![York Region logo]

Clause 12 in Report No. 11 of Committee of the Whole was adopted by the Council of The Regional Municipality of York at its meeting held on June 25, 2015 with the following amendment to recommendation 2:

2. The Broadband Advisory Task Force be comprised of the following members:

   Mayor Altmann
   Mayor Dawe
   Mayor Hackson
   Regional Councillor Jones
   Mayor Pellegrini
   Mayor Quirk
   Regional Councillor Rosati
   Mayor Scarpitti
   Mayor Van Bynen

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York Region Broadband Strategy Update and
Advisory Task Force Terms of Reference and Structure

Committee of the Whole recommends adoption of the recommendations in the report dated May 22, 2015 from the Commissioner of Corporate Services and Chief Planner with the following amendments to recommendation 1:

1. Council endorse the proposed Broadband Advisory Task Force Terms of Reference and structure as outlined in this report (Attachment 1) with the following amendments:

   a) Term of Membership - The Advisory Task Force term is anticipated to be between 18 and 24 months subject to further review

   b) Responsibilities - Add "review and refine specific goals, outcomes and timelines for the implementation of the Regional Ultra High Speed Broadband Strategy"

   c) Meeting Logistics – The Advisory Task Force will meet quarterly or as determined by the Task Force members

   d) Meeting Logistics – The inaugural meeting will be scheduled as late as Q3 2015 or as determined by a majority based on the availability of Task Force members

**York Region Broadband Update and Advisory Task Force
Terms of Reference and Structure**

1. Recommendations

It is recommended that:

1. Council endorse the proposed Broadband Advisory Task Force Terms of Reference and structure as outlined in this report. (Attachment 1)

2. Regional Council appoint the Broadband Advisory Task Force members.

3. The Regional Clerk circulate a copy of this report to the local municipalities.

2. Purpose

This report updates Council on activities relating to the York Region Broadband Strategy and seeks Council approval of a proposed Advisory Task Force Terms of Reference and structure to support staff in the delivery of the broadband strategy (Attachment 1).

3. Background

The Region's Economic Development Action Plan highlighted the need for improved broadband connectivity

Broadband is generally defined as a high-capacity information transmission technique using a wide range of frequencies, which enables multiple messages

to be communicated simultaneously. Broadband can be accessed through wired or wireless transmission technology. This is in contrast to the first generation dial-up Internet, where one was unable to access the Internet and use the telephone at the same time. Broadband Internet access first became widely available across North America in the mid to late-1990s.

Initially, Broadband was characterized by a minimum download speed of 256 Kilobits per second (Kbps), however as technology improved this threshold has been revised numerous times over the past two decades. In January of 2015, the United States Federal Communications Commission (FCC) updated the definition of Broadband by stipulating a minimum download speed of 25 Megabits per second (Mbps) and minimum upload speed of 3 Mbps.

The need to increase high-speed broadband connectivity throughout York Region was identified as a key priority in the Region's *Economic Development*

Action Plan approved by Regional Council in December 2012. The York Region Economic Development Action Plan further highlighted a Transformational goal: "Provide Connectivity Infrastructure to Support Innovation."

The York Region Broadband Strategy Report was adopted by Regional Council on May 15, 2014

On May 15, 2014 Regional Council adopted the York Region Broadband Strategy report, which provided recommendations for improving access to high-speed Internet connectivity for residents, businesses and institutions throughout York Region. An electronic version of the final Broadband Strategy is posted on the York.ca and InvestinYork.ca websites, and hard copies have been distributed to the local municipalities. Hard copies of the Strategy are also included in the Committee Agenda package.

The strategy was organized via the following objectives and associated implementation priorities:

Objectives:

- Encourage investments that will provide higher connectivity speeds within York Region

- Create an environment that facilitates open, competitive and innovative services and applications

- Maximize the efficient investment of both public and private sector funding to improve connectivity throughout York Region

Implementation Priorities:

