

YORK REGION LOOKS LONG-TERM

40-YEAR STRATEGIC VISION

What kind of place will **York Region** be in 2051? The development of a new 40-year long-term vision for the region, underway since last June, will likely be before council for approval in the new year, according to project manager and senior planner **Karen Antonio-Hadcock**.

York Region's 40-year vision stands out from most municipal strategic plans, which reflect current council terms, and stands out from other Greater Golden Horseshoe municipal official plans, which do not go beyond 2031.

"It's a corporate document. It's more of a strategic plan. We've had two iterations of a vision document for York Region. Currently we have in place Vision 2026. It was developed in combination with council and the community. Now we're updating it to do the same for 2051. It's not a planning document," explained Antonio-Hadcock in an interview with *NRU*.

In part, developing a 40-year vision for the region is to commemorate the 40-year anniversary of its creation in 1971. An update of the current Vision 2026 strategy, developed by the CAO and development services long range and strategic planning branch in 2002, is required to

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STUDYING FORGOTTEN LANDSCAPES

IN-BETWEEN CITIES

Urban policy in Canada suffers from an outdated perspective on the types of areas in which Canadians live. A new e-book compiled and edited by **York University** professors and published by **Praxis (e)Press** hopes to spur a new way of thinking about cities and suburbs when it comes to planning, infrastructure and service policy.

In-Between Infrastructure: Urban Connectivity in an Age of Vulnerability builds on an idea developed by German architect and urban planner **Tom Sieverts**. The idea, *Zwischenstadt*, translates to "in-between city" and refers to the urban space in between a typical, dense city centre and the sprawling suburbs. Sieverts' idea was developed in a strictly European context.

But the book, edited by **York City Institute** director Dr. **Roger Keil**, Faculty of Liberal Arts and Professional Studies associate dean **Patricia Burke Wood** and assistant social sciences professor **Douglas Young**, applies the concept primarily to the north Toronto/south York Region area around York University. However, one chapter does specifically look at the **City of Winnipeg**.

"Most planners, when you ask them what kind of city they would like to see they will tell you they like a compact, transit-oriented, new urbanist kind of development.

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UPCOMING DATES

SEPTEMBER 6

Mississauga Planning & Development Committee, 1:30 p.m.

Ajax Community Affairs & Planning Committee, 7:00 p.m.

Durham Region Planning Committee, 9:30 a.m.

Whitby Planning & Development Committee, 7:00 p.m.

Oshawa Council, 6:30 p.m.

Pickering Planning & Development Committee, 7:30 p.m.

SEPTEMBER 7

Brampton Planning, Design & Development Committee, 7:00 p.m.

York Region Planning & Economic Development Committee, 1:00 p.m.

Halton Region Planning & Public Works Committee, 9:30 a.m.

SEPTEMBER 12

Ajax Council, 7:00 p.m.

Oakville Planning & Development Council, 7:00 p.m.

Oshawa Development Services Committee, 1:30 p.m.

Richmond Hill Council, 7:30 p.m.

Halton Hills Council, 6:30 p.m.

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GREATER TORONTO
AREA EDITION

TRENT SET TO GROW

CAMPUS EXPANSION

Just in time for the new school year, **Oshawa** is following through on a request from one of its university campuses that will only help fuel the city's booming post-secondary education sector.

Last spring, after operating for just one academic year from its own dedicated campus in Oshawa, **Trent University** asked city council to begin work on changes to the official plan to allow Trent's King Street West/Thornton Road campus to expand. Now, the city is set to present an official plan amendment to help the school grow.

After operating a satellite campus in borrowed space at Oshawa's **Durham College** for more than 30 years, **Peterborough**-based Trent bought up an unused former Catholic elementary school and leased open space at Oshawa's civic complex site to establish its own campus. The university has been working on the plans for its second campus since 2007. (See *NRU-GTA Edition*, June 30, 2009 and May 11, 2011.)

