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TRAFFIC CONTROL SIGNAL YONGE STREET AT OAK RIDGES MORAINÉ CORRIDOR PARK OPERATING AND MAINTENANCE COST

The Transportation and Works Committee recommends the adoption of the recommendations contained in the following report, November 19, 2008, from the Commissioner of Transportation Services:

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

1. Regional Council support the request from the Toronto Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) for the Region to pay the operating and maintenance costs of the traffic control signal at the intersection Yonge Street (Y.R. 1) and the Oak Ridges Moraine Corridor Park.
2. The Regional Clerk forward this report to the Toronto Region Conservation Authority.

2. PURPOSE

This report seeks Regional Council's support of a request from TRCA, on behalf of the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH), for the Region to remove their requirement to pay for the operating and maintenance costs associated with the traffic control signal at the intersection of Yonge Street and the entrance to the Oak Ridges Moraine Corridor Park. The location is shown on *Attachment 1*.

3. BACKGROUND

At its meeting of October 27, 2005, Regional Council adopted Clause 7 of Report No. 8 of the Transportation and Works Committee which supported the construction of a traffic control signal on Yonge Street at the entrance to the Oak Ridges Moraine Corridor Park and recommended that the lead provincial agency being Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH) be requested to pay the installation, operation and maintenance costs associated with the signal. Since then ongoing discussions are occurring between the province and TRCA relating to the park ownership and management options.

The traffic control signal has been constructed

Discussions took place with the TRCA with respect to funding for the signals and it was agreed that the Region would construct the signal and invoice TRCA for this work. Regional staff prepared the design and issued a construction contract to install the signals at this location. The signal was installed in early March of 2008.

As the original direction from Regional Council was for the MMAH to pay for the operating and maintenance costs of the signal, staff have been reluctant to activate the signals until an agreement was reached on the payment of the operating and maintenance costs. At this point in time, neither TRCA nor MMAH has agreed to pay these costs.

Recently a request was received from TRCA for the Region to pay the costs of operating and maintaining these signals.

4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

The TRCA has been invoiced for the construction costs of the signals. A request was received from TRCA to relieve them from their obligation to pay for the operating and maintenance cost for the signal. Since it was Regional Council direction that TRCA was to pay these costs, staff is now seeking Council authorization to change this direction and assume the costs.

The Oak Ridges Moraine trail benefits the residents of the Region

The Oak Ridges Corridor Park (ORCP), is a wildlands nature reserve park on the Oak Ridges Moraine, consisting of 428 hectares of land owned by TRCA in the Town of Richmond Hill. The Region of York was a partner in the development of the ORCP Management Plan which prescribes significant natural heritage restoration and public trail development. A 5 kilometre portion of the Oak Ridges trail traverses the park and is seen as a significant amenity to Regional residents. York Region, under the Greening Strategy, is a partner on a number of projects with the Oak Ridges Trail Association, Town of Richmond Hill and Toronto Region Conservation Authority.

Under the Sustainability Strategy, York Region is advancing a Regional Natural Heritage trails initiative. The Region recognizes the importance of large scale Regional public trail networks to its residents such as the Oak Ridges trail. The crossing of the Oak Ridges trail at Yonge Street in Richmond Hill provides a safe passage for trail users.

On September 18, 2008, Regional Council adopted the Pedestrian and Cycling Master Plan. The Master Plan includes a pedestrian system along Yonge Street that will connect to the pedestrian zone along the Oak Ridges Moraine trail. It would be a positive contribution for York Region, as a partner with both the Oak Ridges Trail Association

and in support of the development of the Oak Ridges Corridor Park, to accept the operational maintenance costs associated with the traffic signals at this location.

The signal can be turned on upon adoption of this report

The TRCA has agreed to pay for the cost of the construction of the signals. If this report is adopted the signal will be activated.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The annual operating and maintenance costs associated with a traffic control signal is approximately \$6,700. These funds are available in the proposed 2009 Roads operating budget.

6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

The traffic control signal on Yonge Street at the Oak Ridges Moraine Corridor Park provides park visitors with a safer access to the Oak Ridges Moraine trail parking area and a safer crossing of Yonge Street.

7. CONCLUSION

The construction of the traffic control signal at the intersection Yonge Street and the Oak Ridges Moraine Corridor Park was completed in early March, 2008, however it has not been activated pending agreement from TRCA to pay for the operating and maintenance costs as authorized by Regional Council. TRCA has recently requested that they be relieved from their obligation to pay these costs and requested the Region to assume the operating and maintenance costs of the traffic signal.

Regional staff are in support of this request and recommend that Regional Council authorize these costs to be included in the annual roads operating budget.

For more information on this report, please contact Paul Jankowski, General Manager Roads at extension 5901.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.

(The attachment referred to in this clause was included in the agenda for the December 3, 2008 Committee meeting.)