Elements of the York Region Tourism program include Tourism Marketing and the Industry Development and Partnership Initiatives which provide the strategic framework and environment for a long-term, coordinated approach to the development, growth and sustainability of the tourism sector.

### 2009 Tourism Marketing Program

#### Goal

The goal of the Tourism Marketing Program is to deliver innovative, integrated, research-driven marketing, public relations and promotional initiatives in partnership with industry stakeholders that inspire growth in visitation and economic spend.

#### Objectives

- To build the profile of York Region as a viable four season tourist destination
- To increase overnight stays in commercial lodging and increase visitor spending

- To attract new and repeat visitation to attractions, festivals and tourism amenities
- To engage local residents, as well as Visiting Friends and Relatives to experience York Region's tourism offerings
- To increase industry participation in Regional tourism marketing initiatives

#### Target Audience and Market Segments

Activities defined in the Tourism Marketing Program are designed to attract visitors, increase volume and revenues with a focus on the following three key audiences and market segments:

1. Leisure Consumers – Regional activities to increase Overnight Visits will leverage the success of current involvement in the Provincial Distinctive Getaways, Great Drives and Golf programs and development of new experiences based on the product clusters of Culinary, Arts and Culture and Outdoors.

This target market is defined as same day and overnight visitors comprised of Adult Explorers, Visiting Friends and Relatives and Family Travellers based in the geographic locations of York Region, the Greater Toronto Area and the rest of Ontario

2. Corporate Groups – Identifying the benefits of location, accessibility, venue options, quality service and added value propositions will be featured to increase business travel, meetings and convention markets with a focus on GTA Association and Meeting Planners, as well as the corporate and non-profit local business community.

3. Leisure Groups – The diversity and wealth of tourism experiences and available recreation facilities will be featured to build York Region's share of this market through sport and recreation organiza-



### York Region

PRINT AND ON-LINE MARKETING OPPORTUNITIES

Discovery Guide

Seasonal Magazines - In Your Backyard - Spring/Summer and Fall/Winter

[www.yorktourism.com](http://www.yorktourism.com)

Reserve your space now!

Contact Steffanie Rundle, Tourism Sponsorship  
905-830-4444 or toll free 1-877-464-9675 ext 1582 • [steffanie.rundle@york.ca](mailto:steffanie.rundle@york.ca)

tions, educators and tour operators from York Region, the GTA and Ontario.

### Advertising and Promotions

Multi media advertising campaigns are proposed for all market segments incorporating print, radio, magazine and web based activities which have been determined based on their potential to deliver results to tourism businesses, to increase consumer inquiries and to engage the tourism industry.

Strategic marketing initiatives, distinctive audience messaging and supporting collateral materials will be developed to support the needs of the various target audiences.

Each year a postcard direct mail promotion is sent to York Region residents highlighting the available tourism brochures, and inviting recipients to visit [www.yorktourism.com](http://www.yorktourism.com) for more information and ideas on what's available in York Region.

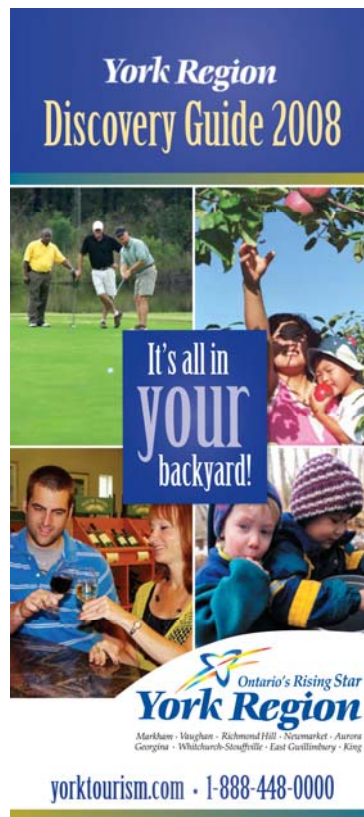
### Tools and Supporting Publications

All of the marketing and advertising activities direct consumers to [www.yorktourism.com](http://www.yorktourism.com) where the municipalities, businesses, and festivals and events are encouraged to leverage this FREE on-line marketing opportunity with profiles, descriptions and announcements of services or events.