During Trent's first year at the new campus approximately 800 students enrolled in programs, though the school envisions enrolment numbers doubling in the next five years. More ambitious is the second phase of Trent's planned Oshawa expansion, which anticipates enrolment to rise to 2,500 students, necessitating the lease of additional city-

owned lands, which is an option in the current agreement, and potentially the acquisition of adjacent properties.

"Our growth will require future acquisition of properties adjacent to our property. These properties are to the west and north, essentially the south-east area of the Thornton Road and King Street West intersection," Trent administration vice-president **Don O'Leary** wrote to the city in a letter dated September 30, 2010.

Our growth will require future acquisition of properties adjacent to our property.

• Don O'Leary

"As the city reviews its official plan, designating the properties in this area for university purposes would be helpful as we acquire these properties and proceed through the municipal approval process to development of the sites," the letter states.

The immediate area consists largely of single-family homes and as such, the area is designated in the city's official plan for residential uses. The amendment that will be presented at a public meeting later this month adds university uses to the list of permitted uses for properties at [739 to 797 King Street West and 31 to 67 Thornton Road South](#). The meeting is being held September 12 at 6:30 p.m. in Oshawa council chambers. **nr**

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40-YEAR STRATEGIC VISION

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incorporate the new foundational regional policies that inform all regional decisions.

“Since then, the region has been doing a lot of very strategic thinking and has put together a lot of documents and action plans that have refreshed the approach we had in Vision 2026. The 2051 document will be very similar, but will reflect a number of new plans and documents,” explained Antonio-Hadcock.

The 2009 regional official plan and 2007 sustainability strategy, which emphasize building complete sustainable communities and a sustainable region, are not reflected in the Vision 2026 strategy. Other documents and policies that will be aligned with the new vision include Best Practices for New Communities (2008), Transportation Master Plan (2009), Water and Waste Water Master Plan (2009) and the Community and Health Services Multi-Year Plan (2010).

“What we’re seeing for instance, is now the new regional official plan has a greater emphasis on city building, complete communities, and better integration of our sustainability strategy. The new vision document will include similar types of emphasis,” said Antonio-Hadcock.

The updated strategy will reflect emerging issues, as well as guide business planning in the region.

“Some of the big issues we face moving forward require a longer term perspective. We’re thinking about climate change, energy, the ways our communities are transforming. Those things are going to take much longer than our typical 20-25 year horizon to look to address.”

“The consultation strategy for developing the new vision is primarily a web-based consultation that builds on the outcomes of previous consultations for the regional official plan, the three infrastructure master plans, the long term water conservation strategy, the community and health services multi-year plan,” said Antonio-Hadcock.

The region will also be hosting two youth forums in September and additional forums for its local municipalities later this fall.

A report with a summary of some of the feedback collected during the consultation process to date will be before the region’s planning and economic development committee September 7. [nru](#)

GTA IN BRIEF

[Climate change report released](#)

A report released this month by the **Conference Board of Canada’s** Centre for National Security called “Beyond Sandbagging: Building Community Resilience to the Impacts of Climate Change” highlights the need for a stronger framework for discussing climate change related risks. The report emphasizes climate change adaptation and mitigation at the local level including community-based strategies.

The report also examines the impacts of climate change on public safety and national security.

In addition to funding and emergency assistance, the report recommends government climate change adaptation and mitigation policy can include zoning to prevent development on flood plains, warning systems for dangerous weather and research to help local communities address areas of potential risk.

“We need to put more emphasis on enabling

communities and individuals to prepare themselves for the impact of climate change and to deal with its consequences,” said Centre for National Security director **John Neily** in a press release.

[Feds propose coal-fired power regulation](#)

Last week the federal government released a new draft regulation that would require new coal-fired power plants to meet stricter performance standards. The proposed regulation would

help promote the transition to higher-efficiency electricity generation and is expected to reduce carbon emissions by 175 mega tonnes between 2015-2031. Should the new regulation be adopted, it will help Canada meet its commitment to reduce its total greenhouse gas emissions to 17 per cent below 2005 levels by 2020, as outlined in the Copenhagen Accord.