- Education and Advocacy Priorities

- Municipal Process Priorities

- Infrastructure Investment Priorities

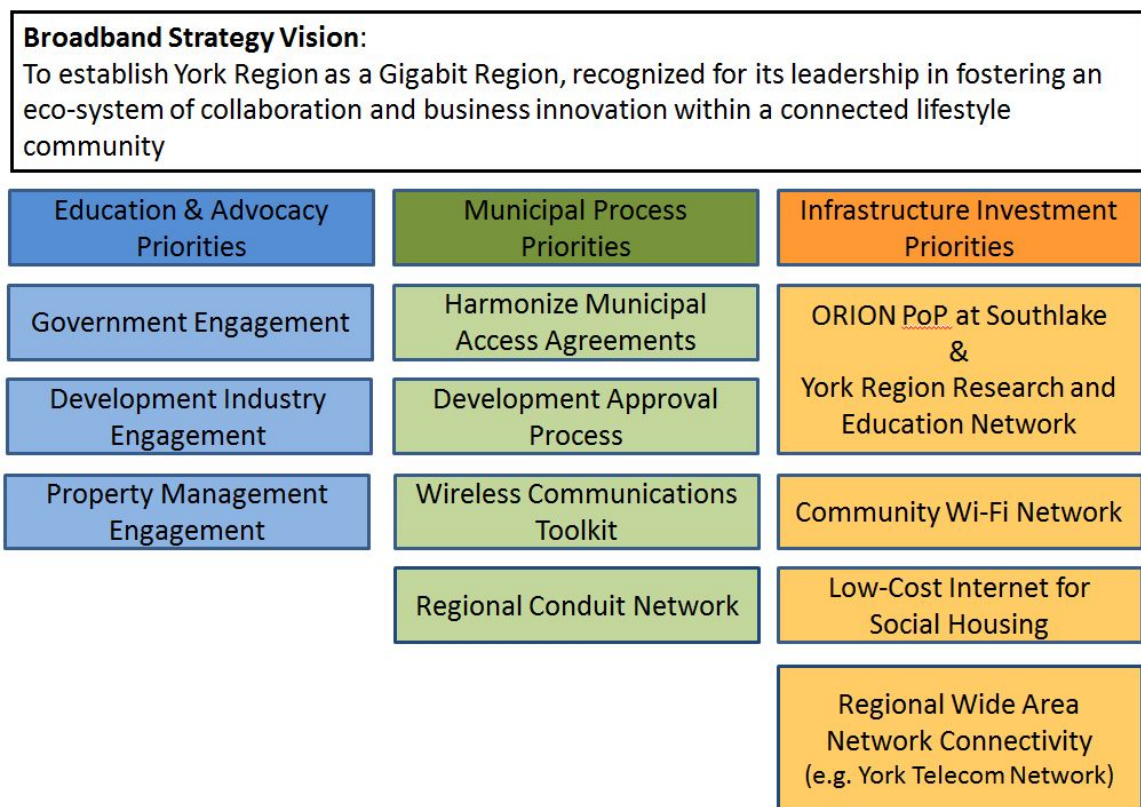## A broad range of connectivity-related initiatives are outlined in the York Region Broadband Strategy

The Broadband Strategy covers a diverse range of initiatives that collectively contribute to achieving the goal of establishing York Region as a Gigabit Region including, but not limited to:

- Developing tools to help local municipalities formulate policy language and access agreements that support and assist with attraction of broadband infrastructure investments

- Working with Municipalities, Universities, Schools and Hospitals (MUSH) sector stakeholders to improve research and education capabilities throughout the Region

- Engaging public and private sector stakeholders to investigate opportunities for partnerships that promote Broadband development and access for residents, businesses and institutions

Figure 1 illustrates the vision and scope of the York Region Broadband Strategy as captured in the May 15, 2014 report.

Figure 1
York Region Broadband Strategy Overview

Broadband Strategy Vision:
To establish York Region as a Gigabit Region, recognized for its leadership in fostering an eco-system of collaboration and business innovation within a connected lifestyle community

Education & Advocacy Priorities	Municipal Process Priorities	Infrastructure Investment Priorities
Government Engagement	Harmonize Municipal Access Agreements	ORION PoP at Southlake & York Region Research and Education Network
Development Industry Engagement	Development Approval Process	Community Wi-Fi Network
Property Management Engagement	Wireless Communications Toolkit	Low-Cost Internet for Social Housing
	Regional Conduit Network	Regional Wide Area Network Connectivity (e.g. York Telecom Network)

The York Telecom Network is one of many components included in the Broadband Strategy

The York Telecom Network (YTN) is a York Region owned and operated dark fibre-optic infrastructure asset. It was originally started in 2002 as a means of connecting Regional Offices to each other. The YTN is one of many components included in the Broadband Strategy.

When the York Region Broadband Strategy and report were developed, it was assumed that the YTN would be an asset that could be leveraged to assist in delivering some of the strategy's objectives. However, a review of the YTN was initiated by the Region to determine the optimal business model. As a result, all new initiatives involving the YTN have been suspended, pending the outcome of the review that is currently underway.

A report including an update on timelines and expected outcomes of the YTN review will be presented to Committee of the Whole by the IT Services Branch on June 18, 2015. This will be followed by a second report in early 2016 that will include recommendations to Council regarding the future of the YTN.

