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2005 REPORTING ON SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS AND BARRIERS REPORT

The Finance and Administration Committee recommends the adoption of the recommendation contained in the following report, June 8, 2006, from the Commissioner of Finance, together with the following additional recommendation:

- 2. The Regional Chair send a letter to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing and to the Association of Municipalities of Ontario outlining the Region's concerns with the amount of time and administrative effort involved in preparing this report.**

1. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that:

1. This report be received and be submitted to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing in accordance with the Section 300 of the Municipal Act, and posted on York Region's website.

2. PURPOSE

This report outlines York Region's 2005 submission to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH) as it relates to the Reporting on Service Improvements and Barriers and is provided for information purposes.

This report provides notice to MMAH and the public of initiatives undertaken by York Region to improve the efficiency and/or effectiveness of service delivery and barriers to achieving further improvements. This report strives to demonstrate how the improvement is more efficient or effective and how the municipality or community will benefit from the changes. The report endeavours to promote a greater understanding among citizens of the choices York Region has made.

3. BACKGROUND

Section 300 of the Municipal Act requires municipalities to provide yearly notice to the public of improvements to the efficiency and effectiveness of their service delivery and barriers to achieving further improvements. This requirement was previously considered to be satisfied by the Municipal Performance Management Measurement Program (MPMP). The MMAH has provided clarification of the requirements of Municipal Act, Section 300 and indicated the report is to be distinct from the MPMP response. The report is to include only those service areas for which improvements or barriers exist.

The method of delivering the information to the public is as determined by the municipality.

4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

Through this reporting requirement, the MMAH has introduced an opportunity for the Region to demonstrate annually in a qualitative fashion what initiatives have been undertaken by the Region to further the effort to contain tax levy increases through efficiencies and enhance the value of each tax dollar through improvements in effectiveness.

York Region undertakes a variety of performance measurement activities to ensure the efficiency and effectiveness of Regional operations including the performance measurement framework used by York Region, the benchmarking activities of the Ontario Municipal CAOs Benchmarking Initiative and the performance measures included in the MPMP. The benefits of the initiatives, which translate into improvements efficiency and effectiveness are likely to be evident in the above mentioned performance measurements.

York Region scrutinizes its operations to determine whether its efforts have resulted in improvements and to take corrective action in the absence of measurable improvements. As well, this information further enhances the data available on which decisions of resource allocation in the budget development and review process are made.

As all municipalities are required to report improvements, the information provided by other municipalities allows for the sharing of ideas and best practices and the opportunity for further improvements in York Region.

4.1 Highlights of York Region's Service Improvements and Barriers

Attachment 1 provides a detailed listing of service improvement initiatives and barriers by business unit.

In 2005, the key initiatives in the Transportation & Works department resulting in improvements in efficiency and/or effectiveness were the launch of Viva Rapid Transit and the expansion of routes in YRT, resulting in an increase in service hours of 19%. Mobility Plus expanded service to selected cross-boundary destinations on a one-year trial basis to allow passengers to ride in one vehicle rather than to physically transfer between vehicles.

In support of the introduction of Viva, the Roads branch initiated the Transit Signal Priority system allowing for a faster public transit system without the cost of dedicated transit lines. As well, the Roads branch introduced a trial program involving pre-wetting stockpiles of road salt with a cost-effective vegetable juice mixture that lowers the

freezing point of moisture and reduces the frequency with which salt needs to be re-applied.

Solid Waste Management introduced a Three Stream Waste System encompassing blue box materials, organics and residual waste. This program allows for co-mingling of blue box materials and has resulted in increased residential use of the blue box program and thus diversion increased by 19% from 2004.

OPTimize Works is a best practice initiative undertaken by the Water and Wastewater branch and focuses on optimizing performance from existing and future operational assets, staff and technology.