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BUSINESS PROPERTY TAX RATES

GTA-WIDE DECREASES

Commercial property tax rates decreased in all 25 GTA municipalities since last year. **Toronto**, and the **Durham Region** municipalities—**Oshawa**, **Brock**, **Clarington**, **Whitby**, **Ajax**, **Pickering**, **Scugog** and **Uxbridge**—top the list with the highest tax rates for commercial properties in 2011. There is only one notable change in the ranking of this year's commercial property tax rates over last year. The Town of Richmond Hill moved up from being the municipality with the 22nd highest commercial rate in 2010 to the 12th highest rate in 2011.

Similarly, industrial tax rates decreased in all GTA municipalities in 2011 compared to last year. This year there are no municipalities with an industrial tax rate over 5 per cent while in 2010 there was one municipality—Oshawa had an industrial tax rate of 5.1447 per cent. Among the 25 municipalities listed below, Toronto's industrial tax rate is the 11th highest, while the Durham municipalities remain among the highest in the GTA. With the lowest commercial tax rate, **Milton**'s industrial tax rate is the 13th highest in the GTA.

Combining commercial and industrial tax rates, **East Gwillimbury**, **King**, **Whitchurch-Stouffville**, **Vaughan** and **Markham** have the overall lowest business property tax rates in the GTA. (For 2011 residential tax rates see *NRU-GTA edition August 24.*) [nru](#)

2011 GTA business tax rates

Municipality	Commercial		Industrial	
	Rank	%	Rank	%
Toronto	1	3.38614	11	3.38614
Oshawa	2	3.28765	1	4.97673
Brock	3	3.05473	2	4.61373
Clarington	4	2.90932	3	4.38711
Whitby	5	2.88651	4	4.35157
Ajax	6	2.86093	5	4.31171
Pickering	7	2.84742	6	4.29065
Scugog	8	2.78729	7	4.19693
Uxbridge	9	2.67982	8	4.02944
Brampton	10	2.48636	14	2.89708
Georgina	11	2.42559	15	2.79707
Richmond Hill	12	2.32023	23	2.33898
Mississauga	13	2.28447	16	2.64854
Caledon	14	2.20080	17	2.57345
Newmarket	15	2.19618	18	2.53006
Burlington	16	2.19435	9	3.46605
Halton Hills	17	2.16760	10	3.42272
Aurora	18	2.14369	19	2.46896
Oakville	19	2.13867	12	3.37584
East Gwillimbury	20	2.12774	20	2.45040
King	21	2.09836	21	2.41619
Whitchurch-Stouffville	22	2.05970	22	2.37120
Vaughan	23	2.02817	24	2.33450
Markham	24	2.00544	25	2.30805
Milton	25	1.98390	13	3.12507

Source: Municipal websites

GTA IN BRIEF

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DURHAM

[Darlington expansion report](#)

Last week, the federal government released the environmental assessment report from a three-person Joint Review Panel on **Ontario Power Generation's** application to build and

operate a new nuclear power plant at Darlington. The report outlines environmental effects of a Darlington nuclear plant and makes 67 recommendations concerning required environmental impact studies and monitoring programs before construction begins and during the lifetime of the facility.

"The panel concludes that

the project is not likely to cause significant adverse environmental effects, provided the mitigation measures proposed and commitments made by OPG during the review, and the panel's recommendations are implemented," notes the report.

The report will now go to Cabinet for approval. Should the the new nuclear plant receive approval from the Governor in Council, federal departments such as the Nuclear Safety Commission

and Transport Canada can begin to issue approvals.

"All of the evidence suggests that it is a bad idea to build more nuclear reactors at that Darlington site. We hope that Cabinet will be the first official body to have the courage to say that out loud," said **Lake Ontario Waterkeeper** president **Mark Mattson** in a press release.

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IN-BETWEEN CITIES

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Most consumers, allegedly, want single-family homes in the suburbs. That's at least what the development industry tells us," Keil told *NRU*. "The reality is somewhere in the middle. The reality is that most of us live in these nondescript, in-between landscapes."

One of the central problems in these so-called in-between cities is a lack of connectivity in various respects, such as transit and transportation, and disparities in other types of infrastructure, as well as social services and general economic well-being.

