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COUNCIL ACCOMPLISHMENTS, 2007-2010

The Finance and Administration Committee recommends the adoption of the recommendation contained in the following report from the Chief Administrative Officer, Commissioner of Corporate Services and the Commissioner of Finance.

1. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that this report be received for information.

2. PURPOSE

This report highlights some of the major accomplishments, events and successes of Regional Council during the 2007-2010 term through the Finance and Administration Committee.

3. BACKGROUND

The Finance and Administration Committee provides strategic direction and acts as an advisory body to Regional Council. The Committee ensures the efficient management of York Region's finances. In addition, the Finance and Administration Committee is responsible for procurement, human resources, information technology, legislative and record keeping services and for managing the legislative requirements for provincial tax reforms and court administration for cases prosecuted under the *Provincial Offences Act*.

4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

2007-2010 Awards

- Awarded Top 100 Employer in Canada and Top 75 Employer in GTA
- Achieved National Quality Institute Level I Certification for Wellness program
- Received the Distinguished Budget Presentation Award from the Government Finance Officers for each of the years 2007, 2008 and 2009
- Received the Canadian Award for Financial Reporting from the Government Finance Officers for each of the years 2006, 2007, 2008
- Received the National Institute of Government Purchasing award for demonstrated excellence in public sector procurement in 2007
- The Regional Municipality of York was recognized by the Prosecutors' Association of Ontario "for contributing to the furtherance of justice while

demonstrating exemplary commitment through its support to assisting and promoting the aims and objectives of the association”

Major Accomplishments

Financial Sustainability

- Introduced a Capital Asset Replacement funding program through the provision of significant additional funding each year to a 2010 level of \$22.6 million, reducing long term debt needs by over \$226 million in the 10 year capital forecast
- Introduced an annual budgetary provision for debt reduction in 2007 of \$11.8 million which has resulted in reduced debt requirements over the 4 year period of \$47.2 million and will reduce future debt requirements by \$112 million over the 10 year capital budget period
- Approved a new Development Charge By-law which eliminated the discounting of non-residential development charges, reducing the tax burden for new growth on existing taxpayers
- Phased out and eliminated GTA pooling as a result of continued political lobbying
- Received an improved credit rating from Standard and Poors to a full Aaa removing their negative trend qualifier and maintained an AAA rating with Moody's Investor Services
- Reviewed and realigned reserve funds and target balances to better reflect current and future needs
- Continued lobbying resulted in the establishment of The Provincial-Municipal Fiscal and Service Delivery review after which the Province committed to take back the costs of Ontario Disability Support Payments, Ontario Drug Plan, Ontario Works, and Court Security costs
- Secured a total of \$52.7 million of Infrastructure Stimulus Funding from the Government of Canada and the Province of Ontario, advancing \$79 million worth of key infrastructure projects to stimulate the economy and create immediate additional jobs in York Region

Programs & Services

- Continued lobbying of the Province to provide tax relief for seniors (Province announced new grant for seniors in 2008 budget)
- Provided opportunities for tax relief by lowering the annual tax threshold for property tax increases within the Region's tax relief program for seniors and low income disabled persons
- Implemented the requirements of the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Regulation under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)* including training all staff and adopting a corporate Accessible Customer Service Policy by January 1, 2010
- Executed a Memorandum of Understanding with the York Region Hospitals for \$12M/year in funding to 2026 – the MOU includes the option to with-hold funding equal to the amount of operational costs to EMS related to hospital off-load delays

- Oversaw the establishment of the physical locations for immunization centres and Community Flu Assessment Centres as part of the H1N1 response
- Completed more than \$2.5 million of energy efficient building retrofits, resulting in annual savings of over \$400,000 in utility costs
- With the LEED® Sustainable Building Policy established in 2006, a total of eleven Regional buildings were either built or being built to at least LEED Silver standards by 2009. Included are three EMS Paramedic Response Stations and the Tom Taylor Housing Project in Newmarket
- Embarked on green energy initiatives including the Region's first geothermal installation at Vaughan Community Environmental Centre, the Region's largest solar array at Stouffville Zone 2 Pumping Station, and purchases of clean energy through Bullfrog Power for three facilities
- York Region Court Services implemented and expanded the Walk-In-First-Attendance program which provides customers with an opportunity to potentially resolve their charge without the need of a formal trial
- York Region Court Services implemented an electronic customer flow system at the Tannery Court location to improve public flow and customer service

Governance

- Reviewed and realigned several Committee structures to best deliver Regional Council's vision and strategies
- Completed a comprehensive review of the Purchasing By-law to enhance transparency and accountability, with the amendments adopted by Regional Council in 2009

Administration

- Negotiated Collective Agreements for CUPE 905 YRU, Long Term Care and ONA.
- Successfully settled claims against the Region with a value of over \$28 million as a result of litigation efforts
- Executed numerous land acquisition projects in support of the Region's Rapid Transit and Capital Infrastructure programs, including the Spadina Subway extension
- Undertook joint venture with King Township to use Regional lands for a new arena project and EMS Station in Schomberg under Federal Stimulus funding

Relationship to Vision 2026

The recommendations of the Finance and Administration Committee that are subsequently endorsed by Council are consistent with the stated goals of York Region's Vision 2026 Plan and the Sustainability Strategy.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct financial implications associated with this report. The costs of implementing the programs and initiatives cited in this report have been managed by

Council in its administration of annual budgets between 2007 and 2010, and longer-term financial planning.

The Finance and Administration Committee oversees approximately one-third of the total Regional operating budget (\$69 million), and 7% of the 10 year capital budget (\$437 million).

Priorities of Council are reflected in the annual budget and associated funding allocations. With responsible, prudent fiscal policies, sustainable financial strategies and proactive financial planning processes, York Region strives to ensure that programs and services are delivered to the community in an effective manner at reasonable cost. York Region's financial policies and practices ensure that ongoing operating requirements as well as growth and development needs are financed in a fiscally responsible manner to meet the current and future needs.

6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

Regional staff has, and will continue to, work closely with local municipal staff to ensure the effective and efficient support of policies that are consistent with the strategic goals of local municipalities. Many of the accomplishments in the 2007-2010 term are facilitated by the spirit of collaboration between all municipalities in York Region.

7. CONCLUSION

The 2007-2010 Finance and Administration Committee and Regional Council have taken decisive steps to address the needs of York Region residents.

For more information on this report, please contact Ellen Ma, Business Administrator at Ext. 1285.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.