

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – MAY 15, 2006

REGION OF YORK DRAFT POLICY FUNDING OF COLLECTOR ROAD CROSSINGS OF 400-SERIES HIGHWAYS

Recommendations

The Commissioner of Engineering and Public Works, in consultation with the Director of Reserves and Investments, recommends:

1. That this report be received for information purposes.
2. That the Region of York be requested to amend their draft policy, entitled “Funding of Collector Road Crossings of 400-Series Highways” to include long term structural maintenance costs imposed by the Ministry of Transportation and/or the 407/ETR, as a component of the project costs to be eligible for Regional funding.
3. That a copy of this report be forwarded to the Region of York.

Economic Impact

There are no immediate economic impacts resulting from the adoption of this report. However, an increase in capital expenditure will result should the Region of York not adopt its draft policy or amend it to include the long term structural maintenance costs of collector road crossings of 400-series highways.

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide the Region of York with formal comments on their draft policy entitled “Funding of Collector Road Crossings of 400-Series Highways”.

Background - Analysis and Options

On February 16, 2006 a draft policy entitled “Funding of Collector Road Crossings of 400-Series Highways” was presented to Regional Council for consideration. This policy, once finalized allows the Region to formalize their position respecting financial contributions to local municipalities for the construction of municipal collector road crossings of 400-series highways. These road projects fall within local municipal jurisdiction, are typically located mid-concession block between Regional arterial roads, and require bridge structures to facilitate their crossing of a 400-series highway such as Highway 400, 407 and 427.

Although jurisdictional responsibility for the construction and on-going maintenance for mid-block collector highway crossings is at the local municipal level, direct tangible benefits to the Region are realized as a result of their construction. These benefits include:

- the provision of additional transportation capacity to the Regional arterial roads,
- relief from expansion pressures on nearby Regional arterial roads,
- facilitating Regional transit improvements/initiatives,
- improving the provision of emergency services,
- supporting the Region’s intensification goals, and
- increased opportunities for growth of related businesses by the connection of employment areas flanking each side of the 400-series highways.

The planning and construction of continuous mid-block collector roads substantially improves the performance of the local and regional road system and the provision of transit services. As a

result, it has been common practice that funding for one third of the capital cost of these overpasses/underpasses are identified and cost shared by the Region and has been included in the current Regional Development Charge By-law.

The Ministry of Transportation (MTO) is now imposing maintenance costs associated with newly constructed bridges over the 400-series highways. These costs are onerous to the City, whether paid up front or spread equally over a certain period of time and cannot be funded through Development Charges. Therefore, they must be accommodated from alternate revenue sources.

Overall the draft Regional policy allows for the City's Development Charge rate to remain lower and facilitates improved coordination of projects and initiatives between Regional and Local levels.

Region of York's Proposed Funding Policy

The Region's draft policy essentially establishes:

- a) a clear and transparent funding formula for capital budget planning purposes,
- b) what components of the project are eligible for funding,
- c) eligibility criteria for project funding, and
- d) an official Municipal notification protocol in order for a local municipality to receive funding for an eligible project.

The capital construction costs associated with these collector road projects and bridge structures are eligible for full funding from Development Charges either at the Regional or local Municipal level.

The draft policy recommends that York Region contribute one-third of the cost of the bridge structure and associated road works. The limits of the project will extend to a point on either side of the 400-series highway crossing to where the new road will intersect with the first existing or planned municipal road.

Eligible components of the project include all engineering fees, roadwork and structural related construction costs, storm sewers, utility relocates and property requirements. Non eligible components of the project include local watermain or sanitary sewer services, signage, sidewalk, illumination, traffic signals and streetscaping. Currently all costs associated with legal and maintenance agreements as required by the Ministry of Transportation and/or 407/ETR are not included in the Region of York's proposed funding policy.

Other Regional municipalities such as the Region of Peel do not provide any Development Charge financial contribution to similar types of local bridge projects.

The City's current Development Charge Background Study dated August 2003 includes the following projects which would be eligible for Regional funding.

1. Portage Parkway (Applewood Crescent) Overpass at Highway 400
2. Zenway/Fogal Underpass at future Highway 427 extension north of Highway 7 (Block 58)
3. America Avenue Overpass at Highway 400 (Block 33)

Relationship to Vaughan Vision 2007

In consideration of the strategic priorities related to the planning and management of growth as established by Vaughan Vision 2007, the recommendations of this report will assist in ensuring:

- Growth does not outpace the road network infrastructure;

- That municipal installations and operations are undertaken in an environmentally responsible manner;
- That proposed road patterns provide effective and efficient transportation and transit services;
- Coordination of development with municipal facilities; and
- Implementation of the policies established by OPA No. 600

Conclusion

Overall the draft Regional policy allows for the City's Development Charge rate to remain lower and facilitates improved coordination of projects and initiatives between Regional and Local levels. It is recommended that the long term structural maintenance costs imposed by the Ministry of Transportation and/or the 407/ETR be included as an eligible component for Regional funding.

The Region's final policy will be brought forward to Regional Council this fall following receipt of comments from the local municipalities.

Attachment

N/A

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Respectfully submitted,

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