"They're almost invisible, these areas," Keil said. "It's not something that politicians like to talk about unless something catastrophic happens, like we saw with the Sunrise propane explosion, which was smack in the middle of that kind of landscape."

"The fact that people were living next to a plant like that, which was an accident, almost, of urban planning. How come you have a residential neighbourhood next to a propane gas facility like this? If we were to erase this clean and had to rebuild this part of the city, we would never do this."

Keil said that the lack of major landmarks, iconic structures or landscapes that stick in one's memory, means that it is harder to plan for services and infrastructure in what he called an "unaesthetic landscape" and what the book asserts is merely a dull, disparate background to marquee locations such as universities, airports, financial districts and research centres.

"Often, the in-between city inherits a particular pre-existing skeleton of infrastructure not intended to support the in-between city that comes to exist there," reads the book's conclusion, written by Keil, Wood and Young. "The in-between city, particularly its residential life, is compelled to graft onto networks of transport and trade oriented elsewhere, and attempt to turn them to local purposes."

Keil elaborated on the notion, pointing out that the affordability of various transportation options is a factor in such in-between communities. He pointed out that the Transit City plan would have rectified some of the major transportation issues in the area around York University, though he stressed that he was not trying to make a political point.

"The infrastructures have been planned to connect the single-family home suburbs in the north with the location of

jobs in the downtown," Keil said. "If you live in the suburbs and you have a family with two cars, if there's no gridlock you can move through this infrastructure and use it in this particular manner, but if you live in between and you don't have the economic means to participate in this system, then you are cut out of it."

Keil hopes the book and future research on the topic can inform government policy down the line to help provide the in-between cities with better infrastructure and services.

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• Dr. Roger Keil

"We need to get away from the polarization between central cities and suburbs. That's the only archetype of urban development in Canada and elsewhere," Keil said.

"We are very ill-prepared right now to create a conceptual framework to understand this new urban landscape. The majority of Canadians now live in these kinds of landscapes that are changing very rapidly and are changing in a way that we don't fully understand."

The e-book is available for free and can be downloaded [here](#). **nrU**



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GTA IN BRIEF

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[North Albion Hotel and Barn designation](#)

The **Township of Uxbridge** has announced plans to designate the North Albion Hotel and Barn (circa 1864) at [7049 Concession Road 4](#) under the *Heritage Act*. The North Albion Hotel has a long history as a meeting place, used by the Roseville community. After the hotel was sold to Rev. **William Kendall** and his wife in 1918, they began to use a barn on the east end of the property to hold interdenominational Sunday church services—the barn was known as Kendall's church. The services were held at the church for over 70 years until the building was sold and dismantled in 1997. The last day to file an objection to the designation is September 24th.

[Gibson Road rezoning](#)

Clarington will host a public meeting September 21 to discuss a rezoning application for [3431 Gibson Road](#) in the former Township of Clarke. The application seeks to rezone the property as "agricultural exception" to prohibit new residential uses.

HALTON

[Four bids received for Brant Pier](#)

Last week, the **City of Burlington** announced it had received four tender bids from prequalified contractors to complete the Brant Street Pier. Bids received by the city ranged from \$10.5-million (**BOT Construction Ltd.**) to \$6.4-million (**Graham Group of Companies**). The two other bids came from **Toronto Zenith Contracting Ltd.** (\$6.703-million) and **Rankin Construction Inc.** (\$6.714-million). A report recommending the contractor is expected to be before the city's community services committee meeting September 14.

"We are pleased to be moving forward, but the city needs to have all the financial and accurate tender information in place before naming a successful contractor," said Mayor **Rick Goldring** in a press release.

[Burlington considers ciclovias](#)

At its meeting today, the Burlington community services committee will consider a staff report recommending options for implementing car-free

Sunday events in Burlington. Four possible options are outlined in the report with options for a road closure only or an event focus, either delivered directly by the city or indirectly through a community organization. While the cost to host a car-free event starts at \$10,000, the report notes that this cost could be recovered through event sponsorships.