4.   Analysis and Options

A variety of initiatives have been launched to deliver the strategy

In delivering the York Region Broadband Strategy, staff has led and supported a number of initiatives. Tables 1 and 2 list and provide the status of these initiatives.

Table 1

Completed Broadband Initiatives

Education & Advocacy Priorities

- Digital Canada 150 Strategy "Connecting Canadians" Fund Program facilitation
  - In August 2014, Staff facilitated a "Connecting Canadians" Fund program information session to share information on available opportunities from this federal program – resulting in a letter of support request from Vianet for a development in Whitchurch-Stouffville in January 2015

Municipal Process Priorities

- Broadband-oriented Working Groups
  - Throughout 2014 staff led the development of working groups focused on opportunities to improve Broadband access in the following areas:
    - Planning Policy Language
    - Wireless Connectivity
    - Employment Areas
    - Centres and Corridors/Intelligent Communities
    - Municipal Conduit Network Development
- Connected Communities Seminar
  - In November 2014, Cisco Canada was invited to present an overview of connected communities initiatives from around the globe and provide a context for an outcomes-oriented approach for Broadband deployment for York Region

Infrastructure Investment Priorities

- ORION Point of Presence (PoP) at Southlake Regional Health Centre
  - Throughout 2014, staff worked with ORION, Southlake, and York University to facilitate the installation of an ORION PoP at Southlake and its connection to York University – which was completed in February 2015
- Developed scope-of-work for Wireless Connectivity Toolkit
  - Regional staff collaborated with staff from all nine local municipalities to develop a scope-of-work which will form an RFP to develop a best-practices resource to assist municipalities in attracting and processing wireless communications infrastructure investment applications

Table 2

Ongoing Broadband Initiatives

Education & Advocacy Priorities
- York Region Broadband and Innovation Summit
  - Slated to take place in October 2015
- York Region Research and Education Network
  - Working with ORION and MUSH sector stakeholders to facilitate the development of a York Region Research and Education Network

Municipal Process Priorities
- Planning and Policy Language Tool
  - Slated for completion in Q3-2015
- Wireless Connectivity Toolkit
  - Slated for delivery in Q4-2015

Infrastructure Investment Priorities
- ORION PoP Media Event at Southlake
  - Staff are working with ORION, Southlake, Town of Newmarket and other stakeholders to announce the installation of the ORION PoP – will take place in Q2-2015
- Transit Public Wi-Fi Pilot Project
  - Working with Transit and IT Services staff to develop and launch a Public Wi-Fi pilot project at various transit terminals across York Region's centres and corridors
- Ongoing engagement with Local Municipalities and Internet Service Providers (ISPs) on various development opportunities throughout York Region

Staff have been tasked with recommending a governance model to guide the delivery of the Broadband Strategy

The May 2014 Broadband Strategy Report suggested that a York Region Broadband Steering Committee be formed to provide guidance on delivery of strategy objectives and help to ensure these objectives are met in an inclusive manner that accounts for the needs of the various stakeholders across York Region.

Staff examined several steering committee models that were established in other jurisdictions to support broadband-oriented initiatives. These include:

- Coquitlam Optical Network (QNet)

- City of Calgary Fibre, Cable, Duct and Wireless (FCDW) Committee

- City of Chattanooga Electric Power Board (EPB)

- Eastern Ontario Regional Network (EORN)

- SouthWestern Integrated Fibre Technology (SWIFT)

These committees were all tasked to either manage municipal or build a regional fibre network.

For additional context, staff also examined the governance models of the following groups and initiatives:

- The suggested Steering Committee structure included in the Broadband Strategy document (attached to the May 15, 2014 York Region Broadband Strategy report)

- The existing York Region Agricultural Advisory Liaison Group

- The approved structure for the York Region Transportation Master Plan Advisory Task Force

Staff recommends the formation of a limited-term Advisory Task Force to guide the implementation of the Broadband Strategy

Through continued discussion and review, staff recommends that a limited-term Advisory Task Force of 18 to 24 months would provide the most efficient and effective mechanism to facilitate Regional Council's involvement in the implementation of the York Region Broadband Strategy. This structure will also assist in soliciting and managing engagement from local municipalities and other stakeholders while ensuring consistency with other similar Regional working groups.

