

Clause No. 21 in Report No. 10 of the Committee of the Whole was adopted, without amendment, by the Council of The Regional Municipality of York at its meeting held on May 15, 2014.

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2010-2014 COUNCIL ACCOMPLISHMENTS - FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

Committee of the Whole recommends adoption of the recommendation contained in the following report dated April 16, 2014 from the Commissioner of Finance:

1. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Council receive this report for information.

2. PURPOSE

This report highlights some of the major accomplishments of Regional Council during the 2010 – 2014 term through the Finance and Administration section of Committee of the Whole.

3. BACKGROUND

The Finance and Administration section of the Committee of the Whole provides strategic advice to Regional Council on corporate management matters. It ensures the efficient and sustainable management of York Region's finances. In addition, Finance and Administration is responsible for procurement, information technology, Regional property, human resources, legislative and record keeping services, and for managing the legislative requirements for court administration for cases prosecuted under the *Provincial Offences Act*.

4. ANALYSIS

Finance and Administration supported policies and initiatives that contributed to the effective operation of the Regional government

The objectives that were accomplished by Finance and Administration and sample major initiatives undertaken are outlined below.

Led sustainable financial management, planning, and administration of York Region's resources through effective corporate strategies and policies

- Developed sustainable budgets that responded to service and infrastructure needs. Reflective of Regional growth, the Region's combined operating and capital budget is now the fourth largest among Ontario municipalities. Starting in the 2013 Budget, Finance and Administration oversaw the introduction of multi-year budgeting to help achieve greater fiscal certainty and expenditure control.
- Leveraged major federal and provincial cost-matching infrastructure programs to deliver key Regional infrastructure projects. For example, seventeen projects valued at \$79 million were completed under the Infrastructure Stimulus Fund.
- Oversaw the development and implementation of the Region's Development Charge policy framework. In 2012, a revised Development Charge Bylaw was passed, and the Development Charge Credit Policy was updated in 2013 to ensure adequate recovery for growth-related capital expenditures. Development Charge collections totaled \$967 million during 2010 – 2013.
- Endorsed annual long-term debt management plans that met the requirements of the Province's Annual Repayment Limit for debt servicing and other financial obligations. In 2011, the Province amended the Annual Repayment Limit regulation to acknowledge York Region's growth realities and allow the inclusion of Development Charge collections in the calculation of the Annual Repayment Limit.
- Endorsed a new Regional Fiscal Strategy for managing debt and building reserves. The strategy is forecast to reduce the Region's peak outstanding debt level by \$1.5 billion and increase capital asset replacement reserve contributions by \$1.2 billion in the next ten years.
- Maintained an AAA/Aaa credit rating from Standard & Poor's and Moody's Investor Service. Triple A is the highest rating and allows the Region to borrow at the lowest possible cost.
- Supported strategies and policies to help prudently and effectively manage Regional investments. During 2010 - 2013, general fund portfolio returns averaged approximately 4.1% annually, exceeding benchmarks. Average annual realized returns during this period were approximately \$68 million. In 2013, Finance and Administration endorsed an update to the Investment Policy allowing the Region to manage funds on behalf of external clients.

- Resolved a nearly decade-long dispute over cost-sharing with Peel Region under the York-Peel Water Supply Agreement, with estimated positive financial implications of approximately \$125 million for the Region.
- Successfully negotiated a new three-year Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) collective agreement. There are over 2,200 York Region employees who belong to CUPE Local 905.

