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CORPORATE CLEAN AIR TASK FORCE PROGRESS REPORT AND 2006 WORK PLAN

The Health and Emergency Medical Services Committee recommends the adoption of the recommendation contained in the following report, October 19, 2005, from the Commissioner of Health Services:

1. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that:

1. Council refer the \$183,000 expenditure outlined in the work plan to the 2006 Business Plan and Budget.

2. PURPOSE

This report will summarize Corporate Clean Air Task Force (Task Force) activities to date and outline potential initiatives to reduce Regional emissions of greenhouse gases (GHGs) and air pollutants. The report will also present 2006 resource needs to complete the work of the Task Force and develop the Regional Air Quality Policy.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 Task Force Mandate and Structure

Regional Council approved the establishment of the Task Force on February 20, 2003 through the adoption of Clause No. 3 of Report No. 2 of the Health and Emergency Medical Services Committee. The Task Force's mandate is to identify specific, measurable and achievable corporate actions to improve air quality. These actions will be incorporated into a comprehensive Regional Air Quality Policy, which will be prepared in 2006.

According to the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM), benefits of clean air programs include reduced operating and capital costs, fewer demands on physical asset management, improved service delivery, and an enhanced quality of life through a healthier population and environment. FCM coordinates the Partners for Climate Protection (PCP) program—a partnership of more than 120 Canadian municipalities working towards reducing GHGs and acting on climate change.

The Task Force has representation from all six Regional Departments and York Regional Police, and is chaired by Regional Councillor Joyce Frustaglio and co-chaired by Regional Councillor Brenda Hogg. The Health Services Department coordinates the

activities of the Task Force and the development of the Regional Air Quality Policy. A consultant has also been retained to facilitate the activities of the Task Force.

3.2 Other Regional Initiatives Incorporating Clean Air Actions

York Region has been proactive in incorporating clean air initiatives into Regional activities and operations in order to reduce emissions of harmful pollutants and greenhouse gases. Some key examples of initiatives that demonstrate the Region's commitment towards improving air quality include the following:

- VIVA and York Region Transit
- Energy Management Strategies
- Growth Management and Community Building Strategy
- Waste Management Strategy
- Greening of York Region Strategy
- Transportation Master Plan
- Smart Commute Initiative
- Vision 2026
- 20/20 The Way to Clean Air Program
- Pesticide Reduction Guidelines
- Water for Tomorrow Program
- Membership in the Partners for Climate Protection Program
- Membership in the International Council on Local Environmental Initiatives
- Membership on the GTA Clean Air Council (Smog Summit coordination)

These initiatives plus others will make York Region more sustainable. The Task Force complements other Sustainable Development initiatives like the State of the Environment Report, which will be presented to Council in December, and the Towards Sustainability in York Region Advisory Group, which provides advice to the Region on how to make the Regional Official Plan more sustainable and how to develop a Sustainable Infrastructure Strategy. All these initiatives are described in more detail in Attachment 1.

The 2005 York Region Clean Air Inventory can be accessed by linking to the Governments' Actions on Clean Air in the Greater Toronto Area section of the GTA Clean Air Online website, www.gtacleanaironline.ca.

4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

The Task Force has established a 2-phase approach to completing its mandate. Phase 1 involves assessing the current state of emissions, identifying activities to reduce emissions, and setting emission reduction goals. Phase 2 will focus on implementation mechanisms, including processes, resources, communication methods and timelines. This second phase will also include a comprehensive education and awareness program for both internal and external stakeholders.

4.1 Activities Completed to Date – Phase 1

4.1.1 Collection of Baseline Data

One of the first activities of the Task Force was to identify the current state of emissions from Regional operations and activities.

Presently certain emissions are tracked through Environmental and Energy Management System (EEMS), a web-based software developed by the Region to track energy consumption and expenses. EEMS presently tracks energy and electricity use for all Regional buildings including owned leased and subsidized housing (York Housing Inc.) For example, electricity and natural gas usage for 2004 from the EEMS system amounted to 81 megawatt hours and 95,093 gigajoules, respectively. The system is also capable of calculating GHG, smog and acid rain emissions.

To complete a comprehensive emissions inventory baseline and to adequately track the performance of clean air measures, additional data is required. For example, more data is needed on vehicle emissions.

