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2004 YORKINFO PARTNERSHIP

The Planning and Economic Development Committee recommends the adoption of the recommendation contained in the following report, October 8, 2004, from the Commissioner of Planning and Development Services:

1. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that:

1. This report be received for information.

2. PURPOSE

This report informs Committee and Regional Council about the 2004 YorkInfo Partnership highlights and the successful establishment of the YorkInfo Partnership Charter. (*Attachment 1*)

3. BACKGROUND

The YorkInfo Partnership works together to create and operate a geospatial information framework among tax-funded, not-for-profit organizations that operate within York Region. Membership includes all nine area municipalities, the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority (LSRCA), Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA), the York Catholic District School Board and the York Region District School Board.

York Region Geomatics initiated the Partnership on January 1, 1996 with a signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Region and the Town of East Gwillimbury. The Township of King and Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville joined the Partnership in 1997, the York Region District School Board in 1999, the Towns of Aurora and Georgina, the two Conservation Authorities joined in 2000 and the Towns of Newmarket and Markham in 2002. With the signing of MOUs with Richmond Hill and Vaughan in 2003, all tax-funded organizations within York Region are now members of the Partnership.

4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

4.1 2004 YorkInfo Partnership Highlights

Several significant successes were realized through the Partnership in 2004.

4.1.1 Orthophotography Mosaics

The Region provided 2002 orthophotography mosaics of their jurisdiction to the respective Partners. These mosaics provide the user with the positional accuracy of a map, plus the detailed visual information available in a photograph.

4.1.2 Key Geospatial Data

York Region maintained and distributed quarterly updates of key geospatial datasets to the Partners. These datasets include, but are not limited to:

- Single Line Road Network (SLRN)
- Parcel Fabric
- Draft Approved Plans and Pending Plans of Subdivision
- Forestry
- Water and Wastewater Facilities
- Emergency Services Locations and Boundaries
- School Locations
- Lakes and Rivers

4.1.3 Water and Wastewater Hydraulic Modelling

The area municipalities provided drawings and digital information on sewer lines, maintenance holes, pumping stations, drainage areas and service areas to the Region for the development of a hydraulic model. This model will ultimately result in better coordination of services for water and wastewater.

4.1.4 West Nile virus (WNV) Catch Basins

York Region Health Services Department required catch basin locations to successfully implement the WNV monitoring and larviciding treatment program.

The Partners worked together to develop a Region wide database through providing catch basin information in whatever form they had. Newmarket and Aurora supplied their engineering AutoCAD files. York Region Geomatics created the catch basin data for East Gwillimbury, Georgina, King, Vaughan and Whitchurch-Stouffville through the use of GPS and digitizing directly from orthophotography. Richmond Hill and Markham provided their catch basins in a geospatial format. York Region then created a Regional coverage of this information and provided back to Partners a new and improved catch basin database in the areas where improvements were made.

4.1.5 Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan

York Region Geomatics provided significant data, resources and expertise to the Towns of East Gwillimbury, Whitchurch-Stouffville and the Township of King to assist in bringing their official plan and zoning by-law information and mapping into conformity with the *Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan*.

4.1.6 GeoSmart Application

York Region Geomatics was the lead Partner in the development and submission of a joint application, on behalf of the YorkInfo Partnership, to the GeoSmart Program for a

project entitled “York GeoNet”. The application proposes the development of a “portal” infrastructure that would provide access to a geospatial warehouse enabling the efficient discovery of land information, through project partner websites with the appearance of coming from the partner website. The web application will enable access to regulations, geospatial information and metadata. The partners will have secure access to more robust information and web mapping services than the public. No single agency would be able to build or maintain this type of application independently, because regulatory attributes and extents mandated by each are so dynamic. Proposed activities for the Town of Richmond Hill will extend this concept and take its infrastructure to a new level towards an enterprise GIS, focussing on environmental and economic needs.

Partnership organizations involved in the proposed project include the Towns of Aurora, East Gwillimbury, Georgina, Whitchurch-Stouffville, Richmond Hill, the Township of King, and the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority.

4.1.7 Training

York Geomatics makes its GIS-related training courses, developed for internal GIS users, available to the Partners at no cost. In addition, York Geomatics provided the Town of Richmond Hill GIS staff with training on the uploading of the Town’s metadata information to the Region’s metadata repository. This will facilitate the sharing of metadata with all YorkInfo Partners. The training provided served as a pilot for providing metadata training to the remaining Partners in 2005.

4.2 YorkInfo Partnership Charter

By the autumn of 2003, it was evident that the Partnership had evolved to the point that it would benefit from the development of a charter to define a framework for cooperation in the creation and management of a geospatial infrastructure among the Partners including a governance model, vision, and mission statement of the YorkInfo Partnership. The first step was to create an Executive Board and Co-ordinating Committee then the Charter was developed through an iterative, consultative process.

The YorkInfo Partnership Charter was presented by the Partnership’s Executive Board to the Co-ordinating Committee for approval at its meeting of May 28, 2004. It was officially launched at the YorkInfo Partnership Annual General Meeting held on September 29, 2004.

The following summarizes the contents of the Charter.

4.2.1 Vision

The Partnership envisions that:

“Our communities will be enriched through the provision of a coordinated geospatial infrastructure.”

