

# Toronto calls for stop-work order on Big Pipe

BY IOAN RANSBERRY  
Staff Writer

Toronto wants to dam up York Region's massive Big Pipe sewage project.

In a 34-to-three vote Thursday, the city's council called for a stop-work order to halt the \$700-million project, including the large-scale removal of groundwater.

Toronto council also agreed to fund a hydrogeologic study to the tune of \$100,000 to determine if the dewatering is causing long-term damage to the ecosystems of the Rouge River.

Future phases cut through the Oak Ridges Moraine in Richmond Hill. Meanwhile, when complete, hundreds of millions of litres of York Region sewage would run to a treatment plant in Pickering each day.

York Region spokesperson Patrick Casey said the region is disappointed with Toron-

to's vote. The work, which is about 70-per-cent finished, will proceed, he said.

A group of 60 York Region residents is demanding the federal and provincial governments insist on a full environmental assessment on the project.

"We are ecstatic with Toronto council's position," group leader Dave Probert of Whitchurch-Stouffville said. "This proves that people do not have faith in York Region."

Ontario environmental commissioner Gord Miller recently reported York Region did not properly assess the project's environmental impact, Mr. Probert said.

Toronto council's stand is backed by Jim Robb, head of the Friends of the Rouge Watershed.

"The City of Toronto has done the right thing," Mr.

Robb said. "Toronto is helping York Region residents fight off groundwater removal and its adverse affects on wells, streams and wetland."

Last week, Thornhill Liberal MPP Mario Racco said there would be no call to stop the project.

"The ministry has already

given its approval and there are strict conditions attached to that approval," Mr. Racco said.

York Region chairperson Bill Fisch said the project will not stop, suggesting the issue could be fought in court.

—Files from David Nickle, Metroland



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The Regional Municipality Of York  
**2006 Business Plans & Budget Public Notice**

On October 27, 2005, York Regional Council received the Draft 2006 Capital, Operating and Rate budgets and referred the budgets to the following Council Standing Committees for detailed review in November 2005:

November 2	Transportation & Works Planning & Economic Development
November 3	Finance & Administration Health & Emergency Medical Services
November 9	Solid Waste Management Community Services & Housing
November 10	Transit

The Finance & Administration Committee will receive the recommended budgets at its December 1, 2005 meeting after review by Standing Committees. The Committee will also consider at that meeting a report recommending solid waste management user fees, including fees not previously in effect.

The 2006 Capital, Operating and Rate budget recommendations, and the solid waste management user fees, are scheduled to be considered for approval and adoption by Regional Council on December 15, 2005.

For further information on the draft budget submissions, please contact Sandra Cartwright, Commissioner of Finance & Treasurer at (905) 895-1231 ext. 1610 or Tony Haddad, Director, Business Planning & Budgets at ext. 1611.

For further information on solid waste management user fees, or to obtain background information at no cost, please contact Robert Zander at (905) 830-4444, ext. 5721.

Council and committee schedules and documents are available on the Region's Web site, [www.york.ca](http://www.york.ca). For information on appearing before a committee, please contact the Regional Clerk's Office at [regionalclerk@york.ca](mailto:regionalclerk@york.ca), or by telephone at (905) 830-4444 ext. 1320.

D. Kelly  
Regional Chair

**York Region**