

Thursday, November 16, 2007

For Immediate Release

Just the Facts About Your Community **reveals vital information about York Region residents**

Ninety-seven per cent of youth aged 20 to 24 years still live in a family household

NEWMARKET – The Regional Municipality of York, in partnership with the Community Reference Group, has released *Just the Facts About Your Community*, a new series of fact sheets to help provide the stories behind the numbers regarding York Region's population.

Based on Statistics Canada data, the first four fact sheets provide an analysis of the characteristics, opportunities and challenges of four segments of our communities: families, low income residents, seniors and youth.

"To have a strong, shared vision of our future, we must understand the characteristics of our residents and identify opportunities and challenges so we can target our resources most effectively," said York Region Chairman and CEO Bill Fisch. "These facts sheets, along with other products being developed in partnership with the Community Reference Group, are essential in our plans for the Region's continued growth."

Some examples that stand out:

- York Region has the highest proportion of married couples with children in Canada, according to the 2006 Census
- The median family income of \$75,678 in York Region in 2001 was second highest in the GTA
- In 2001, 18 per cent of male seniors and seven per cent of female seniors were working or looking for work
- 97 per cent of youth aged 20 to 24 years in 2006 still lived in a family household
- 20 per cent of youth aged 15 to 19 years in 2001 were not attending school
- 10.5 per cent of youth aged 15 to 24 years in 2001 were unemployed compared to 4.5 per cent for the total population

"The business community, school boards, municipalities, agencies and other stakeholders can turn this knowledge into action and adjust programs and services to suit the changing needs of our residents," said Town of Newmarket Mayor Tony Van Bynen, Co-Chair of the Community Reference Group. "This will help ensure that we allocate our resources effectively and maintain our quality of life."

The fact sheets are the second major product developed under York Region's Community Social Data Strategy in partnership with the Community Reference Group. The first was *Community Snapshots: Recent Immigrants Living in York Region*, which was released last year.

"As we saw with *Community Snapshots*, cold, hard facts influence decisions and prompt actions," said Community Reference Group Co-Chair Daniele Zanotti, CEO of the United Way of York Region. "This clear and simple information can be used not just to improve our understanding of community trends, our planning and ultimately our programs, but to advocate for our fair share of funding for services in neighbourhoods across York Region."

While *Community Snapshots* provided a detailed picture of York Region's immigrant population, *Just the Facts About Your Community* shows us high level profiles of the general population.

Just the Facts About Your Community will be distributed across York Region, to the general public, area municipalities, community agencies, the business community and other stakeholders. Also available in Chinese, Farsi and Russian, the fact sheets can be found on York Region's website at www.york.ca under *Just the Facts About Your Community*.

York Region is one of 15 communities across Canada that has formed a consortium to participate in the Canadian Council on Social Development's Community Social Data Strategy.

The consortium, which is part of the Community Reference Group, analyses Statistics Canada data to identify and better understand the social and economic trends within our individual communities. York Region's consortium is comprised of representatives from:

- The Regional Municipality of York (consortium lead member)
- United Way of York Region
- York Catholic District School Board
- York Region District School Board
- York Regional Police Services

The Community Reference Group consists of:

- The Consortium
- Aurora Chamber of Commerce
- Big Brothers/Big Sisters York Region
- Catholic Community Services of York Region
- Human Services Planning Coalition
- Town of Markham Planning and Urban Design Department
- Vaughan Chamber of Commerce
- York South Simcoe Training and Adjustment Board

For additional information, please see the attached Media Backgrounder and Fact Sheets.

For more information on The Regional Municipality of York and our services, please visit www.york.ca

- 30 -

Media Contact: *Tim Paleczny, Corporate Communications, York Region*
Phone: 905 830-4444 ext. 1238, 416 297-9696 or Toll free 1-877-464-9675
Cell Phone: 905 251-6413 Email: tim.paleczny@york.ca