4.2.2 Mission Statement

The Partnership mission statement describes how it will achieve its vision.

“The Partnership will develop a Geospatial Information infrastructure enabling efficient integration and access to mapping technologies and information.”

4.2.3 Principles

Strong partnerships evolve from mutual respect and complementary strengths, combined with collaborative planning and decision-making. Consequently, the YorkInfo Partnership has developed principles to guide its interactions and activities.

4.2.4 Goals

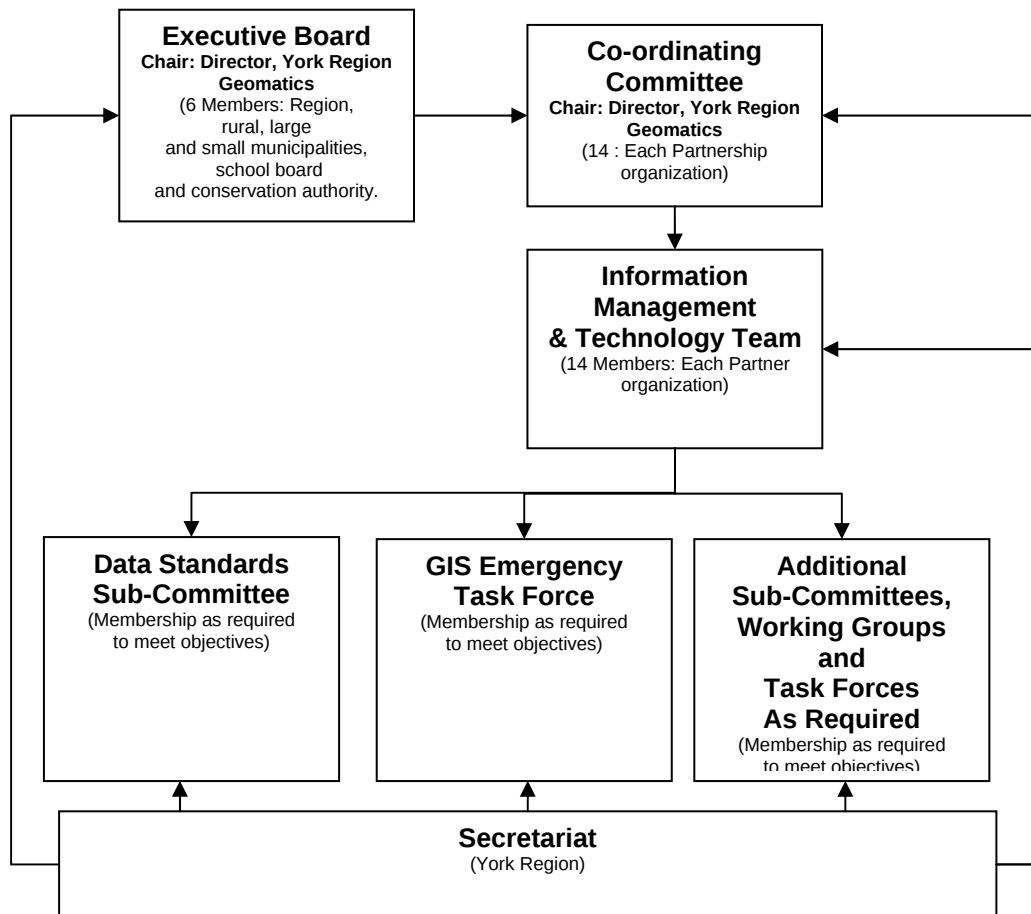
Goals have been defined to identify the major objectives that the Partners will accomplish to have successfully achieved its vision. These goals are:

- Create a geospatial framework to facilitate the sharing of accurate, current, relevant geographic information
- Efficient creation and maintenance of spatial data
- Create efficiencies and economies of scale related to the development and acquisition of tools, licences and training
- Create opportunities for joint initiatives
- Present a strong, unified voice in the geomatics sector at provincial and federal levels
- Provide coordinated GIS emergency management and support

4.2.5 Organizational Framework

The Partnership is coordinated through a framework of members participating in a Co-ordinating Committee, Executive Board and an Information Management and Technology Team. Task forces and standing committees of appropriate GIS and IT representation and duration will be established as required to meet objectives. York Region Geomatics Branch will provide the secretariat and co-ordinate the activities of the Partnership to ensure that representation from across the partner organizations and regional departments includes planners, engineers, foresters, Information Technology, GIS management and professional staff.

Chart 1
YorkInfo Partnership Organizational Framework



5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Some fees are recovered from YorkInfo Partnership fees related to data creation, information management, distribution, products and services. This approach reduces duplication and avoids cost expenditures among the tax-funded organizations of York Region.

6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

All nine local municipalities are members of the YorkInfo Partnership. They, along with the Region, have the responsibility to deliver services that fully employ the best use of technology for the best value to our residents. Through cooperation, the Partnership and its members can avoid duplication and costs related to data collection, information management and technology while developing an efficient information infrastructure that

is requisite to manage the challenges of rapidly growing urban areas alongside agriculture lands and environmentally sensitive sites.

7. CONCLUSION

The YorkInfo Partnership continues to evolve and mature in effectiveness and scope. The Charter will guide the Partners in planning and implementing their activities to ensure the successful achievement of its vision of enriched communities through the provision of a geospatial infrastructure.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.

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