4.1.2 New and Emerging Clean Air Solutions Request for Information

At the May 19th, 2005 Regional Council meeting, Clause No. 8 of Report No. 5 of the Finance and Administration Committee outlined a proposed New and Emerging Clean Air Solutions Request for Information (RFI) process in support of the Task Force. The goal of this RFI is to identify new and emerging clean air measures from private industry. This process will also assist the Task Force by providing a mechanism for private sector involvement and maximizing financial leverage through public-private partnerships. The RFI is expected to be issued later this year.

4.1.3 External Stakeholder Meeting

In order to introduce the Regional Air Quality Policy initiative to agency, municipal and community stakeholders and to solicit feedback on Task Force direction, an External Stakeholder Meeting was held on May 20th, 2005. Over 30 stakeholder groups were represented at the meeting (*see Attachment 2*), providing input on the process for setting emission reduction goals and on potential clean air initiatives for the Regional Air Quality Policy. A follow-up external stakeholder workshop will be held later this year.

4.1.4 Working Groups

Department Leads and Working Groups have been established to assist the Task Force in identifying clean air actions and developing the Regional Air Quality Policy. The five topic-based Working Groups are:

Energy and Green Procurement:

This group is looking into energy management for buildings and regional operations, and procurement of energy conserving and low or no emission products and services.

Transportation Fleet:

This group is investigating emission-reducing policies and technologies, such as fuel purchasing and anti-idling policies, for Police, EMS, and other Regional vehicles.

Transportation and Works - Planning and Infrastructure:

This group is considering practices that improve air quality through public transit and other alternative modes of transportation, urban transportation design, reduced traffic congestion and trip reduction programs, as well as Transportation and Works infrastructure policies and practices that reduce emissions, such as traffic signal coordination.

Natural and Built Environment and Greening Strategy:

This group is looking into growth management and urban design solutions, land securement and naturalization programs such as afforestation.

Smog Alert Response:

This group is considering corporate actions to respond to smog alerts.

The Working Groups have been meeting since April 2005 and have compiled a list of clean air initiatives to be considered by the Region as a means of reducing emissions of GHGs and air pollutants.

4.1.5 List of Promising Initiatives

A list of promising clean air initiatives presently being explored and researched by Task Force Working Groups is included in Attachment 3. These initiatives are of two types:

- Specific, measurable, and achievable corporate actions to improve ambient air quality and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
- Actions demonstrating leadership in air quality and other environmental health initiatives related to emissions throughout York Region, and encouraging local municipalities, York Region residents, industry and organizations to incorporate such initiatives into their activities and operations.

Highlights from the list of initiatives include the following:

- Corporate Energy Conservation Policy—a comprehensive plan to conserve or reduce energy use in Regional buildings (including Housing York Inc.) and leased facilities through practices such as Building Automation Systems, Smart Meters, programmable thermostats, humidity controls, and restriction on unnecessary electrical loads.
- Exploring alternative fuels for Regional fleets.
- Developing an Employee Trip Reduction Program for Regional employees.
- Adopting, supporting and promoting sustainable building principles inside and outside the corporation, within a larger Sustainable Development Initiative.
- Exploring suspension or reduction of some regional operations and activities during smog alerts, such as use of gasoline or diesel powered equipment, non-essential motor

vehicle use, pavement resurfacing, street sweeping, and use of oil-based paints, solvents, cleaners and pesticides.

4.2 Proposed 2006 Activities – Completion of Phase I

To complete Phase 1 of the Task Force, the following activities will be carried out in 2006:

4.2.1 Completion of Baseline Data Inventory

Based on data availability and the feasibility of collecting accurate accounts of energy and fuel use from all Regional activities, the Task Force has selected 2004 as the baseline year for establishing an inventory of emissions through Regional operations and activities. The completion of this inventory involves the collection and collation of emissions, establishment of a 2004 Corporate Emissions Baseline and generation of Emission Tracking Reports.

4.2.2 Enhancement of EEMS Software

The existing EEMS system has the ability to calculate greenhouse gas, smog and acid rain emissions. For vehicle emissions however, EEMS only tracks greenhouse gases. In order to establish a complete emissions inventory for vehicle fuel use, including emissions that affect local ambient air quality, additional software is required for this system. As transportation is a major source of emissions, and a promising area for emission reduction activities, it is vital that fuel usage is accurately tracked and monitored.