Other effective ways to leverage marketing dollars include becoming an advertising partner in the development of niche promotional materials that support market specific advertising and promotional campaigns including:

- the York Region Discovery Guide, which is the only Regional tourism publication of its kind
- the Sport Tournament Brochure builds awareness of establishments that welcome sport teams
- the Conference and Meeting Guide increases meeting, conference and convention business

- the Student and Group Tour Flyer increases group tour traffic
- Two seasonal publications "In Your Backyard" Spring/Summer and Fall/Winter feature seasonally themed all-inclusive weekday or weekend packages that bundle accommodations with multiple tourism experiences including Golf, Outdoor Adventures, Attractions, Festivals and Arts and Cultural offerings to attract new overnight visitors to York Region



### The Industry Partnership Development Program

Tourism industry partnership development is the leadership role that Regional staff undertake to create an environment for the development, growth and sustainability of the tourism industry. This is accomplished by providing strategic direction, holding educational forums, effective communications, business planning assistance, product and partnership development and research initiatives that assist the tourism industry to make informed

decisions. The program consists of the following initiatives:

### Strengthening Partnerships and Communications

The tourism Newsletter blog on [www.yorktourism.com](http://www.yorktourism.com) is found under the Partner Log in menu. This blog highlights advertising opportunities, promotional opportunities and resources for industry partners.

### Stakeholder Product Development

Create innovative all inclusive packages that support the 2009 tourism marketing campaigns and develop experiential offerings that are aligned with Regional and provincial product clusters including Golf, Culinary, Arts and Culture, Outdoors, Distinctive Getaways and Great Fall Drives.

### Research and Performance Metrics

Research captured from the tourism web site ([www.yorktourism.com](http://www.yorktourism.com)) and collected at trade shows and events provides market analysis to enhance and tailor product development strategies and support marketing collateral.

### Consumer Inquiries, Web Site and Database Administration

Direct communication with consumers provides an opportunity to obtain valuable market research and to build repeat visitation.

Tourism is an integral component to York Region's economic and cultural development, and the Region's ability to deliver a successful tourism program is attributable to the strong relationships and support from tourism partners, local Municipalities and industry stakeholders. ♦

For more information on the York Region Tourism Program, please contact Brenda McGowan, Program Manager, Tourism Development at (905) 830 4444 Ex 1553

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### JANUARY

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT / SUN
			1	2	3/4
5	6	7	8	9	10/11
12	13	14	15	16	17/18
19	20	21	22	23	24/25
26	27	28	29	30	31/1

January 13, 3:00 pm—4:30 pm

**York Small Business Webinar: *The 7 Musts of Marketing***

For information, contact: Pauline Nagelmakers ext 1572

January 21, 8:30 am—3:30 pm

**6th Annual Bridges to Better Business Conference**

For information, contact: Pauline Nagelmakers ext 1572

### FEBRUARY

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT / SUN
2	3	4	5	6	7/8
9	10	11	12	13	14/15
16	17	18	19	20	21/22
23	24	25	26	27	28/1

February 10, 3:00 pm—4:30 pm

**York Small Business Webinar: *Perfecting Your Sales Process***

For information, contact: Pauline Nagelmakers ext 1572

February 10, 9:00 am—12:00 pm

**York Small Business Workshop: *The One Page Business Plan***

For information, contact: Pauline Nagelmakers ext 1572

February 24, 9:00 am—11:00 am

**York Small Business Seminar: *Business Revenue & Expenses***

For information, contact: Pauline Nagelmakers ext 1572

### MARCH

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT / SUN
2	3	4	5	6	7/8
9	10	11	12	13	14/15
16	17	18	19	20	21/22
23	24	25	26	27	28/29
30	31				

