ABOUT OGRA

1 OUR HISTORY

The ‘Good Roads Movement’ began in Rhode Island in 1880. The movement was particularly strong in Ontario where wheelmen, riding clubs, and manufacturers sought to protect their interests from legislative discrimination. At the same time, farmers, wanting to capitalize on exploding yields, were drawn to the movement in the hopes that better roads would get products to market faster.

In 2020, the Ontario Good Roads Association is celebrating its 126th anniversary. During this time, our approach to roads and road building changed more than it had in all of history. It was the founders of OGRA who established the groundwork for Ontario’s modern road and highway network.

2 OUR MANDATE

The Ontario Good Roads Association advances the infrastructure and transportation interests of our members through training, advocacy and services. This mandate translates into four main business objectives:

- To advocate the collective interests of municipal transportation and public works departments through policy analysis, assessment of legislation and consultation with partners and stakeholders.
- To provide affordable and accessible education and training services.
- To promote leadership with regard to infrastructure asset management.
- To develop plans, programs and partnerships for the delivery of services that meet the needs of municipal transportation and public works departments, while recognizing the contribution of the corporate sector.

3 RECENT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

OGRA has been involved in a number of recent key initiatives. These include:

- Lead the five-year review of the Minimum Maintenance Standard (MMS) regulation, which has been used successfully since 2002 to defend numerous claims against municipalities.
- Successfully advocated to have the government deem municipal asset management planning be a prerequisite for provincial funding.
- Participated in the development of the Asset Management Planning for Municipal Infrastructure Regulation (O. Reg. 588/17).
- In 2018, OGRA provided professional development to 2401 people through 48 specialized courses.
4 MEMBERSHIP

The OGRA Board of Directors is comprised of 15 municipal representatives from across the province. These positions are allocated as follows:

- 4 from Northern Ontario
- 3 from Eastern Ontario
- 2 from City of Toronto
- 3 from Southcentral Ontario
- 3 from Southwestern Ontario

Half of the Board Members are senior municipal staff, half are elected municipal officials.

5 FINANCIAL PICTURE

As OGRA enters its 126th year, the organization continues to enjoy good financial health. Almost 90% of OGRA’s annual revenue is derived from services that are provided to our membership. OGRA does not receive any provincial funding.
Municipal Class Environmental Assessment Reform

Issue

The Municipal Class Environmental Assessment (MCEA) process has become cumbersome. Municipal infrastructure projects are being hampered by extraordinary delays and costs arising from the MCEA process. The Municipal Engineers Association and other stakeholders have proposed an extensive series of changes to this process that will address these issues while also ensuring that environmental protection is not compromised.

Background

The Municipal Class Environmental Assessment process is a specific type of environmental assessment reserved for municipal infrastructure projects. It is used for public works projects that fall under the jurisdiction of Ontario’s Environmental Assessment Act including roads, bridges, water, and wastewater infrastructure among others. The MCEA process was intended to be an efficient alternative to the normal environmental assessment process that would otherwise be required for almost all municipal infrastructure construction projects.

Since its inception in the 1980s, the MCEA process has been a collaboration between the Ministry of Environment, Conservation, and Parks (MECP) and the Municipal Engineers Association. The MCEA established an approach to compliance of environmental legislation by creating a standardized document which detailed procedures for municipal infrastructure projects. This is known as the MCEA Manual.

The Municipal Class of environmental assessments groups municipal projects into four different types (i.e., schedules) of initiatives:

- **Schedule A** – These are projects considered to be pre-approved by the Ministry. This includes, but is not limited to, routine maintenance and the replacement of municipal infrastructure elements, such as repaving roads, replacing cracked sidewalks and aging water pipes.
- **Schedule A+** – These are projects that generally have a greater potential for some environmental impact but that are also considered pre-approved so long as the public has been advised prior to project implementation.
Municipal Class Environmental Assessment Reform

- Schedule B – These projects include improvements and/or minor expansions to existing facilities. The estimated capital cost of the proposed expansion is typically used to distinguish between minor and major expansions. Schedule B projects are completed by a Project File Report outlining the public consultation and environmental impacts.