Health Services, Public Health branch, implemented the Falls Intervention Team project which focused on the identification and intervention for modifiable risk factors for the frail elderly. The Public Health branch also moved from a drop-in model to a booking process for the Baby Place Breastfeeding Clinic to reduce waiting times, improve continuity of care, and allows for a more effective allocation and utilization of staff. The Long Term Care branch implemented a Convalescent Care Program that resulted in better use of community health sector resources and better prepared clients for community reintegration and self-sufficiency.

Community Services and Housing Department fully implemented a community-based Mental Health Resource Model to assist staff to better serve Social Assistance participants with diagnosed or suspected mental health issues. The initiative has improved the quality of referrals for participants and increased clients' participation in community programs and services. The Social Assistance division has improved the quality and efficiency of service for persons pending or receiving Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) benefits through the implementation of the ODSP Pending model. This model streamlines service through a single point of contact and designates staff with specific expertise to effectively support clients. The Social Assistance division together with Housing Services implemented The Emergency Energy Program and Rent Bank program to promote housing stability and reduce shelter bed use. The Department also made enhancements to its Web Site and YorkLink Community Services directory to better serve the community.

Project "IMPACT", a new computer aided dispatch/records management system was introduced by York Regional Police to ensure efficient response at the front line and to provide continuous uninterrupted access to corporate information and analytical capabilities behind the scenes, electronic information management, and electronic data exchange with other police agencies and the province. The Police also introduced the Mental Health Support Team to reduce the demands for uniformed personal and more effectively handle the special needs of emotionally disturbed persons. As well, in addition to the introduction of a new volunteer program, York Regional Police opened the Community Safety Village in May and has welcomed over 19,000 visitors and 89% of teachers rate the learning experience as "excellent" for their classes.

Corporate Services, Property Services, undertook the Administration Centre Energy Retrofit and expects to realize \$200,000 in annual energy saving. A roster of pre-qualified and approved building/construction trades was developed by the division and is intended to reduce administrative costs and to provide more timely service to clients. Human Resources implemented a number of initiatives to reduce employee turnover from 10% to 6%, avoiding costly recruitment and productivity losses. Also, through a Human Resources initiative, the Region moved away from time-based automatic salary increases in the non-union group to a system of full merit-based salary increases.

As a result of a Procurement to Payment process review, Finance has been able to redeploy one staff person and avoid the need to request additional staff for an approximate savings of \$42,000.

Information Technology has implemented Enterprise Finance to provide timely HR and financial data for management reports. Information Technology also introduced Anywhere eDesktop to reduce the total cost of ownership by implementing this client device as an alternative to desktop PCs. An Enterprise Architecture framework was also developed to guide investment and design decisions as they relate to IT.

4.2 Relationship to Vision 2026

Through incremental improvements in both efficiency and effectiveness York Region is proactively meeting the needs of our customers and setting a high standard for customer services which are both components of Goal 8 of Vision 2026 “Engaged Communities and a Responsive Region”.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Region of York endeavours to provide services to its residents and businesses in a cost-effective manner. This report demonstrates some of the Region’s efforts to pursue opportunities to realize efficiencies and/or improve service with regards to tax levy and user rates.

Additionally, this report is an opportunity to highlight the consequences of capping on subsidy in some programs cost shared with the Province and the impact of GTA Pooling. In cases, such as Ontario Works administration subsidy, the cap has effectively eroded the level of support by the Province resulting in the Municipality bearing an increasing proportion of the financial burden of the program. As well, GTA Pooling acts as a barrier to further improvements as it impedes the Region’s ability to meet the funding needs in infrastructure.

6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

The effort to improve service outlined in this report will benefit residents and businesses throughout York Region. All municipalities are required to report publicly and provide a report to the MMAH.

7. CONCLUSION

This report outlines York region's submission to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing as it relates to the requirements of the Municipal Act, Section 300 Reporting on Service Improvements and Barriers and details the information York Region will communicate to taxpayers through York Region's website.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.

(The attachment referred to in this clause was included in the agenda for the June 8, 2006 Committee meeting.)