

## **9**

### **2005 YORK REGION VISITORS' GUIDE**

**The Planning and Economic Development Committee recommends the adoption of the recommendation contained in the following report, March 15, 2005, from the Commissioner of Planning and Development Services:**

#### **1. RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that:

1. This report be received for information.

#### **2. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this report is to update Regional Council on the production and distribution of the 2005 York Region Visitors' Guide and to advise Regional Council that the Commissioner of Planning and Development Services is exercising his authority to renew the services of Lenmark Communications Ltd. to produce the 2006 Visitors' Guide .

#### **3. BACKGROUND**

In February 2004, regional staff issued a request for proposal and conducted a three stage evaluation process to select a proponent to design, produce and print the 2005 York Region Visitors Guide. In June 2004, based on the evaluation results, Regional Council approved retaining the services of Lenmark Communications Ltd. to design, produce and print the 2005 York Region Visitors Guide.

#### **4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS**

The Visitors' Guide is the only Regional publication of its kind and is the front line consumer brochure designed to promote travel to and within the Region. Eighty thousand copies of the Guide are produced on an annual basis. The Guide provides comprehensive information regarding area Municipalities, attractions, accommodations, arts, theatre, dining, shopping, golfing, marinas, nature, events listings and more. The Guide provides affordable advertising buy-in opportunities that allows Regional tourism stakeholders large or small an opportunity to partner with the Region to increase visitation and tourism revenues into their communities and establishments. The Guide also provides the opportunity for complimentary listings for many community festivals, agricultural fairs and events.

#### **4.1 York Region Progress Report**

In each year of production the Guide continues to evolve. The 2005 Guide has increased in size from 60 to 64 pages based on an increase of 17 new individual business advertisers. The increased advertising revenues continue to offset the production of the Guide resulting with a net cost to the Region of \$2,592 for the 2005 Visitors Guide.

##### **4.1.1 Marketing and Distribution**

The Guide is marketed as the fulfilment piece for consumer inquiries generated from the various consumer advertising and promotional campaigns as outlined in the approved 2005 Tourism Marketing Program.

York Region participates in a Visitor program with the CTM Brochure Distribution Company to distribute the Guide from May through September. This service guarantees circulation on a regular basis to Toronto and Greater Toronto Area Hotels, Attractions, Theatres and Corporate Businesses, Ontario Travel Centres, and this year the program has been extended to include the Kingston and Area Visitor program. Staff also undertakes a distribution program throughout York Region, the GTA and the Province via Chambers of Commerce, Tourist Information Centres, Municipalities, Welcome Wagon, Travel Centres, Libraries, Industry partners and Tourism Toronto.

##### **4.1.2 2006 York Region Visitors' Guide**

In June 2004, Regional Council approved a recommendation that the Commissioner of Planning and Development Services be authorized to renew the contact with Lenmark Communications Ltd., for the production of the Visitors' Guide through 2007, subject to budget approval and satisfactory performance of the preceding year contract.

#### **4.2 Relationship to Vision 2026**

The Guide supports the goals related to the "Arts, Heritage and Culture Opportunities" and the "Vibrant Economy" sections outlined in Vision 2026.

### **5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The Visitor's Guide production is projected to be cost recoverable or with minimum Regional expense without jeopardizing the high standards set and the integrity of the publication. The estimated production cost was net \$90,822 and the actual production cost was net \$92,702. Revenues generated from advertising sales are \$90,110 resulting in a net cost to the Region estimated at \$2,592. Funding for this was an initial creative funding for the 2006 Visitors Guides was included in the 2005 Operating Budget.

### **6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT**

The Visitors' Guide plays an integral role in driving tourism traffic and revenues into tourism establishments in all area Municipalities. Increased tourism revenues result in

increased employment, stimulates business growth and retention while generating positive economic impact. This is the only comprehensive regional publication which is marketed beyond York Region to drive overnight traffic from the GTA, Ontario and the Border States to area Municipalities.

## **7. CONCLUSION**

The Visitors' Guide is the anchor of the Region's tourism program and is the key consumer piece designed to generate tourism revenues into the Region. There is growing Municipality and Industry support and recognition for the Region's tourism efforts and the Visitors' Guide plays an integral role in this success.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.

*(The attachment referred to in this clause was included in the Agenda for the April 6, 2005 Committee meeting.)*