- Schedule C – These are new facilities and major expansions to existing facilities and infrastructure. Schedule C projects require a more comprehensive Environmental Study Report to describe the consultation efforts and environmental issues.

Certain infrastructure projects undertaken by a municipality may not fit within any of the above categories. These would require a full environmental assessment with terms of reference approved by the Minister of Environment, Conservation, and Parks.¹

Analysis

Over time the MCEA process has become more likely to delay projects and significantly increase costs. A 2014 study by the Residential and Civil Construction Association of Ontario (RCCAO) showed that it was typically taking almost 27 months to complete the process for Schedule B and C projects, with study and consultant costs averaging $386,500 - not including municipal staff time.

In February 2017, a joint application for review was submitted to MECP. The Ministry responded positively to the application in April 2017 and committed to completing a comprehensive review by December 2018. Unfortunately, little progress has been made.

Without speedy reform, Ontario municipalities continue to risk losing out on funding for projects that are subject to the MCEA process. This simply is neither proper infrastructure planning nor good asset management.

Following the province’s decision to examine all of the Environmental Assessment processes, the Municipal Engineers Association submitted a major amendment to the MCEA. The Ministry of Environment, Conservation, and Parks has been in possession of these recommendations for over two years. This submission – 224 pages in length – is the culmination of many years of stakeholder collaboration and engagement with practitioners and municipalities.

OGRA’s Request of You

That you write to the Associate Minister of Small Business and Red Tape Reduction and the Minister of Environment, Conservation, and Parks expressing support for the proposals submitted by the Municipal Engineers Association to make the MCEA process more efficient and less costly.

¹ An example of a municipal infrastructure project falling outside of the MCEA class is the York Region Sewage System project
Mandating the Use of Reclaimed Asphalt Pavement

Issue

*Millions of tonnes of Reclaimed Asphalt Pavement (RAP) are stockpiled across the province. Using these materials in road building presents an opportunity for the Government of Ontario and Ontario municipalities to realize considerable environmental and financial benefits without compromising the performance and life expectancy of roads. This can be achieved by creating a standard to mandate the use of RAP into road construction projects across the province.*

Background

Reclaimed Asphalt Pavement is produced when existing roads are rehabilitated. It consists of approximately 95% aggregate (stone, gravel, sand, etc.) and 5% bitumen. An OGRA study found that there are currently 114 storage sites across Ontario containing a conservative estimate of 6.7 million tonnes of RAP (5.9 million tonnes unprocessed, 0.8 million processed).

Since the mid-1970s, various road authorities in Ontario have experimented with the use of RAP in road construction. The Ministry of Transportation began incorporating RAP into its Hot Mix Asphalt (HMA) at this time.

RAP can be handled two different ways. It can either be recycled in-place or be reclaimed and stockpiled for future use in HMA. In both cases it can be applied to road shoulders or added to gravel roads.

Opportunities/Benefits of Using RAP

By incorporating RAP into road construction projects, a number of benefits are realized.

Financially, there is a direct reduction in the overall road building cost as the use of RAP decreases the need for new materials. Costs associated with procuring, hauling and storing the inputs that RAP replaces are eliminated. The product is largely a ‘free’ input.

Environmentally, the use of RAP is an efficient means of recovering non-renewable petrochemical resources. The ability to reuse these materials eliminates the need to ship massive volumes of solid waste to landfills. RAP also eliminates a corresponding demand to procure increasingly valuable/expensive virgin aggregate resources. Buttressing each of these positive outcomes is the associated reduction of water use and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. This is where the largest opportunity exists.
Mandating the Use of Reclaimed Asphalt Pavement

The scale of these benefits is immense. In North America, compared by volume to other recycled products, 13 times more asphalt is recycled than newsprint. For glass, it is 27 times greater. And for plastic containers, this ratio increases to a staggering 267 times more product.\(^1\)