Staff recommends that the Broadband Advisory Task Force have a similar structure as the Transportation Master Plan Advisory Task Force. The suggested composition includes:

- Chair of the Planning and Economic Development Committee

- Regional Council representative from each local municipality

The Advisory Task Force would also include, in a supporting role, staff representation from:

- Transportation Services

- Community and Health Services

- Environmental Services

- Corporate Services

- Finance

- York Region Rapid Transit Corporation

- York Regional Police

Terms of Reference itemizing the proposed Advisory Task Force membership, responsibilities, processes and logistical information is provided in Attachment 1.
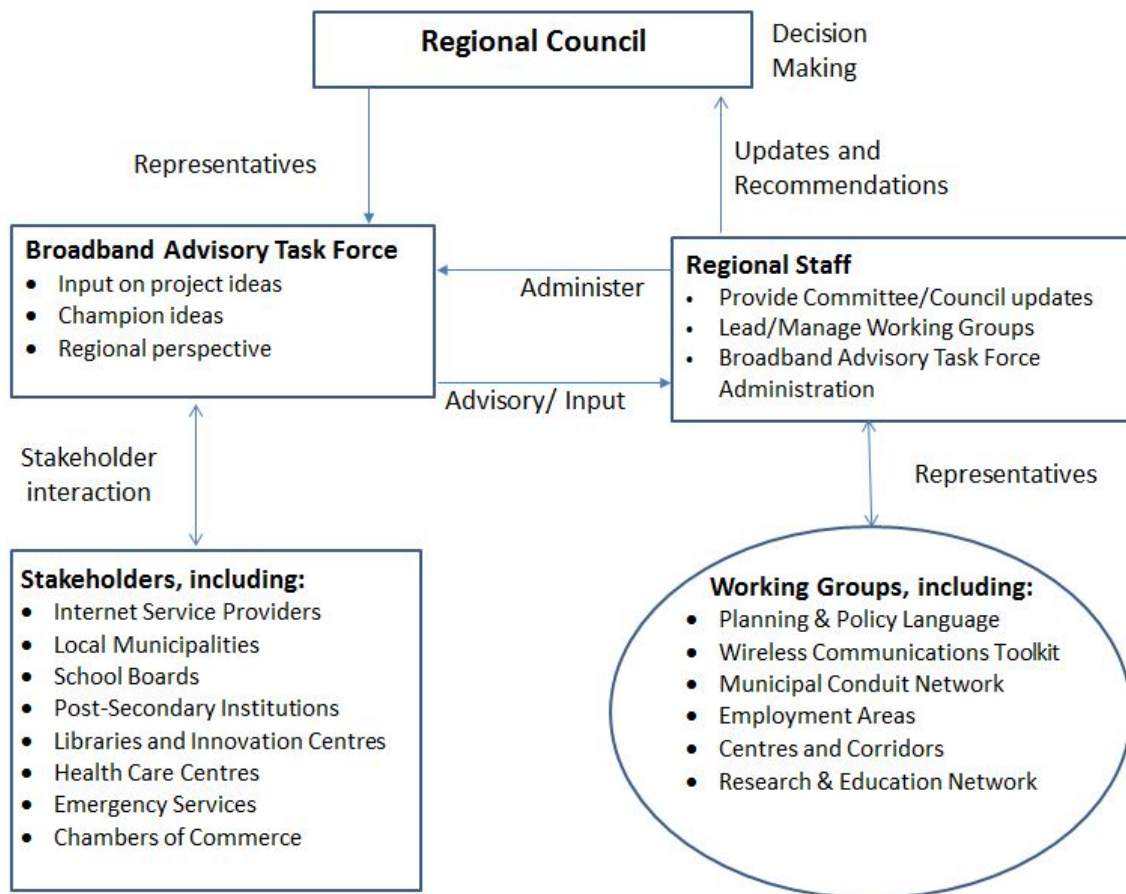
The role of the Broadband Advisory Task Force is to support York Region staff in the delivery of various aspects of the Broadband Strategy

The Broadband Advisory Task Force will be a resource that can:

- Champion high-speed broadband connectivity across the region

- Interface with and consult with stakeholders

- Provide feedback and input into policy development as required

Regional staff will seek input from the Broadband Advisory Task Force as initiatives move forward. Figure 2 illustrates the Advisory Task Force Relationship model.

Figure 2
York Region Broadband Advisory Task Force Relationship Model

Staff will leverage the Advisory Task Force as a resource to gather industry insight, input on policy and to engage stakeholders. As initiatives and opportunities arise, staff will form and lead the activities of working groups.

Link to key Council-approved plans

Broadband-related initiatives support the *York Region Official Plan* objective "To encourage and accommodate economic Activities that diversify and strengthen the Region's economic base, employment opportunities for residents and competitive advantage for its businesses".

