

GREATER TORONTO AREA POOLING SOCIAL SERVICE COSTS

Recommendation

The Commissioner of Finance & Corporate Services recommends:

That the following resolution be adopted:

Whereas the City of Vaughan and other municipalities in the GTA are also experiencing significant budgetary pressures;

And Whereas GTA Pooling amounts to taxation without representation on the property owners of the City of Vaughan;

And Whereas the Regional Municipality of York, Region of Durham, Region of Halton and the Region of Peel all forward significant funds to the Province to fund social service costs in Toronto through GTA pooling;

And Whereas GTA pooling represents twenty-four (24) municipalities within these four (4) Regions who are required to collect local property tax dollars and forward them to the Province for use by the City of Toronto;

And Whereas Social Housing and Social Assistance costs should be more appropriately funded by the Province and not through property taxation;

Now Therefore be it resolved that the City of Vaughan supports in principle the actions of the Town of Richmond Hill to draw attention to the GTA pooling issue;

That the Province of Ontario, through consultation with the local and regional GTA municipalities eliminate GTA Pooling;

That the Province take further steps to remove funding for the implementation of provincial social policies from property taxation.

And that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to the Premier of Ontario Dalton McGuinty, the Honourable Greg Sorbara, Minister of Finance, the Honourable John Gerretsen, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, local Members of Provincial Parliament, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, the Regional Municipalities of York, Peel, Durham and Halton and all local GTA municipalities.

Purpose

To provide Council with a resolution regarding the discontinuance of GTA pooling and the removal of funding for the implementation of provincial social policies from property taxation.

Background - Analysis and Options

At the February 14, 2005 Council meeting staff were requested to draft a resolution requesting the Province of Ontario to discontinue GTA Pooling.

In 1998 Greater Toronto Area pooling was introduced as a measure to reduce the burden of the local services realignment on the City of Toronto. The services involved are Social Assistance

Social Housing. Every year the Province provides the funding requirement from each GTA Region as an estimate for their share of the pooling cost for inclusion in their operating budget.

Since the introduction of GTA pooling, up to and including 2005, York Region will have collected from local municipalities and forwarded \$654.4 million to the Province to fund Toronto Social Services. Of this amount \$194.7 million was collected within the City of Vaughan. In 2005 approximately 31.3% of this funding for GTA pooling is collected in the City of Vaughan.

Conclusion

This resolution recognizes that GTA pooling amounts to taxation without representation, that other municipalities like Toronto have budgetary issues and the funding for the implementation of provincial social policy issues should not be funded from property taxation.

Attachments

Attachment 1 – Richmond Hill Resolution

Respectfully submitted,

Clayton D. Harris, CA
Commissioner of Finance & Corporate Services

Greater Toronto Area (GTA) Pooling - Town of Richmond Hill Portion

Moved by: Mayor Bell

Rec. 17 WHEREAS the City of Toronto has consistently said it is distinct from other municipalities in Ontario and wishes to independently negotiate with other levels of government;

AND WHEREAS the City of Toronto has recently withdrawn as a member of the Association of Municipalities of Ontario;

AND WHEREAS the City of Toronto is currently considering withdrawing from the Greater Toronto Marketing Alliance;

AND WHEREAS the City of Toronto currently receives payments for Pooling Costs from municipalities located outside of its boundaries for services rendered by the City of Toronto inside of its boundaries;

AND WHEREAS the payment of such Pooling Costs amounts to taxation without representation on the residents of the Town of Richmond Hill;

AND WHEREAS the City of Toronto has not paid its share of the costs of operating the GO Transit system despite all other GO Transit partners meeting their funding obligations;

AND WHEREAS the Town of Richmond Hill believes that the payment of Pooling Costs to the City of Toronto by municipalities outside the City of Toronto is inconsistent with the stated intentions of the City of Toronto to be considered distinct from other municipalities and to independently negotiate with other levels of government;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Town of Richmond Hill will withhold its share of Regional Pooling Costs estimated to be \$15,660,000 in the 2005 Regional Levy, and should the City of Toronto wish to use Richmond Hill taxpayer money, Council and Staff would be happy to negotiate directly with the City of Toronto;

(continued)

And further, that this resolution be sent to all municipalities in the Greater Toronto Area requesting their support and requesting that they pass a similar motion in this regard;

And further, that this resolution be sent to the Provincial Minister of Finance, Greg Sorbara; Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, John Gerretsen and to the Federal Minister of State (Infrastructure and Communities), the Honourable John Ferguson Godfrey.

Carried Unanimously