If all of these stockpiles were to be used, the industry would conserve 6.4 million tonnes of virgin aggregate which could be used for other projects. It would also eliminate the need for the equivalent of 2 million barrels of oil, which would save approximately $270 million of costs associated with using fresh asphalt. The volume of RAP identified by OGRA would be sufficient to repave the entire Highway 401 at least 22 times.\(^2\) This quantity of RAP would eliminate the need for 15 million cubic meters of water. This is the equivalent water consumption of 56,500 households for one year. It would also offset approximately 125 thousand tonnes of GHG emissions.\(^3\)

Alignment with Provincial Objectives

In its recently unveiled environmental plan, the Minister of Environment, Conservation and Parks stated that the plan would prioritize balancing “a healthy environment with a healthy economy”.

Specifically, mandating RAP use would directly align with the Government of Ontario’s stated objective of “ensuring sustainable water use and water security for future generations”. Similarly, although a small amount, this would also help the road construction industry play its part toward realizing Ontario’s priority to “reduce its emissions by 30% below 2005 levels by 2030”.

Few opportunities that will allow for the government to do more for less while also cutting water consumption and GHG emissions will present themselves. Such an outcome would occur if the province mandated a standard for the use of RAP in road construction and rehabilitation projects. It should be noted that the Ontario Provincial Standard Specifications (OPSS), which are the standards municipalities use to design and spec infrastructure projects, permit up to 15% of the mass of surface mixes and up to 30% of the mass in base/binder mixes to be RAP.

OGRA’s Request of You

That you write to the Minister of Transportation, the Associate Minister of Transportation and the Minister of Environment, Conservation and Parks asking for the province to begin undertaking steps to mandate road construction and rehabilitation projects to incorporate 10% RAP into surface course and 20% RAP in the base/binder course.

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2. These calculations are based on design specifications of 3.65m lane, 0.04m thickness, 20% RAP, and % compaction volume. Approximate loose density of aggregates is 1500kg. Asphalt content ~5%. Asphalt density is 1017.33kg/m\(^3\) and 1m\(^3\) = 6.29 Barrels [335,000*1000 (kg) / 1017.33 (kg/m\(^3\)] * 6.29 (bbl/m\(^3\)) = 2E\(^6\) barrels.
3. Water Consumptions: 1500000 m\(^3\) divided by (0.184 m\(^3\)/Capita/year) * 30 days * 12 months * 4 people/household = 56 K Household (https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/tv.action?pid=3810027101)
1 Tonne of Bitumen requires 1.3m\(^3\) of water and 226 kg CO\(_2\) e
1 Tonne of Aggregates require 2.3 m\(^3\) of water and 7.95 Kg CO\(_2\) e
Adopting “Vision Zero” Across Ontario

Issue

Although Ontario is proud of its road safety record, avoidable fatalities and injuries continue to happen far too often on Ontario roads. Other jurisdictions have demonstrated that when leaders apply a Vision Zero approach to their roadways such deaths and injuries can be dramatically reduced.

Background

Vision Zero is an approach to transportation planning that fundamentally re-imagines the way road safety is approached with the ultimate objective of eliminating fatalities and serious injuries on roadways.

Launched in Sweden in 1997, Vision Zero has since spread across the globe. Rather than accepting that injuries and deaths are inevitable outcomes of transportation networks, Vision Zero is predicated on the ideas that people make mistakes, fatalities/injuries are preventable and that efficiency does not supersede human safety. This applies to those who design our transportation systems as well as users of these systems. By extension, non-human factors such as road infrastructure, public policy, regulations, vehicle technology, and how victims are treated by the health care system need to be examined with an eye to making improvements.

Timeliness

This is an opportune time for pursuing a Vision Zero strategy across Ontario. First and foremost, the way that Ontarians are using road networks is undergoing rapid change. The road infrastructure, emerging new vehicle technology, increasing active transportation, safety of vulnerable road users, and where Ontarians live have all influenced this change.

