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INTERNATIONAL DRIVE A NEW VISION FOR HIGHWAY 7

(Regional Council at its meeting on June 23, 2013 amended Recommendation 3 of this report as follows:

- 3. *Deferral of the following report dated June 12, 2013, from the Commissioner of Transportation and Community Planning to the October 2013 Transportation Services Committee meeting to allow for the report to be circulated to the Councils of the City of Markham, the Town of Richmond Hill and the City of Vaughan for them to provide their position on the matter, which could include additional names to be considered.)***

The Transportation Services Committee recommends:

- 1. Receipt of the deputations from Karen Rea, Donna Bush, Tom Ka Leung Chan and Jim Kwan;**
- 2. Receipt of the following communications:**
 - Kathleen Llewellyn-Thomas, Commissioner of Transportation and Community Planning, dated June 12, 2013**
 - C. and J. Peel, Markham Residents, dated June 7, 2013**
 - Annette Cacorovski, dated June 10, 2013**
 - Joyce Ramer, Markham Resident, dated June 10, 2013**
 - Elisabeth Tan, Markham Resident, dated June 10, 2013; and**
- 3. Deferral of the following report dated June 12, 2013, from the Commissioner of Transportation and Community Planning to the October 2013 Transportation Services Committee meeting to allow for the report to be circulated to the Councils of the City of Markham, the Town of Richmond Hill and the City of Vaughan for them to provide their position on the matter.**

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

- 1. Council rename Highway 7 (Y.R. 7) along its full extent within York Region to International Drive (Y.R. 7).**

2. The Regional Clerk forward this report to the Clerks of the City of Markham, Town of Richmond Hill, the City of Vaughan and York Regional Police.
3. The Regional Solicitor amend any bylaws as necessary.

2. PURPOSE

This report seeks Council authorization to rename Highway 7 (Y.R. 7) to International Drive (Y.R. 7) along its full extent within York Region between Highway 50 and Donald Cousens Parkway.

3. BACKGROUND

The Region's Public Notice Requirement Policy sets out conditions to change the name of a highway in accordance with legislative requirements

The Municipal Act requires that the Region adopt and maintain a policy (*Attachment 1*) with respect to the circumstances in which the Region shall provide notice to the Public and if notice is to be provided, the form, manner and time notice shall be given

Where Regional Council proposes to change the name of a highway, notice shall be given by:

- Publication in a local newspaper, on one occasion, at least two weeks prior to the date of the Committee meeting at which the matter will be considered
- Personal notice to affected property owners; and
- Signage along the Highway.

Staff are in the process in fulfilling the Public Notice Requirement Policy.

Local municipalities have requested Highway 7 be renamed to reflect the changing nature of this urban arterial road

In June of 2007, a City of Vaughan Council resolution requested that the Region rename Highway 7 to *Avenue Seven*. At the same time, a similar Council resolution was received from the Town of Markham. Both requests stated Highway 7 should be renamed to reflect the changing nature of this urban arterial road. There has been no similar resolution on renaming Highway 7 from the Town of Richmond Hill.

At its meeting of October 22, 2009, Regional Council endorsed a report recommending that public consultation be conducted regarding the proposed renaming of Highway 7. At its meeting of February 16, 2012, Regional Council endorsed a Transportation Services Committee recommendation not to adopt a staff recommendation to rename Highway 7

to Avenue 7. Council referred the issue back to staff for a further report following a meeting scheduled to take place between the York Regional Chairman and CEO and the Mayors of the City of Markham, the Town of Richmond Hill and the City of Vaughan.

This report is in response to the February 16, 2012 Council request.

4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

The renaming of Highway 7 is pursuant to the Council Report dated February 16, 2012, which moved that the York Regional Chairman and CEO and Mayors of the City of Markham, Town of Richmond Hill and City of Vaughan meet on the renaming issue. The proposed renaming reflects the fact that Highway 7 is no longer a highway in the real sense of the Ministry of Transportation – Ontario definition. Lower speed limits along Highway 7 and road (re)design are more in keeping with an urban street shared by pedestrians, cyclists, transit and motorists than a typical highway.

As Highway 7 evolves into an urban main street, the number of businesses and residents impacted by the name change will increase substantially

According to a search conducted using canadapost.ca, there are 175 business and residential mailing addresses across the full extent of Highway 7 within York Region. Eighty-four of the addresses are in the City of Markham, 14 in the Town of Richmond Hill and 77 within the City of Vaughan. These numbers do not take into account address points with multiple businesses or residential tenants.

