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QUEENSVILLE SIDEROAD BRIDGE REHABILITATION SIDEWALK PROVISION TOWN OF EAST GWILLIMBURY, PROJECT 81910

The Transportation and Works Committee recommends the adoption of the recommendations contained in the following report, January 19, 2005, from the Commissioner of Transportation and Works:

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

1. The Town of East Gwillimbury be advised that a new south sidewalk on the bridge will only be included in the upcoming 2005 bridge rehabilitation contract if a funding commitment for this work, estimated at \$150,000, is received no later than April 15, 2005 from the Town of East Gwillimbury.
2. Should this commitment not be received, the design plans for the rehabilitation of the Queensville Sideroad (Y.R. 77) bridge over the Holland River in the Town of East Gwillimbury be finalized to allow for a future sidewalk along the south side of the bridge structure.
3. The Regional Clerk forward a copy of this report to the Clerk of the Town of East Gwillimbury.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to seek Regional Council approval for the Commissioner of Transportation and Works to rehabilitate the Queensville Sideroad bridge over the Holland River (*see attachment 1*) in 2005 with provisions for the construction of a new sidewalk on the south side of the structure, and, secondly, to seek Regional Council's approval that the cost of any new sidewalk constructed on the south side of the structure is to be borne by the local municipality.

3. BACKGROUND

The Transportation and Works Department is preparing plans for the rehabilitation of the bridge that carries Queensville Sideroad over the Holland River. This work is scheduled for construction in 2005 and will entail concrete deck and sidewalk repairs, waterproofing, expansion joint replacement, curb removal and construction of new parapet walls.

3.1 Existing Bridge Structure

The existing structure, which was constructed in 1977, is a 300 metre long two-lane bridge with a pedestrian sidewalk on the north side and a narrow curb on the south side of the bridge. Full height aluminium railing and post barrier system provides traffic protection on both sides of the bridge.

3.2 Lower-tier Municipal Sidewalks

Under the Municipal Act, sidewalks on Regional roads are the responsibility of the lower-tier municipality to construct and maintain. Through this legislation, The Regional Municipality of York has provided municipal sidewalks on Regional bridge rehabilitation or new construction projects for lower-tier municipalities on a cost recoverable basis.

The Region's practice has been to provide, at the Region's expense, at least one sidewalk on a structure during the course of any bridge rehabilitation or new bridge construction project. Any sidewalk on the opposite side of the bridge, if requested by the local municipality, has been the responsibility of the local municipality.

3.3 Town of East Gwillimbury Sidewalk Program

The Town of East Gwillimbury constructs new sidewalk locations by priority and one of the most significant measures for need is where transit service is provided. Town Council has endorsed the concept of installing sidewalks on a prioritized basis, with transit routes being one of the major considerations.

Apart from this criteria and notwithstanding that the Town has identified the section of the Queensville Sideroad as a pedestrian link within the Holland Landing community, there is no current local planning to provide a sidewalk network in the area of the Queensville Sideroad bridge.

On Regional roads, a local municipality will normally undertake to provide new sidewalk construction in conjunction with the reconstruction or urbanization of the Regional road and under the Region's 10-year Roads Capital Program, Queensville Sideroad is not scheduled for any improvements. The Town of East Gwillimbury has no current plans to construct sidewalks on the bridge approaches.

3.4 Bridge Design Code

The existing aluminium barrier system on the Queensville Sideroad bridge does not meet current bridge code requirements and therefore requires replacement with a concrete parapet wall.

The Queensville Sideroad bridge accommodates pedestrians on the north sidewalk. The existing south curb does not provide adequate width or safe refuge for pedestrians. Currently, if curbs are removed from an existing bridge, it is required under the Code to either provide a full width sidewalk or to completely remove the curb and construct a level shoulder surface with the road.

Several design alternatives have been prepared and reviewed for the rehabilitation of the bridge that include the option of providing a full width sidewalk along the south side of the bridge in conjunction with the conversion of the barrier system to a concrete parapet wall design.

