

# FOSTERING SUSTAINABILITY IN MUNICIPALITIES



November 17,  
2011

# PRESENTATION OUTLINE

1. New Approach to a Changing Landscape
2. Adopting a framework
3. Institutionalize and Take Action
4. Keeping the Momentum

**Development that meets the need of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.**

**- Brundtland Commission, 1987**

**Then I say, the earth belongs to each generation during its course, fully and in its own right, (but) no generation can contract debts greater than can be paid during the course of its own existence.**

**- Thomas Jefferson, 1789**

**Treat the earth well: It was given to you by your parents, it was loaned to you by your children. We do not inherit the earth from our Ancestors, we borrow it from our Children.**

**- Ancient Aboriginal Proverb**

## SUSTAINABILITY

The concept isn't a new one

# NEW APPROACH TO A CHANGING LANDSCAPE

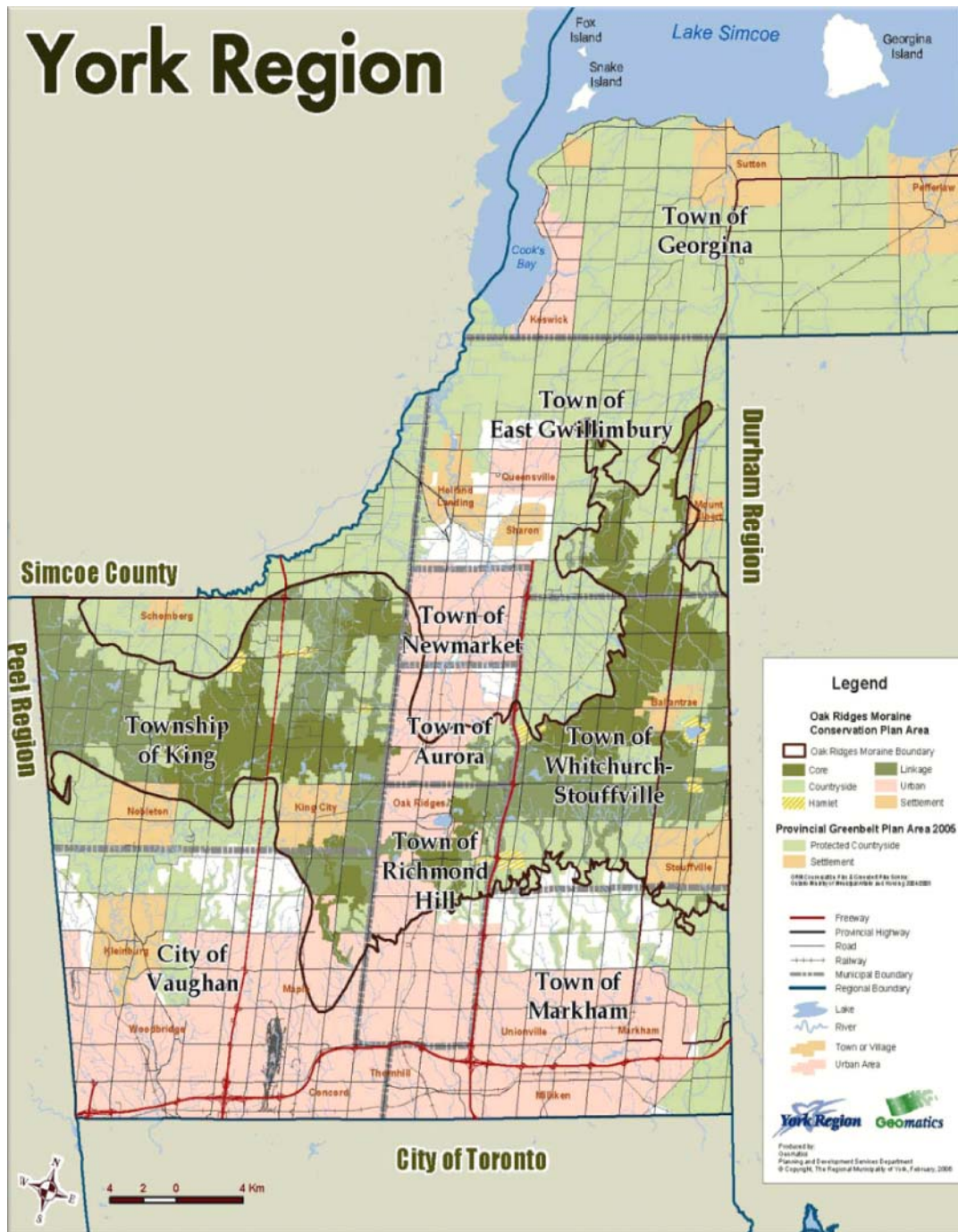
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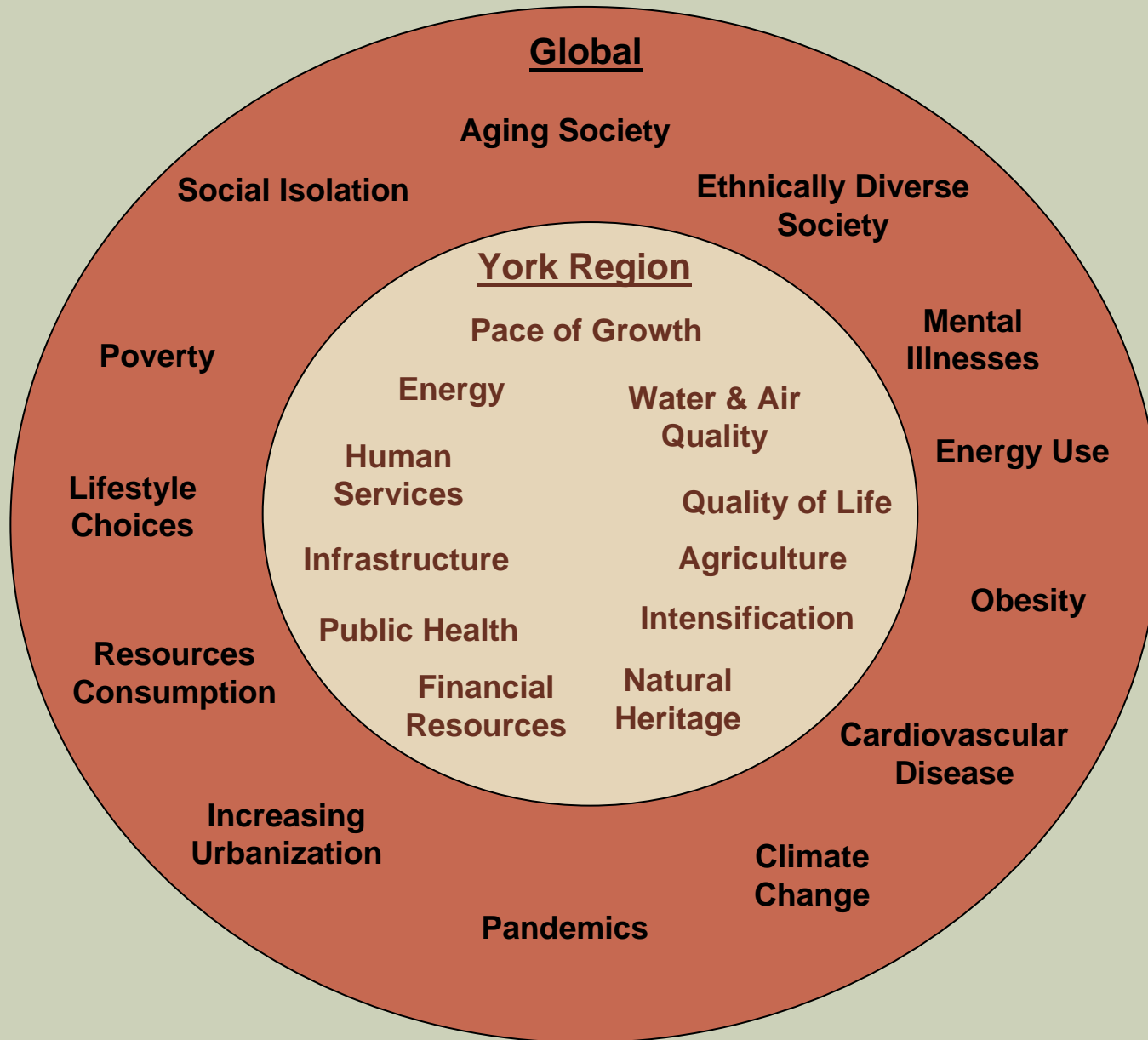
# York Region