PEEL

[Long-range transportation plan update & OPA](#)

Peel Region will host three public open houses to discuss a draft ROPA, which outlines new policies for intensification incentives, human-made hazards, petroleum resources, natural hazards, compatible active recreation and transportation, as well as an update of the region's long-range transportation plan. The update later will support the transportation component included in the proposed official plan amendment.

The open houses will take place from 6 to 9 p.m. as follows:

- September 12 in the Town of Caledon at the Caledon Community Complex
- September 19 in Mississauga's Central Library Atrium
- September 20 in Brampton at the Century Gardens

Recreation Centre Atrium. A statutory public meeting for the official plan amendment will be held October 13 in [regional council chambers](#) at 9:30 a.m.

[AMO awards MiWay mobile site](#)

Mississauga's **MiWay** mobile site was awarded the Peter J. Marshall Innovation Award at last week's **Association of Municipalities of Ontario** annual conference in London. The MiWay mobile site allows transit users to access departure times and to receive service alerts on their smart phones. Mississauga mayor **Hazel McCallion** and city manager **Janice Baker** accepted the award, which recognizes municipalities that have demonstrated excellence in using new approaches to improve efficient service delivery through alternative initiatives and partnerships. Last year, the **Town of Markham** received the award for a new library organization system.

SIMCOE

[Allandale GO station groundbreaking](#)

In a groundbreaking ceremony held last Wednesday, MP **Patrick Brown**, MPP **Aileen Carroll** and GO Transit president **Gary McNeil** kicked-off

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GTA OMB NEWS

Board denies rehearing motion

In a decision issued August 19, board member **Susan Campbell** denied a motion for a rehearing of a decision and an order issued by the board on November 19 last year regarding appeals to a proposed **Town of Markham** official plan amendment. The purpose of the official plan amendment is to direct development and urban design in the Hamlet of Victoria Square. While the parties were able to come to a resolution of issues surrounding their appeal of the official plan amendment, the issue of height was before the board to resolve. (See OMB Case Nos. PL091117 & PL091117.)

The request for a rehearing was made by **Gel-Don Investments Inc., P & F Meat Products Ltd., 589236 Ontario Ltd., Nella Galluci and Anastasia Cavelli**. Their rationale behind the motion was the board did not adequately convey reasons for its decision with respect to the height of structures within the hamlet, as require by *Section 43* of the *Ontario Municipal Board Act*.

At issue was the board's ruling in favour of the town, which preferred wording that limited height of buildings demonstrating a heritage architectural style to three storeys with a pitched roof and compatible with those on adjacent lands. The appellants preferred language that would allow heights up-to-three storeys for buildings with "a heritage architectural style, including a pitched roof and other compatible elements."

Planner **Maria Gatzios (Gatzios Planning + Development Consultants Inc.)** submitted affidavit evidence on behalf of the applicant. She notes, "The testimony of the town's planning consultant, Mr. Butler, directly conflicted with and contradicted my testimony on the height issue, particularly on a crucial point such as compatibility of three-storey buildings with other structures within Victoria Square."

Counsel for the applicant **Michael Melling** argued the evidence presented to the board by the town was contradictory and the board did not address this matter. The decision does not show how the board arrived at its final decision, especially with respect to the heritage evidence, and the decision is "wholly inadequate to permit an effective judicial review," he told the board.

Bruce Ketcheson, counsel for the town, said the board's preference for the wording proposed by the town for the height

policy does not mean the board did not adequately consider the position of the applicant. There is no justification for a rehearing on the height issue because the board's decision "carefully sets out evidence and findings that the board relied on in support of the conclusion reached." Further, *Section 43* of the *Ontario Municipal Board Act* "should not be used to allow a party to reargue its case; some measure of finality to a case is vital," he added.

The board noted *Section 43* of the *Ontario Municipal Act* should not allow a party to reargue its case without a convincing rationale. Further, after a review of the decision, the board found the reasons outlined in its decision were adequate regarding the height issue.

"It decided that the wording of the town was appropriate in the circumstances. There is nothing lacking in the decision that would cause this panel of the board to order a rehearing of the height issue and in effect allow the applicants to reargue their case," the board noted in its decision.

