

June 6, 2014

Subject: North Pickering Updates

Hello,

As your Councillor, I am again writing to residents in North Pickering on matters that may be of interest to you.

Paving Rural Roads

Like you and many other residents, I am concerned with the condition and number of unpaved roads in north Pickering. Safety and use by emergency vehicles also becomes a concern. Staff do their best to maintain these loose service roads, but the rain and the freeze and thaw cycles damage the road and makes maintenance difficult and expensive.

Progress in paving roads has been slowed by costs and priority to rehabilitate or reconstruct many of our northern bridges. It is expensive and can cost hundreds of thousands of dollars per kilometre to pave roads. However, there is also an ongoing cost of not paving roads. It can cost approximately five times more to maintain an unpaved than a paved road (excluding winter control). In the long run, all that gravel and grading to maintain unpaved roads is more expensive to taxpayers.

I introduced a motion to Council on April 22, 2014 directing City staff to work on a detailed plan for paving some of the 103 kilometres of "loose surface" rural roads located north of Taunton Road. I was pleased to get unanimous support from Council on this motion.

My motion directs staff to prepare a 5-year plan and recommended annual budget allocations beginning in 2015 to hard surface the priority and most frequently used roads in north Pickering. I also requested that City staff be directed to seek the input of residents on the plan and the selection of roads to be hard surfaced. Funding these allocations would be subject to budget approval by Council.

I look forward to working with residents and staff to identify the roads recommended for hard surfacing. Please contact me with any suggestions you have on priority roads for paving. I've enclosed an article published in the Pickering News Advertiser on April 23, 2014.

3-Way Stop - Acorn Lane and Old Brock Road, Claremont

On July 2, 2013, Council approved a new 3-way stop at Acorn Lane and Old Brock Road in the Hamlet of Claremont. The reasons raised by residents and discussed at the Council meeting included the lack of any other safe crossing location across Old Brock Road for residents between the Brock Road by-pass and Central Street, about a kilometre, and speeding in this area. Residents including children often cross in this area to get back and forth to the school and the park. I have heard from many residents who appreciate that the 3-way stop now provides a safe crossing location, as well as reduced vehicle speeds.

Some residents have indicated that they want the 3-way stop removed. I would hate to see this 3-way stop removed, an accident occur, and someone get hurt. Please let me know if you support this 3-way stop or alternatively, if you feel that the few seconds inconvenience to drivers to stop outweighs the added safety provided to residents by the 3-way stop. Please email me at dpickles@pickering.ca before June 16th, the date at which this matter may be discussed by Council.

2014 City Budget Capital Projects

One of the most important roles for City Council is the approval of the City Budget. The budget includes capital projects across the city, as well as vital services such as fire protection, parks, sidewalks, roads and lighting, snow removal (including an increase in the seniors' snow removal program), libraries, recreation centres, road maintenance and plowing.

Each year, Pickering allocates capital funds to projects in North Pickering. In previous years, Pickering has tried to allocate funds to hard surface a road or two each year. In recent years, Pickering has been focusing on the rehabilitation of bridges. I have attached the list of capital projects in North Pickering for 2014.

Further, at the budget meeting on February 13, 2014, I raised my concern and the concern of residents that we are not moving fast enough to hard surface roads in North Pickering. I gave notice of my motion to Pickering Council to address the issues of moving ahead with the hard surfacing of roads in North Pickering.

In addition, there are many ongoing maintenance activities that are occurring throughout the year that are not specifically identified in the capital budget. I have been working with staff on the matter of the maintenance of northern roads and piloting a hard surface treatment on a 600 metre section of Salem Road north of Fifth Concession. This was applied in 2013. The treatment does not appear to have done well over the winter and is being reviewed.

As well, this year we are replacing the Whitevale bridge and doing the final design work for resurfacing of Sixth Concession Road, west of Westney Road in Greenwood.

The City Budget was passed at the Council Meeting on February 24, 2014 and the voting went as follows:

In Favour

Councillor Pickles (Ward 3)

Mayor Ryan

Councillor Ashe (Ward 1)

Councillor Dickerson (Ward 2)

Councillor O'Connell (Ward 1)

Councillor McLean (Ward 2)

Against

Councillor Rodrigues (Ward 3)

Civic Awards Ceremony

On a very pleasant note, as a member of the City of Pickering Civic Awards Committee, I was pleased to join Mayor Ryan on May 26, 2014 in presenting the Lifetime Achievement Award to Claremont resident Jim Doyle.

Mr. Doyle has proven himself to be a staunch supporter of the Hamlet of Claremont for many years. He served as Vice-President and President of the Claremont and District Community Association. He was also the chairperson of the Claremont 175th Heritage Festival last year and his tireless devotion and valued leadership helped ensure the event was a success.

Over the years, Mr. Doyle has also played active roles in community theatre, scouts and cubs, and pony clubs. For six years, he served as a board member for the Youth Centre of Ajax/Pickering and is chair of the Community Relations Committee and other committees.



Should you have any questions, you are welcome to contact me at 905.420.4605 or by email at dpickles@pickering.ca and to visit my website at www.davidpickles.com for further information on matters in Pickering.

Yours truly

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Pickles". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "David" and last name "Pickles" clearly distinguishable.

David Pickles
Your City Councillor – Ward 3

DP:ms

Attachments