March 10, 3:00 pm—4:30 pm

**York Small Business Webinar: *How to Keep Clients Forever***

For information, contact: Pauline Nagelmakers ext 1572

March 10, 9:00 am—12:00 pm

**York Small Business Workshop: *Starting a Small Business***

For information, contact: Pauline Nagelmakers ext 1572

March 31, 9:00 am—11:00 am

**York Small Business Seminar: *Instant Power Communications***

For information, contact: Pauline Nagelmakers ext 1572

# ECONOMIC INDICATORS

## KEY NATIONAL INDICATORS: Q3 2008

Source: Canadian Economic Accounts, Stats Canada, November 2008

<b>Gross Domestic Product (GDP)</b>	Real gross domestic product (GDP) increased 0.3% in the third quarter, after remaining essentially flat over the first half of the year. Canadian producers increased their output, led by the mining sector (notably support activities for oil and gas extraction) as well as construction. The manufacturing sector edged up while forestry continued its decline. Production in the services industries continued to grow, with notable gains in the public sector and, to a lesser extent, in retail / wholesale trade.
<b>Personal Spending</b>	Growth in the volume of personal spending slowed to 0.2% in the third quarter. Transportation expenditures were particularly weak, as purchases of motor vehicles fell 2.5%, and demand for consumer credit was lower in the third quarter (also influenced by declining motor vehicle purchases). The slowdown in spending on consumer services reflects decreased spending on travel abroad, restaurants, and accommodation services.
<b>Inflation</b>	Inflation was up to 3.4% in the third quarter, from 2.3% in Q2. The price of goods and services produced in Canada advanced 0.9%. Export prices were up 3.9% (but did not grow as quickly as in the second quarter 8.4%), while import prices (+4.8%) increased more than export prices in the third quarter, reflecting the depreciation of the Canadian dollar.
<b>Employment &amp; Unemployment</b>	Unemployment was unchanged in the third quarter, holding at 6.1%, while the employment rate edged down 0.3 percentage points to 63.5%. Since the beginning of 2008, employment has increased 1.2% (+203,000), with gains in both full and part time. Employment rose by 2.0% (+338,000) over the same period of 2007, most of which was full time.
<b>Exports</b>	Exports of goods and services fell 1.4% in the third quarter. This was the fifth consecutive quarterly decrease, leaving the volume of exports 5.8% lower than in the second quarter of 2007. Exports of primary goods, including agricultural and fish products, energy, and forestry products registered notable declines. Shipments of automotive products abroad recorded a fourth consecutive decline.
<b>Imports</b>	Imports of goods and services declined 1.6% in the third quarter. Services imports (-4.4%) recorded a third consecutive quarterly decline, as imports of financial services related to securities trading were down sharply. Canadian travel expenditures abroad were also down significantly for a third consecutive quarter.

## YORK REGION INDICATORS: MID YEAR 2008

Source: Economic & Development Review Mid-Year 2008, \*2007 York Region Employment Survey

**The Canadian economy grew at an annualized rate of 1.3%, while the US economy declined by 0.5% in the third quarter**

	2007	2008	% change
<b>Population</b>	965,000	997,600	1.4 %
<b>Unemployment</b>	5.9%	5.8%	- 1.7 %
<b>Number of Jobs</b>	475,000*		
<b>Number of Businesses</b>	29,000*		
<b>Total Construction Value</b>	\$1,756,142	\$1,506,399	-14.2 %
Residential	\$1,248,878	\$1,067,840	- 14.5 %
Industrial	\$177,327	\$181,779	2.5 %
Commercial	\$226,766	\$198,633	- 12.4 %
Institutional	\$103,170	\$58,147	- 43.6 %
<b>Industrial Vacancy Rates</b>	5.2 %	5.8 %	11.5 %
<b>Commercial / Office Vacancy Rates</b>	8.2 %	6.7 %	- 18.3 %
<b>Housing Sales (Resale)</b>	9,326	7,848	- 15.8 %
<b>Average House Price</b>	\$416,264	\$440,399	5.8 %