The board denied the motion.

Solicitor **Michael Melling (Davies Howe)** represented Gel-Don Investments Inc., P & F Meat Products Ltd., 589236 Ontario Ltd., Nella Gallucci and Anastasia Cavelli. Solicitor **Bruce Ketcheson (Ritchie Ketcheson)** represented the Town of Markham. (See OMB Case No. PL091117.)

Thornridge Drive development approved

In a decision issued August 19, board member **Joseph Sniezek** issued an interim decision and allowed appeals by **2123659 Ontario Inc. and Joe Wade**

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GTA OMB NEWS

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against the **City of Vaughan's** failure to make a decision on their consent, rezoning and official plan amendment applications. The applicants proposed to create five new residential lots for single-detached dwellings fronting Pondview Road at [143 Thornridge Drive](#).

The board found that it was outside its powers to decide on the width of a cul-de-sac and asked the parties to resolve the matter themselves.

The parties then jointly submitted a revised zoning by-law and conditions of consent with a revised number of lots

from seven to six, which the City of Vaughan found to be satisfactory.

The board noted the "revised by-law and conditions of consent represented good planning and conform to the official plan."

The board allowed the appeals.

Solicitor **Michael Bowman (Osler Hoskin)** represented 2123659 Ontario Inc. and Joe Wade. Solicitor **Claudia Storto** represented the City of Vaughan. (See OMB Case No. PL100795.) [nru](#)

GTA IN BRIEF

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construction for the new Allandale Waterfront GO Transit station in **Barrie**. The new stop extends GO Transit train service into downtown Barrie.

"Ridership growth in this region has exceeded our expectations and we are pleased to provide a second downtown access to GO service," said McNeil.

The \$3.5-million project

is expected to be completed by the end of December and includes a new 12-car side platform with heated shelters, as well as a pedestrian tunnel, bicycle shelters and 150-space parking lot.



YORK

[Moraine business park proposed](#)

The **Town of Aurora** has given notice it has received complete applications for a rezoning and an official plan amendment from **1623 Wellington Street Development Limited** for a mixed-use office development, with ancillary retail uses at 1623 Wellington Street East. The site is currently zoned "rural

general" and "Oak Ridges Moraine Rural."

[Pedestrian and cycling path opens](#)

The **Town of Markham** celebrated the opening of a new 18.5-km multi-use cycling and pedestrian path Saturday. The new path is located on the south side of Major Mackenzie Drive East between Woodbine Avenue and Ninth Line. The project was funded through a \$4.5-million Ontario Infrastructure Investment Grant. [nru](#)

GTA PEOPLE

The **Ontario Infrastructure and Lands Corporation** has appointed **David Livingston** as its president and CEO. Livingston currently sits on the boards of **eHealth Ontario**, **Ovarian Cancer Canada** and the **Children's Aid Society of Toronto**.

The corporation also appointed business consultant and current **OPSEU Pension Trust** chair **Tony Ross** as the chair of its board of directors. Other directors appointed to the board include **Provincial Building and Construction Trades Council of Ontario** business manager and

Secretary Treasurer **Patrick Dillon**, Equifax Canada president **Carol Gray**, **Kelly Santini** lawyer **Larry Kelly**, **Brookfield Real Estate Services** board member **Gail Kilgour**, real estate lawyer **Mitch Kowalski**, **Ontario Financing Authority** and **Ontario Electricity Financial Corporation** CEO **Gadi Mayman**, **Green**

Shield Canada CFO **Isabel Meharry**, retired lawyer **Linda Robinson**, **Integrity Works** president **Anthony Salerno**, **SCOTT Associates Architects** principal **Darija Scott**, retired engineer **Jim Schwindt**, retired accountant **John Swinden** and **First Capital Realty** executive vice-president and CFO **Karen Weaver**.

Former **Markham Arts Council** executive director **Judi McIntyre** has been appointed general manager of the **Unionville Business Improvement Area**. McIntyre is also chair of the **York Region Arts Council** and was a founding board member of the **Ontario BIA Association**.