

Steeles Avenue Boundary Road Agreement with the Region of York

(City Council on April 11, 12 and 13, 2000, struck out and referred this Clause to the Etobicoke, North York and Scarborough Community Councils for further consideration and report thereon to the Planning and Transportation Committee.)

The Planning and Transportation Committee recommends:

- (1) the adoption of the recommendations of the Steeles Avenue Sub-Committee contained in the transmittal letter (February 1, 2000) from the City Clerk, subject to providing Principles 2 and 9 with the same protection as provided for in Principle 3;**
- (2) that the report and Council's action in respect hereto be forwarded to the Chairs of the Regions of York and of Durham, the Chair of the Greater Toronto Services Board and to the Telecommunications Steering Committee.**

The Planning and Transportation Committee submits the following transmittal letter (February 1, 2000) from the City Clerk, Steeles Avenue Sub-Committee:

Recommendations:

The Steeles Avenue Sub-Committee recommends to the Planning and Transportation Committee that the report (January 19, 2000) from the Commissioner, Works and Emergency Services headed "Steeles Avenue Boundary Road Agreement – Region of York", be adopted subject to the Principles contained in Table 1 of the report being amended as follows:

- (1) inserting the words "west of Markham Road" after the phrase "improvements to north-south links between the municipalities" contained in Principle No. 3; and
- (2) adding the following two Principles:

Principle 9

From a service point of view, all properties on Steeles Avenue should share the same level of services at the higher standards.

Principle 10

Development and planning activities on properties abutting Steeles Avenue should share a common set of planning standards, and dialogue should take place between the two municipalities in developing Official Plan policies that would apply to Steeles Avenue.

In so doing, the Sub-Committee recommends to the Planning and Transportation Committee that City of Toronto staff be authorized to enter into discussions with Region of York staff regarding the development of a Boundary Road Agreement with the Region of York, based upon the following principles:

- (1) Steeles Avenue provides benefits to both the City of Toronto and The Regional Municipality of York;
- (2) the City and Region recognize that development growth will occur on both sides of Steeles Avenue and improved transportation infrastructure is needed to service this development;
- (3) the City and Region recognize that in addition to improved east-west transportation services, improvements to north-south links between the municipalities, west of Markham Road, are also required to accommodate development growth on both sides of the boundary;
- (4) the municipalities should share costs for the maintenance and operation of Steeles Avenue;
- (5) the municipalities should share the capital cost of infrastructure improvements to Steeles Avenue;
- (6) the priority of infrastructure improvements should be agreed to by both parties;
- (7) cross-boundary transportation improvements need to be co-ordinated between the City and the Region;
- (8) the City of Toronto and the Region of York will seek to include the Regions of Durham and Peel in discussions regarding those sections of Steeles Avenue close to the respective boundaries;
- (9) from a service point of view, all properties on Steeles Avenue should share the same level of services at the higher standards; and
- (10) development and planning activities on properties abutting Steeles Avenue should share a common set of planning standards, and dialogue should take place between the two municipalities in developing Official Plan policies that would apply to Steeles Avenue.

The Sub-Committee reports, for the information of the Planning and Transportation Committee, having directed staff that any discussions entered into with the Region of York with respect to Steeles Avenue be conducted in consultation with the respective Councillors, and that the following issues be incorporated into such discussions:

- (a) trail links;
- (b) location of commuter parking;
- (c) site plan approvals;

- (d) benchmark operating costs be based on the actual costs of the level of service;
- (e) the City of Toronto policies with respect to telecommunication access agreements be applied to Steeles Avenue, and further discussions regarding telecommunications policies be held with the Region of York with a view to developing some common policies;
- (f) the development of a streetscaping plan for Steeles Avenue; and
- (g) revenue sharing.

Background:

At its meeting on January 31, 2000, the Steeles Avenue Sub-Committee gave consideration to a report (January 19, 2000) from the Commissioner, Works and Emergency Services, presenting the principles of a Boundary Road Agreement with the Region of York and recommending that City of Toronto staff be authorized to enter into discussions with Region of York staff regarding the development of a Boundary Road Agreement with the Region of York, based upon the principles contained in Table 1 of the report.

(Report dated January 19, 2000, from the Commissioner,
Works and Emergency Services, titled ‘Steeles
Avenue Boundary Road Agreement – Region of York)

Purpose:

This report presents the principles of a Boundary Road Agreement with the Region of York.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that City of Toronto staff be authorized to enter into discussions with Region of York staff regarding the development of a Boundary Road Agreement with the Region of York, based upon the principles noted in Table 1 in this report.

Background:

The Steeles Avenue Sub-Committee, at its meeting of November 30, 1999, agreed that a possible agreement with the Region of York regarding Steeles Avenue be pursued and that the Sub-Committee oversee its implementation. This report presents the results of discussions to date with Region of York staff and seeks authorization to continue negotiations based upon a set of principles agreed to by staff of the respective municipalities.