## YORK REGION AT A GLANCE:

- 69% protected agricultural and natural areas
- Forecasted population of 1.5 million growth in 2031
- 25-35,000 people per year growth

# TRENDS



# ADOPTING A FRAMEWORK

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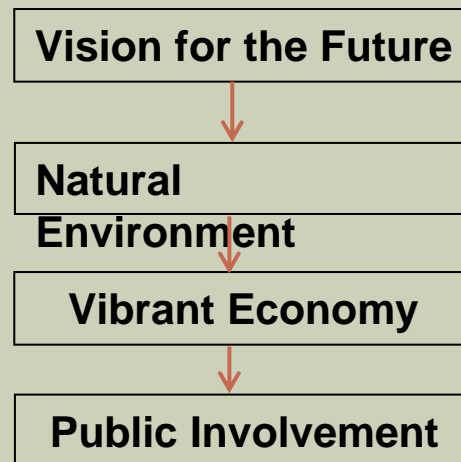
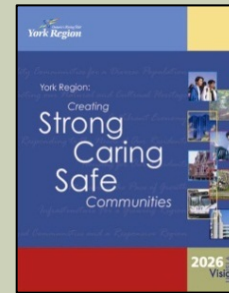
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# BUILDING ON OUR FOUNDATION

- Regional Official Plan (1994, updated 2010)

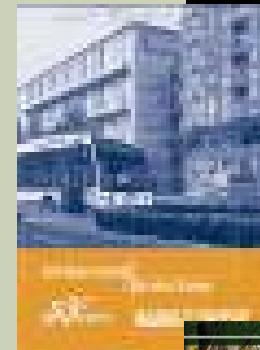


- York Region Vision 2026 (2002)



# SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Public Transit and VIVA Rapid Transit
- Water for Tomorrow Program
- LEED™ Buildings Program
- Greening and Land Securement Initiatives
- State of the Environment Report
- Human Services Inclusivity Action Plan
- Housing Strategy
- Corporate Clean Air Strategy
- Photovoltaic and Solar Wall installation
- Centres and Corridors Program
- Climate Change Discussion Paper
- Integrated Sustainable Infrastructure Master Plans