**ECONOMIC STRATEGY & TOURISM  
BRANCH NEWS**

**THE REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF YORK**

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[www.yorksmallbusiness.ca](http://www.yorksmallbusiness.ca)

**BRANCH SERVICES**

**ECONOMIC STRATEGY**

With a goal of enhancing community prosperity and a strategic focus on sustainable business practices, we specialize in attracting new businesses and helping York Region firms expand their business. We offer assistance in location selection, access to federal and provincial funding programs, investment information services, export strategies, workforce development, and small business start-up consulting. We work in partnership with the Region's nine municipal Economic Development Offices to ensure that all Regional businesses are successful in achieving their goals.

**YORK SMALL BUSINESS ENTERPRISE CENTRE**

Offered in partnership with the Ministry of Small Business and Consumer Services, we serve entrepreneurs in the Northern York Region municipalities: Aurora, East Gwillimbury, Georgina, King, Newmarket, and Whitchurch-Stouffville. Key services include delivering seminars and workshops, one-on-one business consultation and start-up advice. Annual programs offered by YRSBEC are the Summer Company Program, Business Plan Challenge, and the Bridges to Better Business Conference.

**YORK EXPORT DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM**

An Economic Development program providing advisory services to export-ready companies in all nine municipalities of York Region. Our goal is to enable growth of companies by increasing export sales revenue through providing international contacts and referrals.

**TOURISM**

As a department of the Economic Development Branch, we market York Region as an integrated travel destination in partnership with the tourism industry and other levels of government. We collaborate with tourism partners and colleagues to develop and deliver marketing programs that position York Region as a premier, four-season destination. We encompass a full range of services and resources, from strategic planning, marketing research and product development to media advertising, consumer information services, publications, travel trade and media relations.

**STAFF PROFILE:**

**PAULINE NAGELMAKERS & DAN RUBY**

Pauline has worked permanent part time with the Small Business Enterprise centre for four years. She came to the position of Small Business Assistant with very relevant experience, having worked for three small businesses in York Region beforehand, one which was a new start-up. Pauline's responsibilities are administering the provincial youth programs, Summer Company and Business Plan Challenge, coordinating seminars and workshops, handling client information enquiries, and maintaining resource materials and a small business database. Pauline's says the best part of her job is working with people.



This spring, Dan joined Pauline as Small Business Consultant, after spending five years, working for the Nottawasaga Community Futures Development Corporation. He has also started and run four small businesses: three in the hospitality / food industry and one in construction. Dan consults new small business owners on: licenses and regulations; start-ups seeking financing (business planning); and existing small businesses wanting to expand. Dan implements two programs for youth: Summer Company and the Business Plan Challenge. With a degree and background in psychology, he has found that business consulting is the perfect marriage between his entrepreneurial spirit and his desire to help people.

In 2008 the Small Business team has been busy! They have implemented five seminars and nine workshops with the northern six municipalities the Center serves, and have also commenced a new webinar pilot series entitled "Sales Fusion". In the Summer Company Program, they worked with ten outstanding high school and university students, assisting and mentoring them with the Small Business Center Advisory Group in starting and successfully running a business over the summer; the turnout was the Centre's best yet. The Small Business Centre (through a Pickering College student) was also awarded first runner up in the Provincial Business Plan Challenge awards, and first place in York Region for the second consecutive year.

The Centre has been extremely busy with client consultations and expects this trend to continue into 2009 due to the growth in York Region. Sharon Vegh, Manager of Economic Development is pleased with the Centre's adjustment to the new strategic direction implemented in late 2007 including a new location, integrating new staff, and implementing a progressive approach toward rural and municipal outreach to the community in the Northern six municipalities. ♦

**Contact Pauline or Dan:**  
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