Discussion:

Staff from Transportation Services have been meeting with staff of the Region of York Transportation and Works Department regarding the potential of developing an agreement with respect to the capital and operating needs of Steeles Avenue, between Albion Road and Pickering Town Line. The need for such an agreement has arisen because of the changes in the funding arrangements for municipal road transportation that have occurred over the last number of years. Essentially, with the downloading of all costs for municipal roads to local government, the City of Toronto has become solely responsible for the operating and capital costs for Steeles Avenue, a boundary road shared with the Region of York. The City is fully responsible for these costs as a result of previous decisions that resulted in all of the Steeles Avenue right-of-way lying entirely within the City of Toronto boundary, i.e. the north limit of the City boundary is the north streetline of Steeles Avenue. Appendix 1, attached, presents a previous report to the Urban Environment and Development Committee in June 1998 outlining the history of the development of Steeles Avenue.

Principles of an Agreement:

The goal of our discussions has been the development of an agreement with the Region of York to fairly share the operating and capital costs for Steeles Avenue.

Our initial discussions with Region of York staff have led to the development of a set of principles to guide the further negotiation of a detailed agreement satisfactory to both parties. These principles are outline in Table 1, attached.

Prior to continuing with further negotiations, we are seeking the Sub-Committee's endorsement of the principles.

Region of York Issues:

Region of York Council has authorized its staff to continue negotiations with City of Toronto staff. Regional staff have indicated that they are willing to consider our proposal for an equal sharing of operating and capital costs for Steeles Avenue, but that they wish consideration of the following issues as part of the agreement:

- (1) usage of York Region average benchmark operating costs when determining the annual cost allocation to York Region for Steeles Avenue;
- (2) consideration by the City of Toronto of York Region needs when reviewing traffic signal timing and traffic operational improvements along Steeles Avenue;
- (3) joint review by both York and Toronto staff of development applications located along Steeles Avenue;
- (4) joint York and Toronto approval of a 10-year capital plan for the required improvements to Steeles Avenue including commitment from the City of Toronto to fund their portion

of the required Steeles Avenue capital expansion requirements. This item applies particularly to the required widening of Steeles Avenue from Tapscott Road to Beare Road;

- (5) agreement from the City of Toronto to be a co-proponent with the Region of York for the Environmental Assessment for the north/south road improvements in the eastern part of York/Toronto boundary area. This Environmental Assessment Study would determine the need for road connections between Highway 401 and Highway 407 in this east York/Toronto area. The agreement should also include a commitment to shared funding of the required capital improvement (depending on the results of the Environmental Assessment);
- (6) commitment by the City of Toronto to initiate and fund the Toronto portion of the required north/south road improvements crossing the York/Toronto boundary. These improvements include widenings and the implementation of HOV lanes in recognition of the mutual benefit to both York and Toronto from ensuring adequate north/south capacity and reduced congestion for cross boundary trips; and
- (7) inclusion of Durham Region in the negotiations for the sharing of capital expansion costs along the eastern portion of Steeles Avenue, from Tapscott Road to Beare Road and the Environmental Assessment for north/south arterial road improvements in the eastern York/Toronto and west Durham area.

Fundamentally, what the Region of York is indicating is that they are willing to consider the City of Toronto's request to equally share the operating and capital costs associated with Steeles Avenue in return for the City of Toronto agreeing to:

- (a) co-operation with respect to traffic operational matters and development review;
- (b) funding the City of Toronto share of identified transportation improvements in the Steeles Avenue corridor; and
- (c) co-proponency of an Environmental Assessment for new road connections in the eastern part of the City of Toronto.

Upon authorization by the Sub-Committee, staff will enter into further discussions with Region of York staff to finalize a new boundary road agreement with the Region of York.

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Table 1

Principles with the Regional Municipality of York
With Respect to Steeles Avenue

Principles:

- (1) Steeles Avenue provides benefits to both the City of Toronto and The Regional Municipality of York.
- (2) The City and Region recognize that development growth will occur on both sides of Steeles Avenue and improved transportation infrastructure is needed to service this development.
- (3) The City and Region recognize that in addition to improved east-west transportation services, improvements to north-south links between the municipalities are also required to accommodate development growth on both sides of the boundary.
- (4) The municipalities should share costs for the maintenance and operation of Steeles Avenue.
- (5) The municipalities should share the capital cost of infrastructure improvements to Steeles Avenue.
- (6) The priority of infrastructure improvements should be agreed to by both parties.
- (7) Cross-boundary transportation improvements need to be co-ordinated between the City and the Region.
- (8) The City of Toronto and the Region of York will seek to include the Regions of Durham and Peel in discussions regarding those sections of Steeles Avenue close to the respective boundaries.

The Planning and Transportation Committee also had before it Appendix I, report (June 23, 1998) from the General Manager, Transportation Services, appended to the report (January 19, 2000) from the Commissioner, Works and Emergency Services, which was forwarded to all Members of Council with the agenda of the Planning and Transportation Committee for its meeting of March 21, 2000, and a copy thereof is on file in the office of the City Clerk:

Lois James addressed the Committee with regard to this matter.