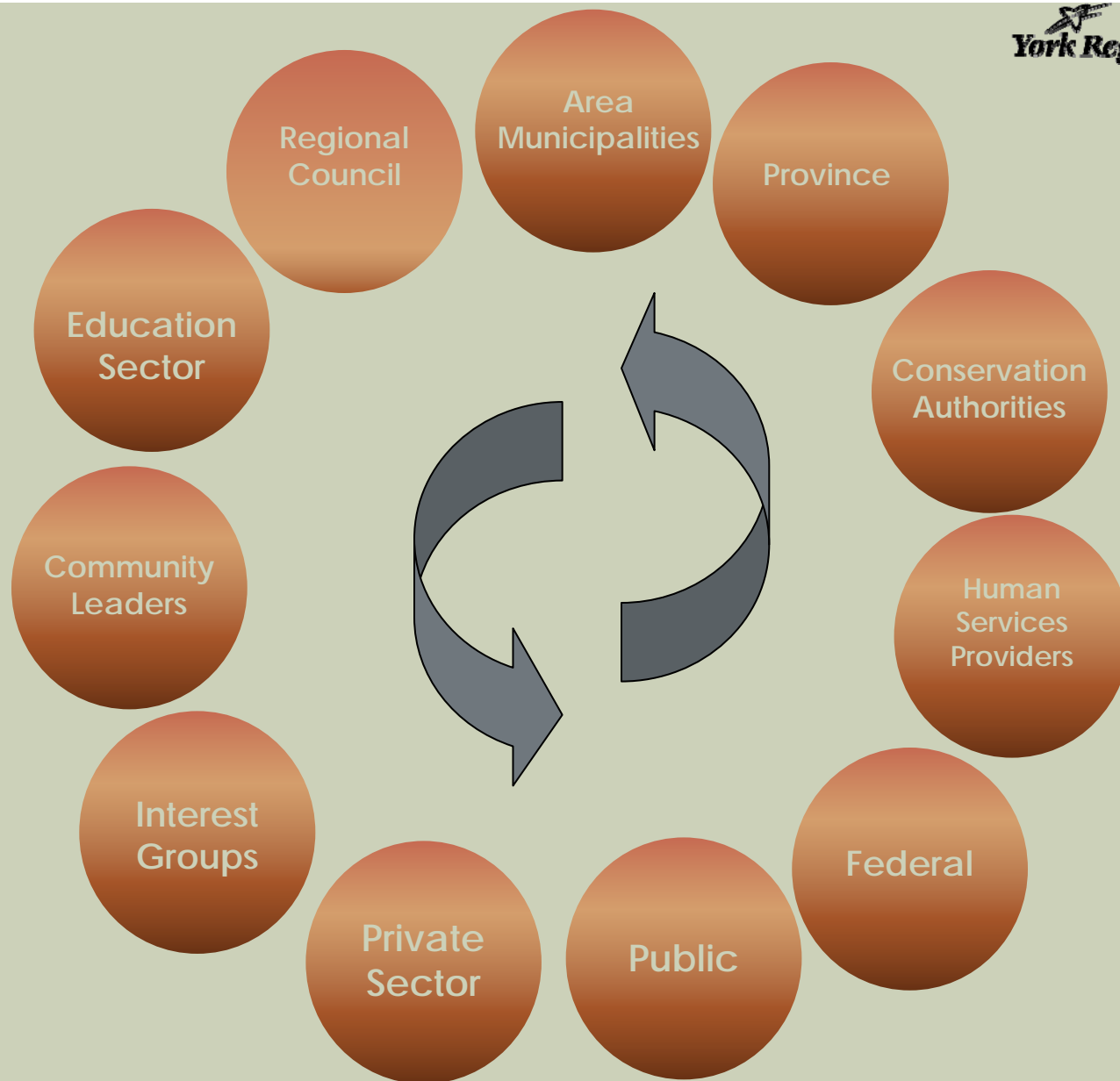


# JOURNEY TOWARD SUSTAINABILITY



## EDUCATION, ENGAGEMENT AND PARTNERSHIP

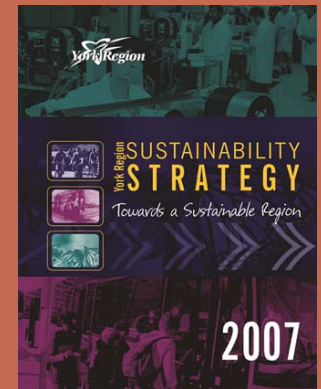
- Intensive pre-consultation of Sustainability Strategy
- Symposium
- Towards Sustainability in York Region Advisory group
- Planning for Tomorrow Growth Management Strategy Public Engagement
- Internal Consultation



**Collaboration with a diversity of disciplines in key.**

- Framework for making better decisions
- Integrates economy, environment and communities
- Makes Good Business Sense
- Translates Theory into Practical Action
- Reduces Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Expectation of the Public and Regional Employees
- Demonstrates leadership

## WHY A SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY?



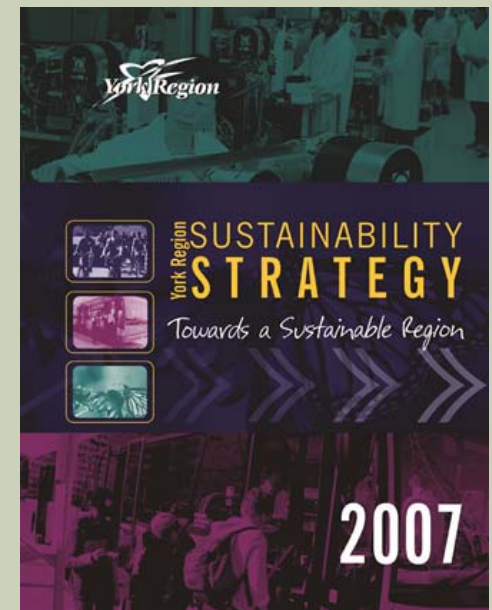
1. Corporate Culture of Sustainability
2. Healthy Communities
3. Economic Vitality
4. Sustainable Natural Environment
5. Education, Engagement and Partnerships
6. Sustainability Implementation and Monitoring