As Highway 7 redevelops into the urban main street of York Region, the number of Highway 7 address points will increase substantially. New development will include much higher densities with many residents or businesses occupying different suites at the same address point (building up versus building out).

As a result, as time moves on, more and more residents and businesses would be impacted by a name change. In order to minimize impacts and costs, it is recommended that any proposed name change be implemented simultaneously with the opening of the first section of vivaNext rapidway.

A new name for Highway 7 will symbolize the transformation taking place along this very important corridor

Highway 7 is going through a significant transformation from provincial highway to an urban main street. The name Highway 7 implies that the corridor provides for long distance through trips for all types of traffic including heavy vehicles. This use is not compatible with the new vision for the corridor.

Highway 7 is no longer the route of choice for long distance trips to travel from one end of the Region to the other. Provincial facilities are designed to carry the load for those types of trips. Highway 7 is transforming into our main street, a destination in itself, a place that you travel to instead of through.

The name Highway 7 does not reflect the vision for this corridor that is currently under construction. Changing the name is an important symbolic step that re-enforces the vision for the corridor for existing and future residents, businesses and travelers to York Region.

International Drive reflects the cultural diversity of the Highway 7 corridor

At its meeting of February 16, 2012 Regional Council referred the Highway 7 renaming issue back to staff pending discussions scheduled to take place between the York Regional Chairman and CEO and the Mayors of the City of Markham, the Town of Richmond Hill and the City of Vaughan. Their meeting has since taken place and the new proposed name, International Drive, has emerged that reflects a new vision for the corridor.

The renaming of Highway 7 to International Drive reflects the ethno-cultural diversity and richness that characterizes the communities this roadway passes through in the City of Markham, Town of Richmond Hill and City of Vaughan. Communities represented along Highway 7, include: Asian and South-East Asian, Indo-Pakistani, Tamil, Italian, Russian and Iranian communities.

Even though the common name of the roadway will be changing from Highway 7 to International Drive, it is recommended that this road section continue to be identified as Regional Road #7 in our regional road inventory.

A review identified one location in the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville in the Bloomington Road and Warden Avenue area with a similar name; International Parkway. Emergency Services have advised that this similarity does not present an issue with respect to their operations.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Replacement of approximately 200 street name signs is estimated to cost \$300,000 (net of routine replacements required for maintenance). Sufficient funds are available in the approved 2013 Transportation and Community Planning operating budget to undertake this work.

6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

Public meetings were held in each of the three municipalities affected by the potential renaming of Highway 7. A website was also created where residents who were not able to attend a public meeting could review the documentation and post comments. Information regarding the PCCs and the website was shared with each local municipality.

7. CONCLUSION

This report provides information on the proposed renaming of Highway 7 to International Drive.

During public consultation efforts, many names for the roadway were suggested if the renaming process was to go forward. Some comments were received regarding implementation costs, confusion for users of the roadway and a general concern about the necessity to rename the road. Other comments were received from residents who felt that renaming the road made sense as we transform a highway into an urban street. Changing the name is an important symbolic step that re-enforces the vision for the corridor for existing and future residents, businesses and travelers to York Region.

For these reasons, it is recommended that Council rename Highway 7 to International Drive.

For more information on this report, please contact Steven Kemp, Director, Traffic Management and Intelligent Transportation Systems, at Ext. 5226.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.

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



STATUS:	Final
Council Approved:	Y
CAO Approved:	N/A

TITLE: Public Notice Requirements	Edocs No.: 1899105 Original Approval Date: December 13, 2007 Policy Last Updated: November 17, 2011 Posted on Portal: April 17, 2012
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POLICY STATEMENT:

A policy to establish the circumstances in which the Region shall provide notice to the public in the course of conducting its business.

APPLICATION:

The principles established in this policy apply generally to the conduct of all Regional business. Where the requirements of this policy conflict with any applicable statute or regulation, the statute or regulation shall prevail.

PURPOSE:

The *Municipal Act, 2001* (the “Act”) requires that the Region adopt and maintain a policy with respect to the circumstances in which the Region shall provide notice to the public and, if notice is to be provided, the form, manner and times notice shall be given. The purpose of this policy is to set out the Region’s notice requirements in accordance with the legislative requirements.