Regional Council has approved a number of strategic documents that provide clear direction regarding Economic Development within the current term of Council and beyond. The Economic Vitality section (Chapter 4) of the *York Region Official Plan – 2010*, Objective 3 of the Strategic Priority Area to Strengthen the Region's Economy in the *2015 to 2019 Strategic Plan*, and the *Vision 2051* goal of fostering an Innovation Economy each highlight the

importance of economic development and high-speed broadband connectivity as essential infrastructure for York Region's economy.

5.   Financial Implications

Resources allocated to the development of the York Region Broadband Advisory Task Force and the execution of the various elements of the York Region Broadband Strategy will be implemented primarily through the budget of the Planning and Economic Development Branch, in partnership with other departments, local economic development offices and external program delivery partners.

6.   Local Municipal Impact

The York Region Broadband Strategy was initiated and funded in partnership with all nine local municipalities. Ongoing participation by and partnerships with and amongst the local municipalities are critical to the execution of the Strategy and will continue to be key in successfully identifying and implementing broadband-related priorities for their respective communities.

7.   Conclusion

There is a need to enable greater high-speed broadband connectivity throughout York Region to support innovation and other activities. Through the Economic Development Action Plan and the Broadband Strategy, the Region has identified the opportunities to advance the growth of this medium and have commenced a variety of initiatives to address this need.

The formation of a Broadband Advisory Task Force will support staff efforts to deliver on the broadband strategy recommendations by acting as a resource to provide input on policy, interface with stakeholders, and assist in gathering industry insight.

For more information on this report, please contact Doug Lindeblom, Director, Economic Strategy at ext. 71503.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.

Attachment (1)

Accessible formats or communication supports are available upon request.

Draft Terms of Reference

Council Advisory Task Force: Regional Broadband

Purpose	What will the Regional Broadband Advisory Task Force do and why?

The Regional Broadband Advisory Task Force is an advisory body of Council to provide feedback to York Region staff in the development of tools, policies and working groups to advance the goals of the York Region Broadband Strategy.

Background	Why was it created?

The York Region Broadband Strategy was developed to identify connectivity issues and opportunities throughout York Region and to provide a framework for addressing the connectivity needs of the Region's residents, businesses and institutions.

The key Priority Areas requiring consideration by the Advisory Task Force will include:
- Education and Advocacy
- Municipal Process
- Infrastructure Investment

Composition	Who is on the Regional Broadband Advisory Task Force ?

The composition of the Regional Broadband Advisory Task Force is to be determined by York Region Council.

Suggestions include:
- Chair of the Planning and Economic Development Committee (PEDC)
- A Regional Council representative from each local municipality

The Advisory Task Force will be supported by representatives from senior management and the following departments and services:
- Transportation Services
- Community and Health Services
- Environmental Services
- Corporate Services
- Finance
- York Region Rapid Transit Corporation
- York Regional Police

Term of Membership	**How long is the commitment for the Regional Broadband Advisory Task Force?**
The Advisory Task Force term is anticipated to be between 18 and 24 months.	
Decision-Making	**How does the Regional Broadband Advisory Task Force make decisions?**
The Advisory Task Force is an advisory body to Regional staff. Decisions will be made by Regional Council.	
Responsibilities	**How will the Regional Broadband Advisory Task Force work together to meet its purpose?**
Advisory Task Force members will attend meetings and provide support to staff by: • championing high-speed broadband connectivity across the Region, • consulting with stakeholders, • providing feedback and input regarding policy development.	
Meeting Logistics	**When does the Regional Broadband Advisory Task Force meet?**
The Advisory Task Force will meet quarterly to review and discuss issues and action items pertaining to the execution of the York Region Broadband Strategy. The proposed meeting schedule is as follows: Inaugural Meeting – Q3 2015: Overview of the Broadband Strategy and identification of key actions under each Priority Area Subsequent Meetings – Quarterly from Q4 2015 to the end of the Advisory Task Force Term: Broadband Strategy project updates, opportunities and discussion Meetings of the Advisory Task Force will be approximately two hours in length.	
	What needs to be done and by whom?
• The Regional Clerk, in consultation with the Planning and Economic Development Branch will solicit agenda items and prepare meeting agendas and minutes. • Planning and Economic Development Branch staff will be responsible for meeting-related activities, including: – workplan development, monitoring, maintenance and reporting – activities to support completion of deliverables of the Advisory Task Force – overall administration of the Advisory Task Force • Regional Broadband Advisory Task Force input will guide staff recommendations and be integrated into Regional staff work plans and reports to Council, as appropriate.	

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