## ACTION AREAS



# Guiding Principles for Implementation

1. LEADERSHIP AND A LONG-TERM VIEW
2. TRIPLE-BOTTOM LINE APPROACH
3. IMPROVEMENT, INNOVATION AND RESILIENCY
4. SHORT-TERM ACHIEVABLE ACTIONS CONTRIBUTE TOWARDS SUSTAINABILITY LEGACY
5. PARTNERSHIPS AND ENGAGEMENT
6. STEWARDSHIP, SHARED RESPONSIBILITY AND COLLABORATION
7. RAISE AWARENESS AND EDUCATION
8. SUSTAINABLE LIFESTYLES, NEEDS & EXPECTATIONS
9. TARGETS, MONITOR AND REPORT PROGRESS



## **Engagement**

- **Regional Official Plan Update – Public Engagement**
- **Sustainability Multi-stakeholder Focus Group**
- **Expert Review by Natural Step Canada and the University of Waterloo**
- **Presentations and Forums to a wide-range of audiences**

## **Distribution**

- **Over 3000+ copies of the Sustainability Strategy distributed to a wide audience including:**
  - **Stakeholders and Members of the Public**
  - **York Region and local municipal staff**
  - **Regional and local Councils**
  - **York Region MPPs and MPs**

## **Education**

- **Training for 250 Commissioners, Directors, Managers and Supervisors**
- **New Employee Corporate Orientation**

# **ENGAGEMENT, DISTRIBUTION AND EDUCATION**

# SUSTAINABILITY TRAINING PROGRAM

Integrate sustainability into business models and decision-making processes



Over 250 senior managers, managers and supervisors are trained in sustainability.

# New Employee Corporate Orientation

- ❑ **Mandatory Corporate Learning Course for all new employees (management and staff)**

- ❑ **Offers overview of York Region including**

- ❑ **An overview on the concepts of sustainability and the Sustainability Strategy**