4.2.3 Literature and Best Practice Review

A literature and best practice review will establish specific pollutants that will be targeted for emission reduction activities. Ongoing scientific research continues to link specific pollutants to health and environmental impacts. While the major smog precursors and GHGs will be targeted for emission reduction activities, opportunities to reduce the emissions of other harmful pollutants (air toxins such as heavy metals and volatile organic compounds), based on a scientific cost-benefit analysis, will be explored.

4.2.4 Screening and Evaluation of Initiatives

A screening and evaluation process will be used by the external consultant to review the list of promising initiatives and to select those that have the greatest potential to fulfill the mandate and mission of the Task Force.

Some clean air initiatives have the potential for funding or grant opportunities to offset costs. These opportunities will be further explored as the Task Force continues to investigate and select promising clean air initiatives.

This process will take into account a cost-benefit analysis, health impacts, environmental value, economic considerations, funding opportunities and other implementation considerations. The result of this process will be recommendations to Council on which measures should be incorporated into the Regional Air Quality Policy and action plan.

4.2.5 Grant Applications and Potential Emission Credits

Opportunities for funding emission reduction measures and the potential for the Region to participate in emission trading (an economic tool that allows companies to work together to reduce emissions at lower costs) must be further researched to fully understand and take advantage of these opportunities.

4.2.6 Contract Extension of Facilitator

Activities of the facilitator to date have ensured that the Task Force, the Working Groups and the External Stakeholder process moves forward on schedule and with visible results. An extension of the facilitator's services until early 2006 will ensure that the project will be completed in spring 2006.

4.3 Next Steps – Phase 2

After the list of initiatives has been screened and reviewed by the external consultant, a further report will be brought forward to Council in 2006. This report will outline the recommended initiatives and their associated costs for implementation.

Once the emission baseline is set, targets are selected and emission reduction activities are implemented, a process will be established for the ongoing collection and analysis of emission data (fuel and energy use) to ensure that the emission reduction targets are being met.

4.4 Relationship to Vision 2026

As a project that involves sustainable communities, environmental strategies, innovative business practices, health and wellness, liveable communities, cost-effective infrastructure, efficient transportation, and alternative service delivery, the Task Force supports all eight goal areas of Vision 2026.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

To date, Task Force costs to retain a facilitator and conduct Task Force and Stakeholder meetings have been accommodated within the Council approved 2005 Business Plan and Budget (shared by all six Regional departments and York Regional Police). Several activities identified in the list of promising initiatives are already underway, with budgeting accommodated with department-specific programs.

However, in order to complete the proposed 2006 activities (Phase I), the following additional financial and staff resources will be required for the Task Force:

Table 1
Costs for Proposed 2006 Activities

Resource	Cost
One Temporary Full-Time Environmental Engineer (1 year)	\$87,500 less \$12,000 wage subsidy from the Environmental Careers Organization*
Consultant Services	\$175,000 less \$87,500 from Green Municipal Fund**
Expansion of emissions tracking database	\$10,000
Extension of current Facilitator contract	\$10,000
Corporate Enhancement	\$183,000

* The Environmental Careers Organization provides environmental career development through wage subsidies and internships.

** The FCM Green Municipal Fund was established by the federal government in its 2000 budget to stimulate investment in innovative municipal infrastructure projects. The grant covers 50% of the cost to perform feasibility studies, to a maximum of \$350,000, and is set to expire at the end of 2006. The Region has already been awarded this grant.

The total estimated costs to meet the requirements of the Task Force for 2006 are \$183,000. It is recommended that this \$183,000 expenditure be referred to the 2006 Business Plan and Budget as a corporate enhancement.

6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

The benefits of a clean air program, including improved service delivery, enhanced health, and protection of the environment, will benefit all local municipalities.

7. CONCLUSION

The Corporate Clean Air Task Force was established with a mandate to identify specific, measurable and achievable corporate actions to improve air quality and to incorporate these actions into a comprehensive Regional Air Quality Policy. While the Task Force has been meeting over the past year to develop clean air actions for incorporation into a Regional Clean Air Policy, additional resources are required to select the most promising clean air actions based on emission reduction potential, economic, health and implementation considerations. The proposed Regional Air Quality Policy and clean air action plans will be presented for Regional Council approval in 2006.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.

(The attachment referred to in this clause was included in the agenda for the November 3, 2005 Committee meeting.)