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2004 SMOG SUMMIT AND GTA CLEAN AIR COUNCIL UPDATE

The Health and Emergency Medical Services Committee recommends the adoption of the recommendations contained in the following report, May 20, 2004, from the Commissioner of Health Services, with the addition of Recommendation No. 4 as follows:

- 4. That an invitation be extended to the 2004 Smog Summit to consider York Region as a location for the 2005 Smog Summit.**

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

1. Health and Emergency Medical Services Committee and Regional Council receive this update on the activities of the GTA Clean Air Council (CAC) and the proposal for the fifth annual Smog Summit.
2. Health and Emergency Medical Services Committee and Regional Council endorse the GTA CAC draft joint actions to improve air quality to be announced at this year's Smog Summit as outlined in this report.
3. The Regional Clerk distribute this report to all area municipalities for information purposes.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to present Health and Emergency Medical Services Committee and Regional Council with the GTA CAC draft joint actions to improve air quality to be announced at the 2004 Smog Summit and the proposed approach for the 2004 and future Smog Summits.

3. BACKGROUND

The Smog Summit was an outcome of the May 2000 City of Toronto Medical Officer of Health's report on smog entitled, "Air Pollution Burden of Illness in Toronto." In June 2000, a conference of all three levels of government was organized to explore solutions to improve air quality. This initiative led to the formation of the GTA CAC in 2001 and the signing of an annual Intergovernmental Declaration on Clean Air by representatives of federal, provincial and municipal governments in the GTA. The aim of the GTA CAC is to tackle smog and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in the GTA. The Regional Municipality of York has been a member of the GTA CAC since 2001 and has been represented at monthly GTA CAC meetings by Health Services Department staff.

In addition to collaborating to produce and follow-up on the Intergovernmental Declarations on Clean Air for the annual Smog Summits, the GTA CAC has built substantial local capacity to address local air quality through networking, information exchange, workshops and public education and awareness campaigns. Examples of this are the 2003 Idle-Free Campaign, the 20/20 Way to Clean Air Program, and the Demand Management and Emission Trading Workshops. In moving forward, the GTA CAC will seek to raise the profile of successful efforts and facilitate the exchange of experiences to promote continued effective action to improve air quality into the future. It will build on its relationships within government and engage local citizens and leaders from business, labour, health and non-profit community groups to jointly promote solutions to reduce smog levels.

4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

4.1 2004 and Future Smog Summits

The fifth annual Smog Summit will be held on June 21, 2004 with a number of pre-Summit events – including community forums, which will focus on greening initiatives such as strategic tree planting and low-watering, and energy efficiency initiatives that decrease energy use and improve air quality. The Regional Municipality of York will be hosting a community forum in partnership with the Toronto Region Conservation Authority and area municipalities on June 1, 2004. The forum is entitled “York Region Sustainable Communities Forum” and will be held at the Kortright Centre in the City of Vaughan.

As in past years, an Intergovernmental Declaration on Clean Air will be signed by political representatives of federal, provincial and municipal GTA CAC members. The proposal for the 2004 Declaration is to maintain the preamble and common understandings, as well as the joint GTA CAC actions to improve air quality, but to eliminate the individual clean air commitments from each jurisdiction. The recently published “Inventory of Governments’ Actions on Clean Air in the GTA” will be updated periodically and is intended to replace the individual clean air announcements that formed part of past Intergovernmental Declarations.

The theme of Smog Summit 2004 will be the Natural and Built Environment with an emphasis on energy efficiency. The Summit will consist of a variety of components including a keynote address, announcements from representatives of the federal and provincial governments, a municipal roundtable discussion, a public program and plenary. The municipal roundtable discussion will provide an opportunity for municipal politicians to highlight their local commitment to smog reduction in various sectors. As The Regional Municipality of York has been active in several initiatives that will improve air quality and conserve energy, it is proposed that York Region’s political representative share and highlight the following Regional activities:

1. Energy Efficiency – Energy and Environmental Management System (EEMS): This web-based software, designed by York Region and led by the Corporate Services Department, will capture energy consumption and expenses of buildings, street lights and other facilities by tracking electricity, fuel usage, water and waste water accounts, as well as providing analysis on GHG/nitrogen oxides/sulphur oxides emission reductions and performance.
2. Sustainable Transportation – GTA Smart Commute Initiative: York Region, through the Transportation and Works Department, is leading the implementation of this initiative to provide sustainable transportation alternatives such as transit, carpooling and other programs to reduce single occupant vehicle trips across the GTA.
3. Natural Environment – Greening Strategy: This strategy, led by both the Planning and Development Department and the Transportation and Works Department, assists in preserving and enhancing York Region's natural environment as well as improving air quality.

As identified earlier, the commitments or announcements discussed during the municipal roundtable will not be included in the signed Intergovernmental Governmental Declaration. However there will be joint GTA CAC actions announced at the Smog Summit 2004 that municipal, provincial and federal representatives will commit their jurisdictions to by signing the Declaration. The components of the draft joint GTA CAC actions for the Intergovernmental Declaration on Clean Air are outlined in *Attachment 1*.

4.2 Relationship to Vision 2026

Ongoing participation in the GTA CAC and commitment to actions to improve air quality in the GTA support the goals of Vision 2026 such as the promotion of clean air policies and initiatives.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The funding requirements to follow through on the joint commitments announced at the 2003 Smog Summit have been identified by the GTA CAC. Increased obligations of the GTA CAC as a result of these substantive commitments will require additional support from member municipalities. As outlined in *Attachment 2*, it was identified that upper-tier municipalities would contribute \$10,000 towards 2004 GTA CAC activities. The \$10,000 contribution and required staff resources have been included in the approved 2004 Public Health Branch Business Plan and Budget.

6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

York Region will continue to work with local municipalities to identify and implement joint clean air initiatives to be announced at the annual Smog Summit. York Region is also collaborating with local municipalities to present a Pre-Summit Community Forum.

7. CONCLUSION

It is recommended that Health and Emergency Medical Services Committee and Regional Council continue to support the GTA CAC and annual Smog Summits through endorsement of the draft joint GTA CAC actions to improve air quality for the 2004 Intergovernmental Declaration on Clean Air. Regional Councillor Joyce Frustaglio will represent Regional Council at the 2004 Smog Summit and will promote Regional initiatives to improve air quality.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.

(A copy of the attachments referred to in the foregoing were forwarded to each Member of Council with the June 3, 2004 Health and Emergency Medical Services Committee agenda and a copy thereof is on file in the Regional Clerk's Office)