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These Conklin Bros. employees labor to put the rides are always a huge attraction at the Fair but it's carnival rides together for Markham Fair. The winds down Sunday. — Bill Lanning

Region urges province to study area needs

By STEVE HOUSTON
Staff Reporter

York Regional Council is "tired of having to beg for services" and will challenge the province to form a commission and study region-wide needs.

Those were the words of Richmond Hill Mayor Al Duffy following the introduction of a proposal that, if passed next week, would see council petitioning the province to form the commission.

It's mandate would be to study educational, roads and transit needs in York Region and recommend reforms to bring its level of public services up to par with other Ontario areas.

His motion was well received by council members, including Markham Regional Councillor Bud Bonner and Mayor Carole Bell.

Mayor Duffy cited several examples where York lacks services including an inter-regional transit system or sufficient road networks to carry the influx of re-

sidents moving into York.

"The fact is that the province's policies aren't reacting to the growth in York region," said Mayor Duffy, who criticized provincial MPPs in calling York's growth "obscene."

"We're not manufacturing people out of a lab — these are Ontarians moving into York region," he noted.

He also attacked the province's inaccurate population figures that he said are 53,000 residents short of actual tallies.

He noted that York Region is entitled to and needs Hwy 407, a bus system between Markham and King City, a regional park, a community college and improved road networks, among others.

Markham Mayor Carole Bell cautioned that the region's move is still "very preliminary," but supported Mayor Duffy's attempts.

She also said the request for roads, schools and transit would

centre on the east-west line of residential and industrial growth in the more populated southern portion of York.

"Not the whole region but certainly, Markham, Vaughan and Richmond Hill," explained Mayor Bell. "It just seems to make sense."

Mayor Duffy said regional officials have a huge task ahead in convincing the province to be more sympathetic to York's needs as a result of growth but plans to force the issue.

If passed next Thursday, he said selection of commission members would begin Friday. It will likely be made up of area mayors, Regional Chairman Eldred King and provincial officials.

He hopes to present the commission's findings to cabinet next summer.

"We're just saying 'look, recognize us,'" said Mayor Duffy.

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