- ❑ **Sustainability Strategy has been included in course content since 2010.**

- ❑ **In 2011, 186 Employees have received this training.**



**ONGOING  
EDUCATION**

**New Employee  
Orientation  
Sessions**

# INSTITUTIONALIZE AND TAKE ACTION

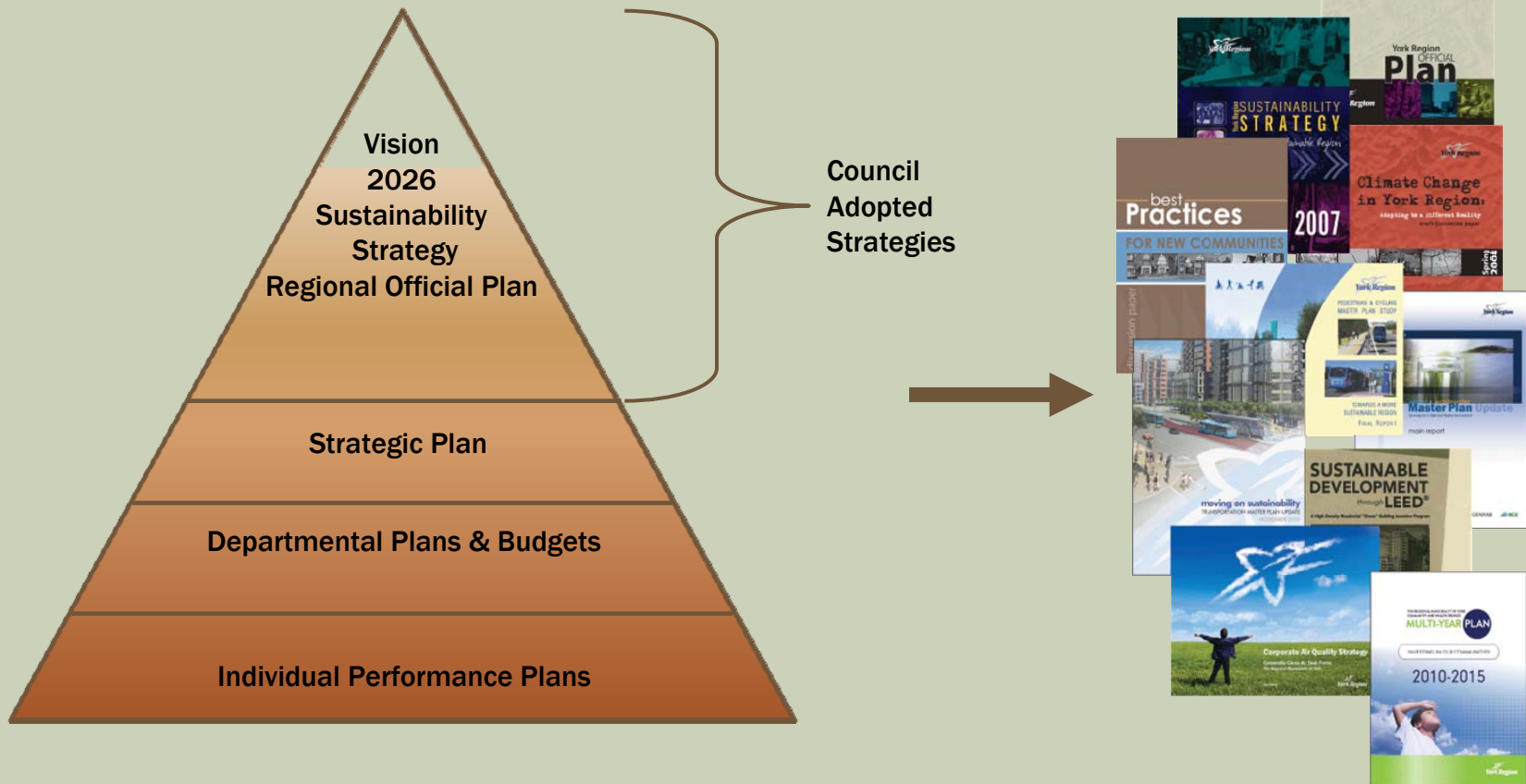
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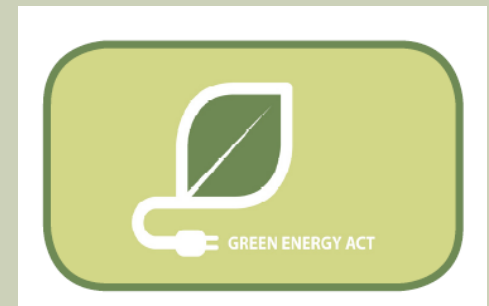
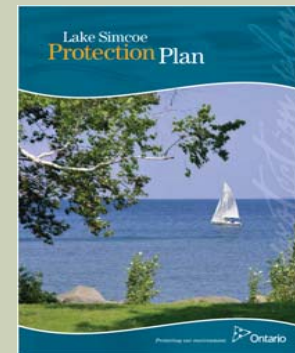
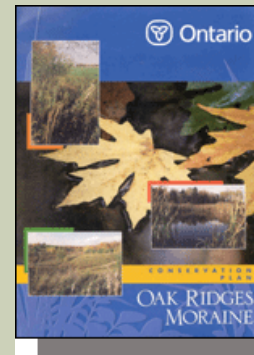
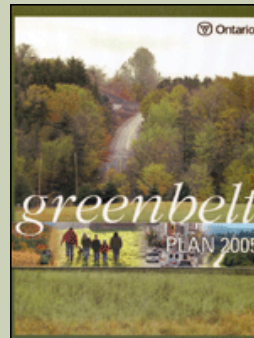


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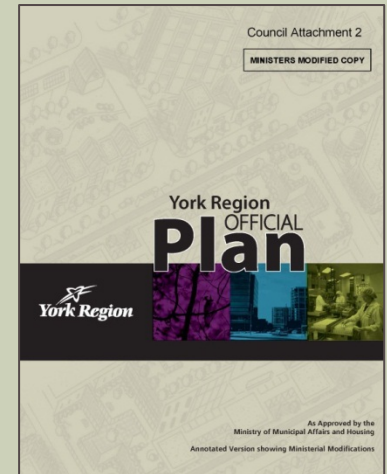
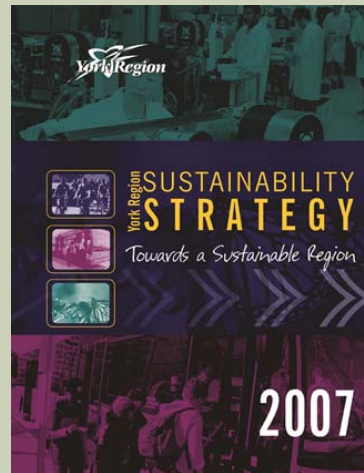
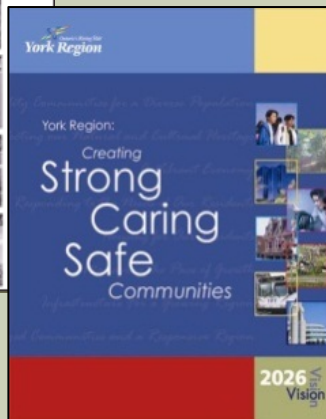
# SUSTAINABILITY: A CORPORATE PRIORITY