Enabled better performance through strategic planning, continuous improvement, and program efficiencies

- Endorsed the Region's *2011-2015 Strategic Plan* that identified 23 strategic objectives and 77 indicators of success. Implementation of the Strategic Plan will help the Region achieve *Vision 2051* objectives for strong, caring and safe communities.
- Identified operating program reductions, efficiencies, and savings as part of the annual budget process. An average of approximately \$7.5 million was identified each year during the last five budget processes.
- Approved acquisition of over 1,000 properties for Regional infrastructure projects, including 650 VIVA acquisitions and two major facilities at 9060 Jane Street in Vaughan and 145 Harry Walker Parkway in Newmarket.
- Approved an accessibility design guideline for all York Region facilities that exceeds the requirements of the Ontario Building Code.
- Oversaw implementation of court process efficiencies, including incorporating an additional courtroom in Newmarket, creating specific time slots for enforcement officers to access the judiciary in the Intake Courtroom to improve court scheduling, and—based on early program successes—obtaining approval to open a second Early Resolution meeting room.

Supported the development and modernization of technology resources that enable delivery of Regional programs and services

- Supported the modernization and renewal of information technology assets critical to Regional operations. In 2013, over 1,600 computers were refreshed and about 3,000 received operating and communication software upgrades.
- Oversaw the transition of Regional telephone systems to newer and more convenient Voice over the Internet protocol (VoIP) systems.

- Supported the development of corporate systems, including enhancements to the Region's Enterprise Resources Planning (ERP) system. The improvements allow for better administration of staffing levels and improved reporting capabilities.
- Enabled business process improvements and tools, such as electronic agendas for Council reports, an upgrade of the Digital Court Recording System, and data warehouse and business intelligence dashboards.
- Supported the development and launch of a revitalized York Region website, york.ca. The site was re-designed to become more accessible and capable of working with emerging media.

Supported initiatives delivered by Regional departments and external partners to help achieve the Region's environmental and human services objectives

- Allocated, as part of the last five budget processes, a total of about \$66.5 million in funding to local hospitals for capital development projects.
- Allocated, as part of the last five budget processes, a total of about \$53 million to the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority and the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority for water protection, land conservation, and environmental education initiatives.
- Supported energy and sustainability projects worth a total of \$2.6 million and yielding approximately \$500,000 in direct energy savings. Several infrastructure projects—such as the Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Operations Centre, the York Region Police Central Services Building, and the Region's Transit Operations and Maintenance Facility—were completed to Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Gold or Silver standards.
- Supported Regional collaboration with the Ministry of Energy to develop details and test templates for energy and greenhouse gas reporting to be used by all public sector agencies in Ontario, as required under the *Green Energy Act*.
- Supported Regional efforts that resulted in two Ontario Power Authority solar Feed-in Tariff (FIT) contracts. Solar photovoltaic systems will be installed at the Bales Operations Centre and at the Georgina Water Treatment Plant.

Strong corporate initiatives contributed to a reputation for excellence

Several awards were received by the Region during this term of Council, including:

- Government Finance Officers Association awards for budget presentation and financial reporting
- GTA's Top Employers award

- Best Employer for New Canadians award for assisting new Canadians in transitioning to a new workplace and life in Canada
- Toronto Star Award for Excellence in Workplace Integration, which recognizes employers for leadership in recruiting/retaining skilled immigrants
- National Quality Institute Performance Excellence Program Level II Accreditation for the Region's Employee Wellness Program.

Link to key Council-approved plans

Finance and Administration accomplishments enabled strong corporate management functions within the Region. The accomplishments supported delivery of several Strategic Plan priority areas, particularly "Manage the Region's Finances Prudently," "Strengthen Organizational Capacity," and "Make Regional Services More User-Friendly."

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct financial implications associated with this report. The costs of implementing the programs and initiatives cited in this report have been managed by Council in its administration of annual budgets between 2010 and 2014.

6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

While effective and efficient programs and services provide an overall benefit to Regional residents, certain initiatives may have more specific or apparent local impacts. Examples of these initiatives include capital funding for local hospitals and funding to Conservation Authorities that implement projects in specific sites around the Region.

7. CONCLUSION

By supporting and enabling various corporate management programs and processes, Finance and Administration helped ensure the effective and efficient operation of the Regional government during this term of Council.

For more information on this report, please contact Joseph Silva, Head of Strategy and Policy, Finance Department at Ext. 77201.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.