

## **Township of Southgate**

### **Administration Office**

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## **Staff Report CAO2020-023**

**Title of Report:** Ontario Good Roads Conference Report

**Department:** Administration

**Council Date:** March 4, 2019

### **Council Recommendation:**

**Be it resolved that Council** receive staff report CAO2020-023 as information; and  
**That** Council consider as part of our next visioning session meeting that we have a discussion on the issue of long term access to High Speed Communications infrastructure in rural Southgate; and

**That** Council direct staff to facilitate discussions with industry experts to develop short and long term future plans for High Speed Fibre Communications Infrastructure in rural Southgate; and

**That** Council consider partnerships to provide fibre optic cable installations into the rural area of Southgate through making municipal investments, seeking external funding sources and working with SWIFT to fund projects.

### **Background:**

The CAO attended the Ontario Good Roads Association (OGRA) Conference in Toronto, Ontario from February 23 to 26, 2020.

### **Staff Comments:**

Some of the highlights of the 2020 OGRA Conference that were of interest were the following sessions:

- Keynote Speaker Dr. James Orbinski spoke of the realities of climate change and what we need to consider to change the present trends in global warming and ice cap losses. He suggests we must each take the initiative, have a vision for a prosperous tomorrow and develop a thriving community as we deal with climate change challenges and our resiliency.
- Pollinator Partnership spoke on the use of roadsides for native flowers and vegetation growth to support the sustaining and importance of pollution, insect habitat and their survival in our environment. They recommend this type of vegetation will save on the costs of roadside grass cutting, will reduce greenhouse gas emissions eliminating the need for mowing and will actually consume carbon dioxide through allowing the plants to grow.
- Affordable Levels of Service related to Asset Management Planning provided information on the importance of establishing levels of service for assets. Presentations from Frank Cowan's Road Specialist, ARA Transportation Group's Senior Pavement Engineer, the Chair of Asset Management Ontario and

Marmak Vice President all provided tools and information around the main theme of making local decisions that demonstrate what the community needs and what we can afford.

- This presentation was made by a Senior Manager for Policy & Programs from Gatlik, an Autonomous Vehicle company based in Toronto and California that reported on the future of delivery services. The company focuses on business to business short-haul logistics, using autonomous vehicles with the core mission of safety and efficiency.
- Dr. Daniel Bear, Humber College, spoke about Overcoming Unconscious Bias as individuals and in the workplace to overcome any of our bias that have been engrained in all of us based on our upbringing and experiences whether positive or negative, that can cause discrimination and harassment claims in our workplace. Ways to overcome bias issues is to take opportunities to discuss bias issues with employees, understand the nature & impact of bias, promote bias literacy, create a structure to thwart bias and have employees take Implicit Association testing online as part of education and an awareness strategy.
- A Technical Briefing Seminar for On-site and Excess Soil Management: Key Elements and Dates for Ontario Regulation 406/19 was presented by Andrew Dunbrack of Englobe was a very informative session on the changes in the custody and responsibility of soils, as well as the new testing requirements.
- The Future of Ontario Northland was an informative session presented by Corina Moore, President and CEO, Ontario Northland Transportation Commission on how they move people and have expanded over the past few years with both bus and rail service.
- Toward Net Zero Communities – A representative from the Federation of Canadian Municipalities spoke about their focus in supporting municipal building retrofit projects to improve mechanical systems and upgrade insulation that reduces energy consumption to reduce carbon footprints. They also support funding of new municipal facilities that are able to achieve net zero energy use. The Executive Director of Clean Air Partnership spoke on the challenges and opportunities to achieve Net Zero. The Director of Operations for Innisfil spoke on their Mobility Orbit Project that will incorporate a rail transit stop as the hub of a planned community development for presently undeveloped property. The community will incorporate high density residential condos, with commercial properties in a walkable and connected community to the transit service.
- From Dial-up to 5G; Harnessing the Broadband in Rural and Northern Communities was an informative session with a Senior Director from Huawei Canada presenting on the technical capacity in Ontario of broadband service. Ashleigh Weeden, a PhD Candidate with the University of Guelph working with Wellington and Bruce Counties. Prior to this, Ashleigh worked for SWIFT and

Grey County on their Intelligent Community Project. Weeden suggests that we shouldn't wait for fibre to be installed in our community. We need to invest dollars through creating a call to action by investing and planning for the installation of fibre in our communities and consider it a necessary service like electricity.

- Its a Mess Out There: Building Safer Roads – This was an informative discussion on the Minimum Maintenance Standards, Joint & Severable Liability, Vision Zero, Policy Defence and the importance of documentation for staff training & maintenance operations records. Presenters from Frank Cowan's Director of Risk Management Services and Dr. Adam Campbell from 3D Forensic Engineering.
- Winter Maintenance Update was a panel discussion of Roads Maintenance experts from the City of Mississauga and Wellington County reporting on the anti-icing and de-icing products they use and how the proper management of salt and chloride products will be impacted in the future with likely less use and the requirement for more frequent plowing operations being required.
- The Final Word Panel is a group of municipal experts in the fields of Building, Clerk, Drainage, Finance, Legal and Public Works that answered questions received from the conference delegates and is always informative and a highlight of the final days events.

### **Provincial Minister Speakers**

- The Honourable Laurie Scott Minister of Infrastructure spoke about being Project Shovel Ready and the planned investments the Provincial Government is making through the consistent OCIF and the ICIP project funding streams. She also spoke of how proud she was delivering on solving the issue of Double Hatter Fire Fighters in her previous Ministerial responsibility.
- The Honourable Steve Clark, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing spoke at a high level of provinces goals to work with and support municipalities through funding for projects and service reviews.
- The Honourable Carolyn Mulroney Minister of Transportation spoke about the Ontario Government's planned investments in Transit and Road construction upgrades across Ontario in the coming years.

### **Financial Impact or Long Term Implications**

The cost of the conference to the municipality is included in the 2020 annual budget.

### **Communications & Community Action Plan Impact:**

This report has been written and presented to Council to communicate accurate information to the public.

### **Goal 5 - Upgrading our "Hard Services"**

**Action 5:**

The residents and businesses of Southgate recognize our linear services - roads, bridges, water and sewer works, for example - to be a fundamental purpose of municipal government. This infrastructure needs to be serviceable and sustainable so that our businesses and communities can thrive and grow.

**Strategic Initiatives:**

**5-B** - The Township will have adopted a long-term asset management plan for the timely repair, replacement, and expansion of the Township's infrastructure, facilities, and **other assets**.

**Concluding Comments:**

1. That Council receive this staff report as information.
2. With the recent announcement that SWIFT will not be providing funding to support rural Southgate projects for the installation of fibre optic high speed in the Township, we need to look at options and ask the question why we could not receive Connect to Innovate and now SWIFT assistance.
3. At the 2020 OGRA Conference we found a supplier that has a mechanical ice management solution that appears to be an impressive option for future road maintenance to reduce salt use and energy consumption. The Township will need to undertake further investigation and research on the operational impact on pavement assets from repeated use. It would appear it would work well on gravel roads and consume less fuel in the operation. A copy of an information package on the equipment is included in this staff report as Attachment #1. The following are links to a product brochure and video about the equipment:

[www.raikomachines.com](http://www.raikomachines.com)

<https://youtu.be/eYsIvP9SmJc>

Respectfully Submitted,

**CAO approval: Original Signed By**

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- Attachment 1 – Raiko Icebreaker Information