# PROVINCIAL CONTEXT

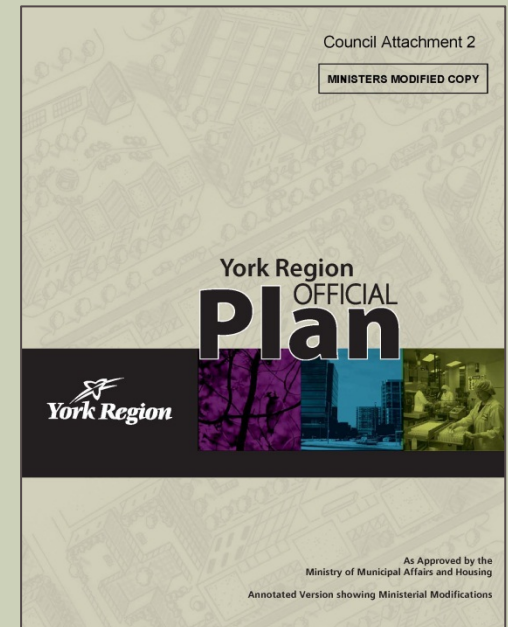


# BUILDING ON OUR FOUNDATION



# YORK REGION OFFICIAL PLAN & SUSTAINABILITY

- Triple bottom line approach was used to evaluate a number of key emerging trends facing York Region, including:
  - An aging and diverse society
  - An urbanizing region defined by vibrant centres
  - Impact of the built environment on social cohesion
  - Climate change, energy conservation, and renewable energy sources
  - Health issues such as obesity, mental illnesses, cardiovascular and respiratory diseases.



## **Sustainability in the Regional Official Plan**

- **City Building in Regional Centres and Corridors**
- **40% residential intensification**
- **New Community Areas, sustainable buildings and design**
- **Protection of employment lands**
- **Updated York Region Master Plans**
- **Enhanced mobility systems**
- **Higher standards for energy and water efficiency, renewable energy systems and waste reduction**
- **Enhanced Regional Greenlands System**
- **A minimum 25% affordable new housing units**
- **Full-cost accounting approach (economic, environmental and social costs)**
- **Protection of the rural and agricultural countryside**

