

To: York Region Rapid Transit Corporation Board of Directors
From: Mary-Frances Turner, President
Subject: Board Reports

Recommendation

It is recommended that:

1. The Board approve the templates for reports to the Board as outlined in this report.

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek approval from the Board for:

- the streamlined templates that will be used for staff reports to the Board
- the formats that will be used for regular progress reports

Background

Since 2003, rapid transit project reporting has been to Committee and Council

- Since the inception of the York Region rapid transit program in 2003, staff has reported to the Rapid Transit Public/Private Partnership Steering Committee, which approved reports and submitted their recommendations to Regional Council for final approval.

The \$1.4 billion vivaNext program requires timely management and decision-making

- The current stage of the rapid transit project, vivaNext, will see the construction of dedicated rapid transit lanes along 67 kms. of major roads in four corridors in York Region.
- The construction program for this \$1.4 billion investment is very large and multi-faceted and effective and timely management would be better managed by a Board.
- In June 2009, Council authorized a Rapid Transit Board to oversee the activities of the York Region Rapid Transit Corporation.

The new Board presents the opportunity to implement a streamlined staff reporting process

- Previously, rapid transit staff reports to Committee and Council were formatted to be consistent within the guidelines provided by York Region for all Regional reports to Committee and Council.
- A more streamlined and focused reporting format will best serve the needs of the Board and Corporation.

Analysis

An environmental scan of reporting formats was undertaken

- Staff has reviewed report formats being used by several different transit and transportation agencies across North America. Locally, reports to the now defunct GO Transit Board are provided, as well as staff reports to the Toronto Transit Commission, and staff reports to the July 2009 Metrolinx Board meeting. Other reports are those utilized by AC Transit, BART, Chicago Transit Authority, Dallas Area Rapid Transit Board.
- Not unexpectedly, a wide variety of reporting formats are being used by various agencies.
- Many organizations utilize one to two page memorandums to the board or commission from the heads of the corporations and agencies, which is accompanied by additional analysis as required.

Memorandum-style reporting is suggested for the YRRTC Board

- All reports to the Board will be in a memorandum format from the President of the Corporation to the Board. This report is presented in the new format
- Two types of memorandums will be used; one will be brief and can serve to address less complex decision/approval items, as well as to introduce regular quarterly and annual reports, while the other is a more detailed memorandum in support of more complex items. These two memorandums are described below.
- For administrative purposes, the memorandum will include the Board Meeting number and date and a document reference number.

Brief Memorandum

- Used for regular standardized quarterly and annual reports, where the covering memorandum serves to introduce the report and highlight key information contained in the report.
- For reports that require a decision or approval that is straight forward where an executive summary is sufficient.
- The brief memorandum will include section headings, titled "Recommendation" "Purpose" and "Background".
- The 'Background' section will provide brief salient background information on the item. Where the subject is a regular report that is being introduced, it will highlight key information in the regular report. Where the subject requires decision and/or approval, it will include brief background and the results of analysis.

Detailed Memorandum

- Used where an item requires a decision and/or approval the subject matter is sufficiently complex to warrant a more fulsome report to the Board. It is also well suited for more detailed information items.
- Detailed memorandums, in addition to the "Recommendation" "Purpose" and "Background" headings used in the brief memorandum will also include section headings titled, Analysis and Conclusion. Additional headings may be added as required.
- The Background section in the more detailed report will be limited to salient historical background.

Corporation memorandums to the Board will be consistent in appearance

- Corporation memorandums and associated documents shall be immediately recognizable as being associated with the York Region Rapid Transit Corporation to help promote 'brand' identity amongst staff, the Board, stakeholders and the public.
- The format and appearance of this report is suggested.

Memorandums tabled at monthly Board meetings will focus primarily on aspects of project implementation that require a decision and/or approval by the Board

- The Rapid Transit Board process approved by Council anticipates both monthly meetings, and additional meetings as required.
- Monthly meetings provide the opportunity to apprise the Board of developments which may eventually require a decision on their part or the results of previous recommendations.
- Memorandums may be brief or detailed, depending on the subject being reported.
- Items of interest that do not require a decision and/or approval will be reported out verbally at the Board meeting.

Reports on project progress will be made to the Board quarterly and annually

- Project progress and financial status does not need to be reported at all monthly Board meetings.
- A reporting format has been developed for the purpose of summarizing project implementation and financial status quarterly. The information contained in the annual report will be in a form acceptable for audit purposes. It should be noted that such a report is often required by senior funding partners, as was the case with the Federal government during the Quick Start, first stage of the rapid transit plan.

It may be necessary to hold supplementary Board meetings from time to time

- Where the timely direction/approval of the Board relating to an issue precludes the item from waiting until the next Board meeting, a special meeting or alternative method shall be established to obtain a decision.
- In such matters, a brief memorandum will be used to brief the Board member.
- A quick decision and/or approval can be achieved by either holding a supplementary Board meeting or by electronic means.

Background information can be minimized or provided as attachments

- Previously, reports to the RT/PPP Steering Committee often contained extensive background sections. This degree of background was helpful for those who were not as well versed in the many aspects of the rapid transit project.
- Now that majority of decisions and approvals are vested with the Board detailed background information will be streamlined.

References to local municipal impact will be changed to stakeholder impact

- The rapid transit plan and program was established with input from affected local municipalities in York Region.
- Now that the project is entering largely a construction phase stakeholder impacts, both public and private, municipal and external multi-jurisdictional continue to be an ongoing aspect of project implementation and will be addressed where appropriate to do so.

Financial updates will be handled in quarterly and annual reports unless there are budget implications

- York Region Council will approve the Rapid Transit Corporation budget annually.
- Outside of such budgetary approval, the President of the YRRTC will by and large manage day to day rapid transit activities including expenditure of the approved budget.
- Most items that will be brought to the Board will be managed within budget and will not be reported on unless there is budget implications

Conclusion

- This report seeks approval from the Board for streamlined staff reporting templates and regular progress reports.
- A simplified method of reporting York Region Rapid Transit Corporation business to the Rapid Transit Board has been developed that consists of brief and detailed memorandums.
- A consistent branded look has been developed for both brief and detailed memorandums.
- Brief one to two page memorandums will be used to introduce regular quarterly and annual reports as well as for less complex decision and/or approval items on the monthly Board agenda.
- Detailed memorandums will be used for more complex decision and/or approvals, as well as information items.
- Additional items of interest to the Board will be reported out verbally at the monthly meeting.

For more information on this report, please contact, Janis Vanderburgh, Senior Counsel, York Region Rapid Transit Corporation at 905-886-6767, Ext. 1045.

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President

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