DEFINITIONS:

In this policy:

Public Meeting: means a meeting, other than a regularly scheduled meeting of Council or Committee, held primarily for the purpose of consulting with the public and for inviting comments on a matter within the jurisdiction of Regional Council.

DESCRIPTION:

Regional Council supports the principles of accountability and transparency in the conduct of its affairs and recognizes that providing full and fair notice to the public of Council’s business is necessary to support these objectives.

The notice provisions set out in this policy are founded on the following principles:

- constituents and interested parties should be made fully aware of when and where Regional business is being conducted and whether matters under consideration may have an impact on them
- constituents should be afforded adequate opportunity to participate fully in decision making by making informed submissions to Committee and Council

The following guidelines shall govern the selection of the appropriate form of notice in individual cases:

- notice shall be given by a variety of means, to reach the broadest audience, in an accessible manner and in an appropriate format
- although recognizing the value of the internet to facilitate speedy distribution of information, it is acknowledged that access to the internet is not universal or fully accessible
- where a matter is known to affect identified individuals, direct notice shall be given to such individuals
- where a matter affects a particular property or section of a highway, notice shall be given by signage on the subject property or section of highway
- newspaper publication is costly and administratively cumbersome, and should be limited to those matters of particular significance affecting a larger community
- the notice requirements set out in this policy shall not affect specific statutory notice requirements which govern any particular matter, including requirements under the *Planning Act*, the *Development Charges Act* and the *Environmental Assessment Act*

Notice provided by the Region shall contain, at a minimum, the following information:

- adequate detail of the subject matter to enable interested parties to understand the nature of the issue
- the date, time and location of the meeting at which the matter will be considered
- information as to the manner in which submissions may be made, whether in person or in writing
- a contact person at the Region who will be available to respond to inquiries

SPECIFIC NOTICE REQUIREMENTS:

Council and Committee meetings:

Notice of the majority of Council business will be given through advance publication of Council and Committee agendas.

Notice of Council and Committee meetings shall be given as provided in the Region's procedure by-law, as follows:

- publishing the annual schedule of meetings on the Region's web site, as well as any mid-year modifications to the schedule

- depositing a copy of each notice and agenda at the Kiosk at the York Region Administrative Centre, at least 48 hours in advance of the meeting
- posting each meeting notice and agenda on the Region's web site at least 48 hours in advance of the meeting
- delivering each meeting notice and agenda to the Clerk of each local municipality
- these notice requirements are minimum requirements only that may be enhanced by Council or by the Chief Administrative Officer in appropriate circumstances
- the notice requirements do not apply to revised agendas

Permanent road closure or alterations:

Where Regional Council proposes to pass a by-law permanently closing or altering a highway in such a manner that access rights will be affected, the following additional notice shall be given:

- publication in a local newspaper on one occasion, at least two weeks prior to the date of the Committee meeting at which the matter will be considered;
- personal notice to those property owners directly affected; and
- signage along the highway.

Where a person's access rights are not affected, two weeks' notice of the Committee meeting shall be given by personal notice to adjacent property owners.

Changing the name of a highway:

Where Regional Council proposes to change the name of a highway, notice shall be given by:

- publication in a local newspaper, on one occasion, at least two weeks prior to the date of the committee meeting at which the matter will be considered;
- personal notice to affected property owners; and
- signage along the highway.

Public meetings:

Where public meetings are scheduled for consultation on proposed projects and infrastructure, notice of the meeting shall be given as follows:

- publication in a newspaper at least two weeks prior to the date of the meeting;
- personal notice to any affected person or anyone who is on record as having an interest in the matter; and
- delivery of notice to the Clerk of the local municipality in which the project will be undertaken.

REFERENCE:

Report 9, Clause 10, Finance and Administration Committee, adopted by Regional Council on November 17, 2011

Report 10, Clause 14, Finance and Administration Committee adopted by Regional Council on December 13, 2007.

By-law No. M-0745-2007-095

CONTACT:

Regional Clerk

APPROVAL INFORMATION

CAO Approval Date:

Committee: Finance and
Administration

Clause: 10

Report No: 9

Edocs No. 3792746

Council Approval:

Minute No. 181 **Page:** 177 **Date:** November 17, 2011

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Minute No. 192 **Page:** 100 **Date:** December 13, 2007

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