# **YORK REGION OFFICIAL PLAN POLICY FRAMEWORK**

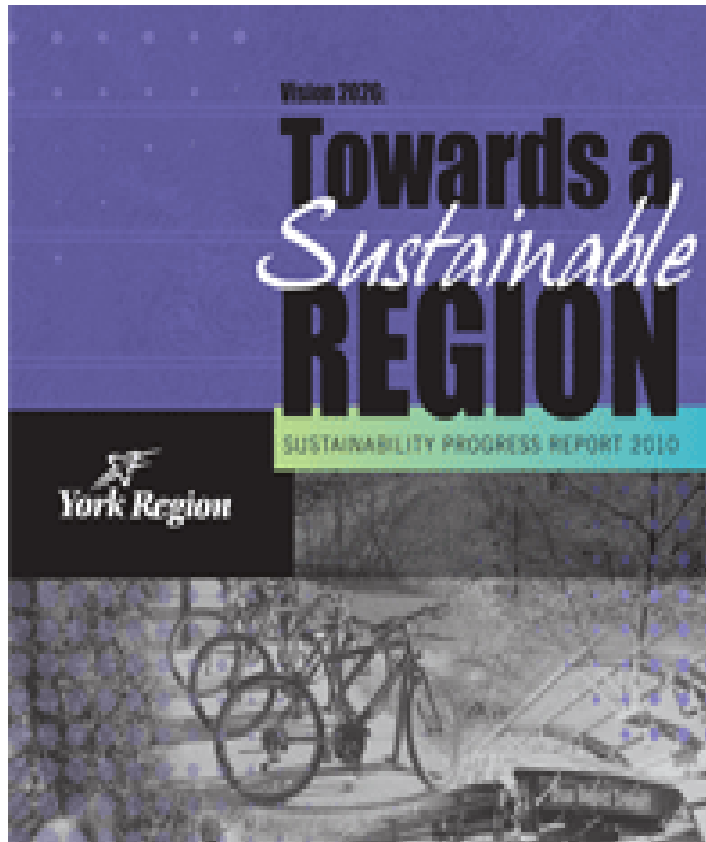
# KEEP MOMENTUM

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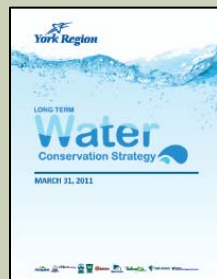
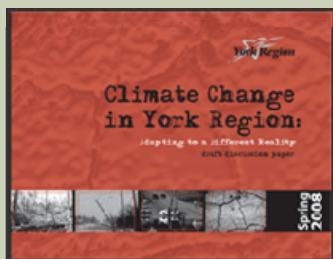
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## ANNUAL SUSTAINABILITY REPORT

Commitment to  
setting targets,  
monitoring  
progress and  
reporting on an  
annual basis

- Vision 2051
- Climate Change Strategy
- Long Term Water Conservation Strategy
- New Communities Guidelines
- Integrated Waste Management Master Plan



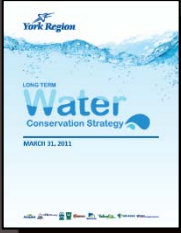
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EMERGENT  
SUSTAINABILITY  
INITIATIVES

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# LONG TERM WATER CONSERVATION STRATEGY

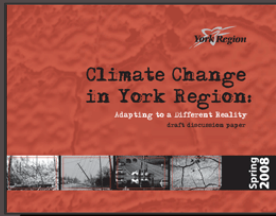


- Used “Soft Path” approach which recognizes the ecological limits of water resources.
- Best-in-class review of global water conservation and efficiency programs.
- Scenario planning – including no new water in 2051 (i.e. water use the same in 2051 as 2011).
- Planning future system based on a number of considerations including climate change, and alternative supply (e.g. rainwater tanks), reuse and demand management.



# NEW COMMUNITIES GUIDELINES

- Provides guidance to municipal partners and development industry
- Addresses the following theme areas:
  - Complete community design
  - Sustainable transportation
  - Open Space/Natural Heritage
  - Sustainable Buildings
  - Energy Conservation/Renewable Energy
  - Water Management and Conservation
  - Waste and Resource Management
  - Education



# CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION PLAN

- Sustainability Strategy, Regional Official Plan and strategic documents call for a Climate Change Action Plan.
- Discussion Paper and workshop held in 2008.
- Explores best management practices and risk management successes in other jurisdictions, what impacts the Region has already experienced and is likely to experience in the future.
- Draft Action Plan to Regional Council November and Stakeholder Workshop in 2012.

# INTEGRATED WASTE MANAGEMENT MASTER PLAN

- A road map that will guide waste management in York Region for the next 25 years.
- Focus on shifting values, in order to drive waste prevention and reuse, while maximizing recycling, composting, and energy recovery.
- Highlighting the need for lifestyle changes around the way we buy materials and generate waste, ultimately making more informed decisions that will lead towards sustainable living.



2051 Goals includes the following language:

- Preventing homelessness
- Universal transit access
- Carbon neutral housing
- Climate resilient housing
- No new water by 2051
- Zero-waste manufacturing and 100% product recyclability
- Zero greenhouse gas emissions
- Community-based social innovation



# MOVING FORWARD – SUSTAINABILITY 2.0?

- ▶ **Establish a Corporate Greenhouse Gas Emissions Target**
- ▶ **Renewable Energy Options for the Region**
- ▶ **Affordable Housing Strategy**
- ▶ **Immigrant Settlement Strategy**
- ▶ **vivaNext Initiative**
- ▶ **Green Power and Biodiesel YRT/Viva Projects**
- ▶ **Fiscal Impact Analysis of Growth and Human Services**
- ▶ **Web-based disclosure system for food premise inspections.**
- ▶ **Improved integration of human health into planning of our communities**

# WHAT WE HAVE LEARNED ABOUT FOSTERING SUSTAINABILITY

- ▶ **Corporate Leadership is key**
- ▶ **Continuous on-going dialogue with everyone in their language**
- ▶ **Great Opportunity – highlight benefits that interest**
- ▶ **Create a simple plan that is action oriented**
- ▶ **Foster a Corporate Culture of Sustainability**
- ▶ **Ensure Implementation: Business Plans, Monitoring Reports, Council Reports**