Secondly, over the next decade, the Government of Ontario is making a massive investment in building or rehabilitating roadways.

Figure 1: A Vision Zero reconsideration of an urban intersection
Adopting “Vision Zero” Across Ontario

This presents a rare opportunity to cost-effectively incorporate Vision Zero designs into projects.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, Ontarians themselves want to see actions taken to make roads safer. Research commissioned by OGRA found that an overwhelming majority of Ontarians favour seeing an increased investment of public funds dedicated to road safety initiatives. When asked, “Would you support, somewhat support, somewhat oppose, or oppose investing a greater share of tax dollars in road safety?”, Ontarians indicated the following:

![Chart showing support levels for increased road safety investment]

Vision Zero in Canada

In Canada, at the federal level, the Canadian Council of Motor Transportation Administrators (CCMTA) is the custodian of the Road Safety Strategy 2025 (RSS 2025). RSS 2025 encourages all road safety stakeholders to make Canada’s roads the safest in the world. It adopts a “safe systems approach” which is a key component of Vision Zero.

Provincial Action

Four provinces and one territory – British Columbia, Alberta, Manitoba, Prince Edward Island and the Northwest Territories – have adopted comprehensive road safety strategies modelled on the safe system approach outlined in the RSS 2025. Notably, while Vision Zero is referenced in some of these strategies, none of them explicitly adopt the Vision Zero principle of making roadways more forgiving of human error through design. The provincial and territorial strategies are more detailed than RSS 2025, and provide a framework for actions aimed at reducing road deaths and injuries.

While Ontario has not established a comprehensive road safety strategy, some of its municipalities have adopted Vision Zero strategies.
Adopting “Vision Zero” Across Ontario

Municipal Uptake

In Ontario, municipalities such as the City of Toronto, the City of London, the City of Kingston, the Region of Peel, and the Region of Durham have developed Vision Zero plans. Others, such as the City of Mississauga, have pledged to adopt Vision Zero and are currently in the process of creating their plans.

New York City remains the highest profile local government to have wholeheartedly embraced Vision Zero. Mayor Bill de Blasio, who was elected in 2014, campaigned on Vision Zero. A plan was developed at the beginning of the mayor’s first term and $1.6-billion of funding was dedicated to implementation. New York’s efforts have paid off. Pedestrian deaths have fallen by 44 per cent since 2014 and overall traffic fatalities were down by 27 per cent. The first half of 2018 saw the fewest traffic-related fatalities in any six-month period ever measured.

Risk Management

Beyond the road safety benefits provided by Vision Zero, there is also a number of social benefits to be gained.

Eliminating accidents reduces the burden on the health care system. Eliminating accidents also reduces the untenable liability that municipalities face because of Joint and Several Liability.\(^1\) Many municipalities have seen their insurance premiums skyrocket – as much as 100% year over year. Since municipalities generate the majority of their revenue through property taxes, roadway injuries and fatalities literally hit homeowners in their pocketbooks. In the same way that municipal risk management will improve, Ontarians carrying automotive insurance should also see a stabilization of premiums as roads become safer.

OGRA’s Request of You

That you ask the Minister of Transportation and the Associate Minister of Transportation to convene a stakeholder task force group to advise the government on how a Vision Zero strategy can be developed and implemented in Ontario.

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\(^1\) When fatalities or injuries occur on municipal property, massive settlements can be awarded to the victim. In many cases, municipalities can be on the hook for steep payouts as a result of what is known as Joint and Several Liability. Joint and Several Liability provides for a plaintiff to recover the entire claim for damages from one of several negligent defendants. This is established in the Ontario Negligence Act. When someone is considered to be harmed through the fault or neglect of several parties, the individual can collect his or her damage award from one or all of the parties. If one of the parties is 50% responsible for the loss, (meaning his several liability is 50%) but is unable to pay the damages, the individual can collect the entire loss from the remaining parties, who are “jointly” liable to the plaintiff for the loss.