3.5 Local Council Resolution

By letter dated February 18, 2004, the Town of East Gwillimbury was informed of the Region's plans for the rehabilitation of the Queensville Sideroad bridge and was further advised of a design alternative that provided the opportunity to provide a full width sidewalk on the south side of the bridge.

Pursuant to the Municipal Act legislation governing responsibility for sidewalks, the Region requested the Town to review their need for sidewalk infrastructure in the area and advise whether the Town required a full sidewalk on the south side of the bridge that could be constructed by the Region on a cost recoverable basis. At that time, the cost for performing the structural modifications to accommodate a full sidewalk on the south side was estimated at \$150,000.

On June 7, 2004, the Town of East Gwillimbury Council moved that the Region widen the south curb to provide for a full width sidewalk and, further, that this be done at the Region's expense.

4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

Sidewalks on Regional roads are the responsibility of the lower-tier municipality to construct and maintain. York Region has provided municipal sidewalks on other Regional road and bridge projects for the local municipalities on a cost recoverable basis.

4.1 Design Options

Several design schemes have been evaluated to rehabilitate and upgrade the Queensville Sideroad bridge to current code requirements.

In order to convert the existing railings to a concrete parapet wall, it is necessary to remove the outer edges of the structure, which will include the complete removal of the curb on the south side of the bridge.

Under the current bridge code, either a full width raised sidewalk or an open shoulder area level with the road are to be provided through the rehabilitation of an existing structure.

At this time it is recommended to not provide a south sidewalk on the bridge in 2005 because of the potential liability associated with the partial or discontinuous provisions for pedestrians, unless the Town agrees to the costs and to construct a continuous sidewalk network on the bridge approaches in the near future.

Recognizing that the section of the Queensville Sideroad and bridge location is on a transit route and that the Town has identified the location as a future pedestrian link for the community, the plans for the rehabilitation of the Queensville Sideroad bridge can be prepared in such a manner that a south shoulder area can be readily converted to accommodate a raised full width sidewalk in the future when the Town decides to construct sidewalks along the roadway approaches.

4.2 Sidewalk Cost

Recognizing that certain structural works are required, as a minimum, to satisfy bridge code requirements for the removal of the aluminium barrier system and curb, the incremental additional cost of providing a full width raised sidewalk over a level shoulder area is estimated at \$150,000.

4.3 Upper-tier Precedence

Under the Municipal Act, an upper-tier municipality is not responsible for the construction of sidewalks on its roadway, unless the municipalities agree otherwise.

Typically, York Region has agreed with local municipalities to provide municipal sidewalks on Regional roads on a cost-recoverable basis.

Through these procedures, precedence has been established with the local municipalities that sidewalks are their responsibility and accordingly, the municipalities have paid their share.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

York Region is responsible for all costs associated with the rehabilitation of the Queensville Sideroad bridge. Funds in the amount of \$1,400,000 are included in the 2005 Roads Capital budget to undertake this work.

6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

Financial construction impacts on the Town are minor.

The Region has advised the Town that a funding commitment is required by April 15, 2005 to incorporate an additional sidewalk along the south side of the bridge into the upcoming 2005 construction contract. The cost of this work is estimated at \$150,000.

The rehabilitation of the Queensville bridge will be carried out under a staged construction scheme where one lane will be open to traffic at all times during construction. Local traffic will be maintained at all times to provide access to businesses and residences in the area.

7. CONCLUSION

Under the Municipal Act, an upper-tier municipality is not responsible for the construction of sidewalks on its roadway.

In future, if new sidewalks are warranted on the south side of Queenville Sideroad, the shoulder area on the south side of the bridge could readily be converted to a raised full-width sidewalk. The design plans for the bridge have been prepared to accommodate their change without any major re-build of the structure. Accordingly, staff recommend that an additional sidewalk on the south side of the bridge only be included in the upcoming 2005 construction contract if the Town provides a funding commitment for this work by April 15, 2005 and the Town plans to extend the sidewalk on the bridge approaches in the near future.

Any construction of a new bridge sidewalk without proper sidewalk on the bridge approaches is considered a potential liability and should be avoided in the interest of public safety.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.

(The attachment referred to in this clause was included in the agenda for the February 2, 2005 Committee meeting.)