

Recently I organized a tour of the York Region Transit (YRT) Master Control building for the Richmond Hill Board of Trade ([www.rhbot.ca](http://www.rhbot.ca)).



Here are some quick facts: York Region transit covers about 140 routes. In 2016 YRT served 22.8 million riders (approximately 77,000 weekday riders). We own a fleet of 123 Rapid Transit buses, 406 conventional buses, 97 Mobility Plus vehicles and there are 5,300 bus stops in the Region. The security cameras and continual monitoring of buses and shelters was fascinating; as was the co-ordination between transit services, emergency services and police.

The Region's 482,000 sq. ft. transit VIVA operations, maintenance and storage facility was built in 2015. It is located on Leslie Street north of 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue in Richmond Hill and can maintain and store up to 196 YRT/Viva transit vehicles. A financial partnership between the Federal, Provincial and Regional governments made it happen.

Working together – gets things done.

### MORE DATES TO REMEMBER

**February 2-3-4** Come celebrate **Richmond Hill's 50<sup>th</sup> Winter Carnival** (Mill Pond Park). Official Opening around 12 noon on Saturday, February 3. Check out: [wintercarnival.net](http://wintercarnival.net)

**March 8 International Women's Day** (Centre for the Performing Arts). Jessica Holmes, Royal Canadian Airforce favourite will perform. Tickets @ [rhcentre.ca](http://rhcentre.ca) or call (905) 787-8811

**May 25 Annual Seniors' Information Fair** from 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. (Centre for the Performing Arts). See you there!

**September 22-23 Tastes of the Hill**, A multi-cultural, culinary experience and fundraiser (Richmond Green Park and Sports Centre, Leslie & Elgin Mills) [richmondhill.ca](http://richmondhill.ca)

Thank you for reading my newsletter. *Brenda*

If you have any comments or questions...

Please call 905-771-2498 or email [brenda.hogg@richmondhill.ca](mailto:brenda.hogg@richmondhill.ca)  
[brendahogg.ca](http://brendahogg.ca)

# Happy New Year



Regional and Local Councillor  
**Brenda HOGG**

**WELCOME 2018... BRRRRRRR!**

The celebration of Canada's 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary has come to an exciting close with the Sesquicentennial festivities wrapping up at the Richmond Green. As we begin 2018, a number of special events are brewing. That's a warming phrase.

### Mark your calendars!

The Ontario Provincial election when you may vote for your local Provincial representative and your Provincial Premier is to be held **June 7<sup>th</sup>**. The Municipal Elections when you may vote for your Mayor, Regional Councillors, a Ward Councillor, your School Board Trustees and for the first time Regional Chair will take place on **October 22<sup>nd</sup>**. Your basic democratic right awaits...

### VOTE!

### HOT TOPICS on a wintry afternoon...

With the New Year, I like to make predictions. Here are some of the hot topics which I expect will guide the upcoming municipal election.

**Taxes:** Are we getting good value for our tax dollar?

**Transit and Traffic:** When can we expect a subway? What are the timelines for the Yonge Street bus rapid transit and the Elgin Mills Road / C.N.R. crossing improvements?

**Civic Precinct Project (our new 'City Hall')**: What are the costs and timelines for construction?

**Cannabis Retail Stores:** Will the Province force our community to open a retail store for cannabis? Stay tuned.

## \$ RICHMOND HILL BUDGET in progress \$

The Town Budget reflects the priorities of the people and our Town. Want to understand the budget? Watch the short video at: [www.richmondhill.ca/budget](http://www.richmondhill.ca/budget)

The budget has two separate components; the Capital Budget and the Operating Budget. The Capital Budget covers growth and maintenance of 'infrastructure' such as community centres, fire stations, pools, parks, trails, arenas, roads and sidewalks. It is funded through Richmond Hill's (rainy day) reserve funds, development charges and grants. Council has approved a Capital Budget of \$70.64 million for 2018. A few highlights of the 2018 Capital Budget are:

- Investing in Information Technology with integrated finance and human resources software
- Revitalizing Bradstock Park (Ward 4)
- Road Overlay Program (asphalt repair)
- Lake Wilcox Boardwalk (Ward 1)
- David Dunlap Observatory (DDO) Park Conceptual Design
- A commitment to our new Civic Precinct and Central Library Expansion

**TAXES... Under discussion:** The Town's 2018 Operating Budget covers the costs of everyday operations and activities. Funds for the Operating Budget come from taxes, user fees, fines and other items, such as program registrations. The Operating Budget determines the annual tax rate which is approved by Council.

**Join us at the Central Library on January 20<sup>th</sup> between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.** to learn more about the Operating Budget and to provide input on where you want to see your tax dollars spent. You may email suggestions to: [budget@richmondhill.ca](mailto:budget@richmondhill.ca) or call: 905-771-8800, ext. 3656

### The Civic Precinct = So MUCH MORE than just a Town Hall



The Civic Precinct project will locate our Municipal Offices in the centre of Town at Yonge and Major Mackenzie. The project includes a public square, an amphitheatre, a reflecting pool/skating rink, a pedestrian promenade and pedestrian plazas. It is projected to be completed in 2026. Can't wait!

### Now that the Vaughan Subway is running ... Where's the Yonge Subway?

Richmond Hill Council has identified the Yonge North Subway Extension as the top TRANSIT priority for the Town. If we get the approvals and the funding... I suppose we'll have to call ourselves a city!? Both Regional and Town Council have given official comments to Metrolinx asking that the Yonge Subway extension be constructed and operational by no later than 2031.

### Elgin Mills / CNR Tracks and Traffic

For several years Richmond Hill has put up with patching the asphalt or having rubber mats installed at the CNR tracks to reduce the bone rattling track crossing. The train traffic has increased and lengthened. Cars and transport trucks are forced to line up and wait on average 4 ½ minutes and sometimes as long as 9-12 minutes for a freight train to pass.



The Elgin Mills/CNR crossing meets all necessary criteria to warrant a separation between rail and vehicular traffic. Count them: There are between 17-30 trains daily with an annual average daily traffic estimate of 38,700 vehicles. GO Rail includes 10 daily commuter trains during weekday peak periods (5 trains southbound, 5 trains northbound). There is also on average, one VIA Rail commuter train per day. In fact, this crossing far exceeds, by 3-5 times, the traffic criteria standard set by the Federal government to warrant a grade separation. Construction is estimated at \$75 million. \$32 million will come from the Region. York Region has submitted an 85 page proposal to the Federal Government through the National Trade Corridors Fund.

The estimated construction end date is December 2026. We need Federal funds now.

### 'York Region is set to deliver \$2.4 billion in water and wastewater projects over the next 10 years' [www.york.ca](http://www.york.ca)

When you read an announcement like that it is hard to imagine how \$2.4 BILLION could be spent on servicing our water and wastewater needs across this region. Consider, there are 1.2 million residents, 51,000 businesses, and 600,000 employees currently in York Region to serve and a natural environment to protect.

I think that it's good to know that currently 140 projects are being built or upgraded across York Region. Not only is it reassuring to know that government is tackling huge vital services within a protective environmental context but the enormity of costs becomes more understandable. We need reliable, clean, safe drinking water. We need our wastewater to be processed safely and returned to source. And with approximately 49% of your residential property tax dollar being spent or invested by York Region, it is good to know that you are getting great value for your tax dollar.