

THE REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF YORK

**REPORT NO. 5 OF THE REGIONAL
TRANSPORTATION AND WORKS COMMITTEE
MEETING HELD ON APRIL 5, 2006**

**For Consideration by
The Council of The Regional Municipality of York
on April 27, 2006**

**1
MINISTRY OF THE ENVIRONMENT GRANT FUNDING
SOURCE WATER PROTECTION STUDIES**

The Transportation and Works Committee recommends the adoption of the recommendation contained in the following report, March 30, 2006, from the Commissioner of Transportation and Works:

1. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that:

1. Council authorize a Regional funding agreement with the Ministry of the Environment to receive funding and conduct technical studies in support of the proposed *Clean Water Act*.

2. PURPOSE

The funding agreement between York Region and the Ministry of the Environment was signed by the Regional Chair and the Regional Clerk on March 29, 2006. A provision of the agreement requires a Council resolution in order to activate this funding agreement. A copy of the signed funding agreement is appended (*See Attachment No.1*).

The agreement stipulates that this grant award be kept private until April 30, 2006; therefore, this report is a private matter.

3. BACKGROUND

In support of the proposed *Clean Water Act*, the Ministry of the Environment recently announced the allocation of \$51 million over the next five years for technical studies to support source water protection plans in Ontario.

York Region submitted an application for the assessment of the vulnerability of wellhead protection areas. The total estimated cost of the study was \$400,000, as reported to Regional Council on March 23, 2006 under 'Proposed Clean Water Act and Proposed Matters to be addressed in Support of the Act', Report No.3, Clause 8.

York Region has been granted funding for \$200,000 from the Ministry of the Environment for partial completion of the requested studies. An additional \$200,000 is pending upon discussions with the Ministry after April 1, 2006.

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4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

The following section provides a brief overview of the funding agreement with the Ministry of the Environment and the technical studies that will be undertaken by York Region.

4.1 Key points of the Ministry of the Environment Funding Agreement

Some of the key points of the Funding Agreement with the Ministry of the Environment include:

- The Funding Agreement had to be signed by March 29, 2006 by the Regional Chair and the Regional Clerk.
- A provision of the agreement requires a Council resolution in order to activate this Agreement.
- The funding amounts to \$200,000.
- Proposed technical studies are modified to include wellhead vulnerability scoring and water quality assessment of existing well supplies.
- York Region must provide the Ministry with a Detailed Work Plan by August 30, 2006.
- The technical studies must be completed by October 30, 2007.
- York Region must not communicate informally or formally on the successful award of grant funding from the Ministry until April 30, 2006.
- Indemnification of the Province and its Ministries for any claims that may result from the performance of the work required under the funding agreement.

- York Region is eligible to re-apply for the additional funds as the grant program will continue for at least five years.

4.2 Proposed Technical Studies

The proposed technical studies will include:

- A vulnerability assessment with York Region's wellhead protection areas as outlined in section 5.3.1 of the Ministry of the Environment (MOE) Draft Guidance Modules.
- Water quality characterization and issues identification for the 37 existing production well supplies as specified in Module 7 of the MOE Draft Guidance document.

4.3 Next Steps

The next steps anticipated by York Region staff are:

- Submission of the Funding Agreement to the Ministry of the Environment for processing.
- Initiating the Request for Proposal process to obtain consulting services for the technical studies.
- Preparing a report for Council upon selection of the successful bidder.

4.4 Relationship to Vision 2026

Watershed-based Drinking Water Source Protection Planning is intended to preserve and restore the integrity of groundwater and surface water resources for the benefit of future generations. This intent is consistent with the objectives of Vision 2026 toward insuring clean water, securing a green York Region, and promoting conservation.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The grant award from the Ministry of the Environment to York Region is \$200,000. Grant funding will be allocated to York Region for the 2005/2006 fiscal year should Council pass the resolution to accept the funding agreement from the Ministry of the Environment. There is no matching fund requirement. This grant funding will eliminate the need to use current approved funding under the 10 Year capital Plan in order to meet the proposed *Clean Water Act*.

Should there be a surplus when the studies are complete these funds are to be returned to the Ministry of the Environment.

In addition, if a claim should be brought against the Provincial Government or its Ministries for work completed by or on behalf of the Region, the Region would be required to indemnify the Province.

6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

Source water protection is the first barrier in protecting potable water supplies. The Source Protection Plan will further advance our understanding of influences to source water and outline measures to be taken to protect these resources. Implementation will involve both Regional and local governments to the benefit of all residents relying on groundwater resources.

7. CONCLUSION

It is recommended that Council authorize the Region's participation in the funding agreement with the Ministry of the Environment and receive \$200,000 to fund technical studies in support of the proposed *Clean Water Act*.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.

(The attachment referred to in this clause is attached to this report.)

Respectfully submitted,

**April 5, 2006
Newmarket, Ontario**

**B. O'Donnell
Chair**

(Report No. 5 of the Transportation and Works Committee was adopted, without amendment, by Regional Council at its meeting held on April 27, 2006.)