

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor William F. Bell, Committee Chair and
Members of Transportation and Works Committee

FROM: Kees Schipper, Commissioner of Transportation and Works

DATE: June 10, 2004

RE: **Draft Resolutions
Regarding the Environmental Assessment and Approvals Process**

In response to a request made at the May 13, 2004 16th Avenue Advisory Committee meeting, two draft resolutions regarding the Environmental Assessment and approvals process are attached.

The first resolution is specific to York Region and contains detailed recommendations from a York Region perspective. If endorsed by Transportation and Works Committee and Council, this resolution would be forwarded to the Ministry of the Environment for a response and to the area municipalities for their information.

The second resolution contains many of the same recommendations but is more general to all municipalities in Ontario. If endorsed by Transportation and Works Committee and Council, this second resolution should be forwarded to the Association of Municipalities of Ontario for their consideration and potential endorsement.

PM/KS/gr

Attachments – 2

(a) Draft Resolution Regarding Environmental Assessment and Approvals Process:

Whereas York Region is the fastest growing large municipality in Ontario; and

Whereas York Region is dedicated to ensuring that growth occurs in an environmentally sustainable manner; and

Whereas this growth is an important component of the Ontario economy and a direct result of the growing population in Canada and Ontario; and

Whereas new and expanded municipal infrastructure is required to provide the necessary services to new residents and businesses within York Region; and

Whereas significant delays have been experienced by York Region in delivering the necessary municipal infrastructure due to impediments during the Environmental Assessment process and other required environmental approvals and permits; and

Whereas delays in the approval of municipal infrastructure projects can often result in other unplanned and unmitigated environmental impacts; and

Whereas the Environmental Assessment Act should recognize the unique and important aspects of transit, roads, water, wastewater and solid waste projects; and

Whereas the Provincial government has announced that an expert panel will be established to provide recommendations on improvements to the environmental assessment process;

Therefore be it resolved that:

1. The Ministry of the Environment be requested to amend the Environmental Assessment Act to streamline the environmental assessment process for municipal infrastructure projects, in particular to:
 - a) clarify the public and private sector roles in the provision of waste management infrastructure,
 - b) provide some certainty to the private sector on the outcome of the process when initiating an environmental assessment for a waste management facility,
 - c) allow the scoping of an environmental assessment process for the expansion of an existing landfill site or to residual waste options if the municipality has maximized other waste diversion initiatives,
 - d) provide definition and rules for the implementation of research scale facilities for waste management,
 - e) allow the scoping and streamlining of the environmental assessment for transit infrastructure, recognizing the overall net environmental benefit of implementing transit facilities as early as possible,

- f) recognize that the need for infrastructure projects is often inherent in the Provincial approval of Official Plans; and
- 2. The Ministry of the Environment be requested to streamline the approval and permitting process required subsequent to the completion and approval of an environmental assessment by ensuring that the process and requirements for applying for Provincial permits be clarified and that suitable turn around times be identified and resources applied to achieve these target timelines; and
- 3. The Ministry of the Environment be requested to clarify and streamline the areas of responsibility for all ministries and agencies dealing with the natural environmental impacts to make clear the respective responsibilities and to eliminate duplication, particularly between the Ministry of the Environment, the Ministry of Natural Resources, the Conservation Authorities, Environment Canada and Fisheries and Oceans Canada; and
- 4. The Ministry of the Environment be requested to expedite and finalize the proposed Canada-Ontario Agreement on Environmental Cooperation as soon as possible; and
- 5. The Ministry of the Environment be requested to establish the expert panel to provide recommendations on improvements to the environmental assessment process and act upon its recommendations as quickly as possible and to include a representative from York Region on the panel; and
- 6. This resolution be forwarded by the Regional Clerk to the Minister of the Environment for a response; and
- 7. This resolution be forwarded by the Regional Clerk to the York Region area municipalities.

(b) Draft Association of Municipalities of Ontario Resolution Regarding Environmental Assessment and Approvals Process

Whereas growth is occurring throughout the Province of Ontario; and

Whereas municipalities in Ontario are dedicated to ensuring that growth occurs in an environmentally sustainable manner; and

Whereas this growth is an important component of the Ontario economy and a direct result of the growing population in Canada and Ontario; and

Whereas new and expanded municipal infrastructure is required to provide the necessary services to new residents and businesses within Ontario; and

Whereas significant delays have been experienced by municipalities in delivering the necessary municipal infrastructure due to impediments during the Environmental Assessment process and other required environmental approvals and permits; and

Whereas delays in the approval of municipal infrastructure projects can often result in other unplanned and unmitigated environmental impacts; and

Whereas the Environmental Assessment Act should recognize the unique and important aspects of transit, roads, water, wastewater and solid waste projects; and

Whereas the Provincial government has announced that an expert panel will be established to provide recommendations on improvements to the environmental assessment process;

Therefore be it resolved that:

1. The Ministry of the Environment be requested to amend the Environmental Assessment Act to streamline the environmental assessment process for municipal infrastructure projects; and
2. The Ministry of the Environment be requested to streamline the approval and permitting process required subsequent to the completion and approval of an environmental assessment by ensuring that the process and requirements for applying for Provincial permits be clarified and that suitable turn around times be identified and resources applied to achieve these target timelines; and
3. The Ministry of the Environment be requested to clarify and streamline the areas of responsibility for all ministries and agencies dealing with the natural environmental impacts to make clear the respective responsibilities and to eliminate duplication, particularly between the Ministry of the Environment, the Ministry of Natural Resources, the Conservation Authorities, Environment Canada and Fisheries and Oceans Canada; and
4. The Ministry of the Environment be requested to expedite and finalize the proposed Canada-Ontario Agreement on Environmental Cooperation as soon as possible; and
5. The Ministry of the Environment be requested to establish the expert panel to provide recommendations on improvements to the environmental assessment process and act upon its recommendations as quickly as possible.