



Anti-Whistling Policy for Trains



Transportation and Works Committee
February 6, 2008
Reference Agenda Item D6

Outline

- ☐ Background
 - Requests received from numerous municipalities
- ☐ Policy considerations
 - Recent focus on Aurora and Newmarket
- ☐ Recommendations



Background

- ❑ Anti-whistling requests received from Markham, Vaughan, Newmarket, Whitchurch-Stouffville and Aurora
- ❑ May 2007 – T&W Committee report
 - Anti-whistling not be considered
 - Letter to Minister of Transport Canada for York to be included as part of pilot automated wayside horn project
- ❑ Regional staff requested to pursue the automated wayside horn
- ❑ Concerns continue to be raised for Anti-whistling from Aurora and Newmarket
- ❑ Primary residents concern – noise from freight trains using line during night-time hours



Discussions with key stakeholders

- ☐ Regional staff met with
 - Aurora Mayor and residents
 - Staff from
 - Canadian National Railway
 - GO transit
 - Transport Canada
- ☐ Implementation criteria and standards are required for the use of Automated horn systems



Anti-whistling may increase legal liability

❑ The Brockville Experience

- March 1999 passed anti-whistling by-law
 - 24 hours a day 7 days a week
- February 2005 - 2 children hit by a train
- A traffic safety review was conducted after the fatal crash
- May 2006 whistling prohibited only during the hours of 10:00 pm and 6:00 am after a series of conditions are met



Other considerations in developing a policy

- ❑ Possibility of increased premiums in the event of a collision
- ❑ Liability shifted to the Region from the rail authority as a result of an anti-whistling by-law
- ❑ Primary concern of residents is noise at night
- ❑ 5 Regional crossings on Newmarket and Aurora Line of which 3 pick up passengers (Wellington/Davis Drive/Green Lane)
- ❑ GO trains run during the day and will sound the horn at each passenger station
- ❑ CN operates at night and could eliminate sounding the horn
- ❑ A night time whistling cessation is a compromise that should satisfy most residents while reduces the risk to York Region from a full ban.

Proposed Anti-whistling Policy

- ❑ Criteria to be met for Regional support
 - Safety audit completed by specialized safety consultant
 - Safety audit approved by Transport Canada
 - Install pedestrian gates where pedestrians are present
 - Education program developed for affected area
 - Anti-whistling for the hours of 10:00 pm to 6:00 am only



Financial Implications to Local Municipality

❑ Potential Costs

- Installation of pedestrian gates - \$60,000 to \$100,000 per location – Federal grants provide up to 80% funding
- Safety audit by consultant approximately \$3,000
- Education program, news paper ad and brochures - \$2,500 to \$5,000
- This will be applicable to all municipalities in York Region
- The local municipality is required to submit a written request to York Region for support prior to passing the local by-law

