

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE - DECEMBER 8, 2003

HIGHWAY 427 EXTENSION COMMITTEE APPOINTMENT OF VAUGHAN REPRESENTATIVE

Recommendation

Mayor Michael Di Biase recommends that:

1. Councillor Tony Carella be appointed to fill the City of Vaughan vacancy on the Highway 427 Extension Committee;
2. The City's remaining representatives on the Highway 427 Extension Committee (Mayor Di Biase and Regional and Local Councillor Frustaglio) continue in this capacity;
3. This report be forwarded to the Regional Municipality of York; the Regional Municipality of Peel; the City of Brampton; the Town of Caledon; and the Township of King with the request for their continued representation and participation on the Highway 427 Extension Committee; and
4. Staff be directed to set up a meeting of the Highway 427 Extension Committee early in the new year.

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to fill a City of Vaughan vacancy on the inter-municipal Highway 427 Extension Committee; request the continued representation and participation of the member municipalities; and to provide direction to Staff to set up a meeting of the Committee early in the new year.

Background – Analysis and Options

Origin and Objectives

The initial meeting of the Highway 427 Extension Committee took place on March 8, 2001. The committee is made up of representatives from the City of Vaughan, the Township of King, the Regional Municipality of York, the City of Brampton, the Town of Caledon and the Regional Municipality of Peel. The committee was struck in response to a number of traffic and development issues in the Highway 50 corridor that would be best addressed through the completion of the Environmental Assessment for the Highway 427 extension. The Committee's specific objectives are:

- To promote and expedite the north extension of Highway 427 in the Regions of Peel and York;
- To develop a common inter-regional position on matters relating to the Highway 427 Extension and any interim transportation solutions that will address community needs, environmental concerns, and economic growth opportunities;
- To support and fully co-operate with provincial transportation authorities in order to expedite the completion of the Environmental Assessment process initiated by the Ontario Ministry of Transportation; and

- To review and support, where appropriate, all initiatives and projects that provide interim solutions to existing traffic problems and transportation issues, thereby ensuring that the short-term requirements of new development and employment growth are consistent with the long-term benefits of the new Highway 427 extended corridor. The Committee also will undertake any studies required in support of proposed interim solutions.

Committee Membership

Prior to the November 2003 election the Highway 427 Extension Committee was composed of the following members:

- Regional and Local Councillor Gino Rosati (Chair), City of Vaughan;
- Mayor Michael Di Biase, City of Vaughan;
- Regional and Local Councillor Joyce Frustaglio, City of Vaughan;
- Regional Councillor Paul Palleschi (Vice-Chair), City of Brampton;
- Mayor Susan Fennell, City of Brampton;
- Mayor Margaret Black, Township of King;
- Mayor Carol Seglins, Town of Caledon;
- Chair Emil Kolb, Region of Peel;
- Chair Bill Fisch, Region of York;
- Regional Councillor Richard Whitehead (Alternate), Town of Caledon.

Each participating municipality will have to adjust its representation on the basis of their election results. It is recommended that Council appoint Councillor Tony Carella to fill the Vaughan vacancy and that the City's remaining representatives continue to serve on the Committee. It is noted that Councillor Carella represents Ward 2, which will be directly affected by the Highway 427 Environmental Assessment.

Basis for Continuing the Work of the Committee

The Highway 427 extension will face a series of on-going challenges as it proceeds through the Environmental Assessment approval process. It will be important for the affected municipalities to be vigilant to ensure that the EA is completed in a timely manner. Continuing to speak with a single voice will be an advantage in dealing with the Province, its Ministries and Agencies. A recent example of a successful collaboration amongst the participating municipalities was the completion of the Boundary Area Transportation Study (BATS). It developed a number of interim solutions to road network congestion in the Highway 50/Highway 427 corridors, which are now working toward implementation.

Since the announcement on December 14, 2001 that the Province would be proceeding with the Highway 427 Environmental Assessment, a number of delays have been encountered in the preparation of the EA Terms of Reference. Shortly after the announcement, work was delayed in order to expand the study area north of Highway 89 to accommodate the needs of Simcoe County. The Terms of Reference are now on hold because of a court decision that prohibits the scoping of routing

alternatives at this stage in the process. Further direction will be required from the Ministry of Transportation before the EA Terms of Reference can be finalized and sent to the Ministry of the Environment for approval.

The newly elected provincial government will be reviewing its policies and priorities during the early days of its mandate. It will be important for the new government to have a clear understanding of the importance of the Highway 427 extension to Peel, York, Brampton, Vaughan and Caledon. Therefore, the work of the Highway 427 Extension Committee should continue in order to ensure that the Province has a comprehensive appreciation of the issues surrounding the highway, to expedite the EA process and to advance solutions where appropriate.

Conclusion

It is recommended that Councillor Tony Carella be appointed to fill the City of Vaughan vacancy on the Highway 427 Extension Committee and that the remaining members (Mayor Di Biase and Regional and Local Councillor Frustaglio) continue to represent the City.

The Highway 427 extension is of strategic importance to the City. It will be important to convey that message to the Provincial government in a clear and consistent manner. The Highway 427 Extension Committee will serve to further this objective by adding the voices of other municipalities that are affected by the extension and the uncertainties that will arise out of the Environmental Assessment process.

Therefore, it is recommended that this report be forwarded to the Regions of Peel and York, the City of Brampton, the Town of Caledon and the Township of King with the request for their continued representation and participation on the Highway 427 Extension Committee. In addition, Staff should be directed to set up a Committee meeting early in the new year in order to discuss the current challenges to the Environmental Assessment process.

Should Council concur, then the recommendation set out above should be adopted.

Attachments

N/A

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Di Biase
Mayor