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REGIONAL ROAD ASSUMPTION CRITERIA

The Transportation and Works Committee recommends the adoption of the recommendation contained in the following report, September 22, 2004, from the Commissioner of Transportation and Works:

1. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that:

1. Copies of this report proposing Regional Road Assumption Criteria be circulated by the Regional Clerk to the Clerks of each of the local municipalities with a request for review and comments by December 17, 2004.

2. PURPOSE

From time to time, the Region is requested to assume certain roads from the local municipalities. This report proposes criteria to determine if roads perform a Regional function and should be transferred to the Region. Some Regional roads also perform more of a local function and should be considered in these criteria for possible reversion to the local municipality.

3. BACKGROUND

York Region's Official Plan defines the long-term Regional road network required to meet the transportation demands of future land use development. Map 9 of the Official Plan identifies both existing Regional roads and those roads not currently in the Regional road system which will form future arterial roads.

To accommodate the transportation demands to the year 2021, the Official Plan identified York Region's future arterial road network. As development proceeds, sections of the original road network, initially under municipal jurisdiction, require upgrading and expansion. These roads normally change in their function and classification and become major arterial roads. These roads then become candidates for inclusion into the Regional road system. The existing major criteria used by staff for evaluating the incorporation of a road into the Regional road system are:

- Currently functions as an arterial road.
 - Urban arterial roads carry large volumes of all types of traffic moving at medium to high speeds with limited direct access to adjacent development. They link communities and serve Regional and inter-municipal travel demands.
- Serves a high percentage of inter-municipal or inter-regional traffic.

- Provides a connection to or connections across barriers to traffic such as freeways, railroads, rivers etc.
- Provides traffic service parallel to existing Regional roads or Provincial facilities, thus providing a more even distribution of traffic.
- Extends an existing Regional road thus providing a longer continuous route.

4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

Although staff has made recommendations to Regional Council on assumptions of local roads based on the above criteria, it is felt this criteria should be reviewed and formalized.

4.1 Adjacent Municipalities

Several adjacent municipalities were contacted to determine if they had criteria for the assumption of local roads into Regional road system. Many use the same thought process we have used in the past and some have formalized the criteria into policies.

4.2 Proposed York Region Criteria

Regional roads fall into two categories, rural and urban, and for the purposes of this report will be treated separately. Regional roads are arterial roads which carry vehicles travelling longer distances, typically between home and work and between different communities and business centres. Regional arterial roads also have fewer access points than do local or collector roads. Regional roads, in general, form part of the main concession grid road system. Mid-block roads would not generally be considered as a Regional road.

4.2.1 Rural Roads

Rural roads are in those areas which fall outside urban areas as defined in the Official Plan. Map 5 of the Official Plan defines clear edges between these rural and urban areas.

The following criteria are proposed for the assumption of existing roads as Regional roads in rural areas:

1. Connects designated rural settlements, having existing major commercial/industrial development or more than 150 persons, to each other and a Regional road or Provincial Highway.
2. Connects a Provincial Highway or Regional road to:
 - a. Provincial Highway.
 - b. Major commercial and industrial areas.
 - c. Major Institutional complexes such as colleges, hospital, etc.
3. Provides service close to consistent major attractors or generators of heavy vehicles.

4. Provides service parallel to and, where justified, crossing major barriers to free traffic movement.
5. Provides service on those roads which are extensions of roads designated as Regional roads in urban areas and thence to a Regional road or a Provincial Highway.
6. Provides service on those roads which are extensions of roads designated as Regional or County Roads in neighbouring jurisdictions and, thence, to a Regional road or a Provincial Highway.
7. Roads should have a current traffic volume greater than 4,000 annual average daily traffic (AADT).
8. Roads should be part of the original concession road grid.

In order for a road to be designated as a Regional road in the rural areas, it is proposed it must meet at least one of the criteria one through six and it must meet criteria seven and eight. This will help ensure that only the major arterial roads are transferred to the Region.

4.2.2 Urban Areas

Urban roads are in those areas designated as urban areas as defined in the Official Plan. Map 5 of the Official Plan defines these urban areas.

The following criteria are proposed for the assumption of existing roads as Regional roads in urban areas:

1. Provides the necessary arterial capacity in a major travel corridor and in general, should be used for inter-municipal traffic.
2. Comprises a reasonable direct and unbroken major traffic route or corridor which connects with major arterial roads or to one or more existing or proposed Provincial Highways at a grade-separated interchange.
3. May include a linkage, existing or proposed, required to cross or circumvent a physical barrier that breaks the logical continuity of the route.
4. Roads should have a current traffic volume greater than 5,000 AADT.
5. Roads should be part of the original concession road grid.

In order for a road to be designated as a Regional road in urban areas, it is proposed that it must meet at least one of the criteria one through three and it must meet criteria four and five, to ensure only the major arterial roads are transferred.

4.3 Impacts on Road System

Staff completed a review of the road system in York Region based on these criteria. The result of this review showed a possible assumption of 386 lane km from local municipalities to the Region, and a possible 59 lane km of Regional roads which could be transferred to the local municipalities. These roads are identified in *Attachment 1* to this report. The transfers could take place over the next 25 years or so.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

For each new lane kilometre of road assumed into the Regional road system, there is an immediate corresponding operation and maintenance cost and a future capital cost of reconstruction and/or widening. The local municipality will have an immediate reduction in their operating and maintenance costs. The growth related portion of the future capital cost is included in the Development Charge By-Law to partially cover the reconstruction and widening costs. The cost apportionment is typically 76.5% development charges and 23.5% tax levy. The operating and maintenance cost is currently \$6,719/lane km, all tax levy. This cost is based on the costs in the 2004 Business Plan.

5.1 Operating and Maintenance

Over the next 25 years or so, based on the criteria in this report, it is expected that approximately 386 lane km of road could be assumed by the Region from the local municipalities. There is also approximately 59 lane km of Regional road no longer performing a Regional function and should be transferred to the local municipality leaving a net increase to the Regional road system of 327 lane km. This represents a \$2,198,000 increase in the annual operating and maintenance budget (at maturity). The savings in annual operating and maintenance costs realized by the local municipality will free up tax room in the order of \$2,000/lane km for paved roads and \$4,500/lane km for loose top, which should be transferred to the Region with the road.

5.2 Capital Cost

Based on current estimates, the cost to widen and reconstruct a two-lane arterial to a five-lane urban arterial road is \$2.0 million per km, ie. two-lane km. This translates into \$299 million over the next 25 years for local municipal road transfers. Based on 76.5% development charges and 23.5% tax levy, this equates to \$70.26 million increase in tax levy over 25 years. This assumes all transferred roads will require widening and/or reconstruction within the 25-year time frame. The amounts will be offset by the development charges collected by local municipalities which will be transferred to the Region when the road is transferred.

6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

This report proposes criteria to be used for evaluating the incorporation of a road into the Regional road system. When a road is transferred from the local municipality to the Region, the local municipality will have a corresponding reduction in the maintenance costs creating some tax room, which should be transferred to the Region.

Regional staff recommends that a copy of this report be sent to the Clerks of each of the local municipalities for review and comments prior to formatting the criteria into a policy.

7. CONCLUSION

Regional staff has reviewed the existing criteria used for evaluating the incorporation of a road into the Regional road system and recommends that the Regional Road Assumption Criteria contained in this report be sent to each of the local municipalities for review and comments by December 17, 2004.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.

(The attachment referred to in this clause is included with this report.)