

RESOURCE ACCESS ROAD PROGRAM GUIDELINES

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OVERVIEW OF RESOURCE ACCESS ROAD PROGRAM (RARP):

Resource-based industries face the challenge of operating in a relatively volatile sector of the economy. By providing financial and material support to the industry through the peaks and troughs of the commodity market cycle, the RARP provides support to industry and enhances the opportunity for success for start-up projects.

Three Yukon Government departments (Highways and Public Works (HPW), Energy, Mines and Resources (EMR) and Economic Development (EcDev)) are pleased to jointly provide assistance to industry in developing resource access roads. HPW provides assistance through planning, contracting and road upgrading work, EMR liaises with industry and government in seeing project through to their completion. EcDev provides guidance in the undertaking of economic impact assessments that evaluate the net economic benefit to Yukon.

Through RARP \$250,000 is available annually for road upgrading, culvert and bridge work, and the development of airstrips and docks. Preliminary focus for RARP is directed to existing resource access roads.

Annual RARP deadlines and the timing of application reviews are as follows:

1. Initial intake deadline is the last business day of April with reviews completed by the last business day of May;
2. Final intake deadline is the last business day of July with reviews completed by the last business day of August.

PROGRAM DIRECTION:

Yukon Government provides financial and material support to industry to develop resource access roads in Yukon. Through RARP, resource-based companies can apply for assistance in upgrading existing roads and under certain conditions, RARP can also be used to assist in the development of new roads, airstrips and docks.

Road upgrading that can be undertaken with RARP funding includes:

- clearing and grubbing;
- ditching (including erosion protection);
- widening and straightening of roads;
- adding granular material;
- excavating soft spots; or
- upgrading road surfaces.

Culvert and bridge work could include:

- installing culverts and/or multi-plates;
- replacing, repairing or extending existing culverts or fluming;
- repairing, modifying or installing new bridges;
- excavating to improve drainage; or
- installing or repairing erosion protection infrastructure.

DEFINITIONS:

Public Road: A road which is always available to the public, is within a surveyed right-of-way and is located on public land, or if not, is formally recognized as a highway (public road). The road must be connected to a highway as defined by the Highways Act.

Resource Road: A road which provides vehicular access to valued resource regions and economic sectors of the territory.

POLICY OBJECTIVES & GOALS:

Resource access roads are the first link in resource industry transportation corridors. They enable exploration and extraction activities to unfold in Yukon and foster economic development in the broader territorial economy.

Normally, significant work and investments are required to upgrade access roads to the point where they can be effectively maintained. The uncertainty and financial constraints that resource sector projects confront in the early phases of growth present considerable barriers to companies as they transition from planning to exploration to site development activities.

The following objectives will be used in conjunction with this policy criteria to establish a list of qualified applicants for RARP on an annual basis.

3. To upgrade resource roads in Yukon;
4. To accomplish the work with local contractors;
5. To evaluate projects on a geographical basis in order to spread the work around the Territory;
6. To develop cost share arrangements for projects that are not in the current inventory of government maintained roads.

PRINCIPLES:

RARP operates based on a set of core principles. An application, an approval process and a set of criteria are applied to each project.

RESPONSIVENESS TO NEEDS OF RESOURCE DEVELOPERS:

The provision of funding for upgrading projects will be in response to request made from industry as well as the need to service public roads already maintained by Yukon Government.

ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES:

The emphasis will be on stimulating and diversifying Yukon's economy and ensuring that there are benefits to all Yukon. An economic analysis will in most cases be required to demonstrate the total economic benefits of the resource project.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS:

Activities undertaken through RARP projects may have potential impacts upon the natural and/or socio-economic environment. As a part of each application, applicants will work with Transportation Engineering Branch (TEB) to identify the scope of the project, which will include identifying potential environmental and socio-economic impacts and the requirements to mitigate, reduce or remove those potential impacts.

Applicants are advised that dependent upon the activities they are proposing, specific permitting or assessment processes may be required prior to commencement of construction. TEB can provide assistance in the identification of the assessment processes, however the final determination and acquisition of the necessary permits or licenses is the sole responsibility of the applicant.

Applicants who receive approval for their projects, will be required to provide copies of permits and licenses prior to funding being appropriated for the project. TEB will provide a list of Mitigating Conditions for each project, if required.

INFRASTRUCTURE UPGRADING:

Submissions to RARP should be focused on upgrading or involve minor relocation of existing roads. As many resource roads already exist in Yukon, the program is focused on making necessary improvements to the existing road network. In limited cases, RARP may be applied to the development of new infrastructure projects.

CRITERIA:

Funding will be provided to those projects that address program principles and rate highly through a project analysis process. The base criteria for funding of resource access roads is as follows:

ROAD REQUIREMENTS:

The extent to which RARP funding is requested must meet the following requirements:

- Be available for use by the public;
- Be within a surveyed or statutory right-of-way;
- Be located on public land, or if on private land, must be formally recognized as a highway (i.e. public road); and
- Provide an economic benefit to Yukon and, in the event of larger projects, provide an assessment of economic impacts.

FINANCIAL REQUIREMENTS:

Projects involving industrial/ secondary roads that are not presently maintained by Yukon Government may require some type of contribution or cost share by the proponent(s). The in-kind requirement will be influenced by factors such as the use of the road, number of beneficiaries, size of project, and expected benefits to Yukon.

For cost share projects, the contribution by the proponent(s) can be in the form of one of the following:

- A direct financial contribution toward the costs of upgrading, administered by way of a Capital Funding Agreement;
- The provision of labour (“sweat equity”) for operations such as clearing, materials (culverts or granular resources), and/ or the use of equipment, at a value equivalent to the required contribution;
- A combination of direct financial contributions, and the provision of labour, material, and/ or equipment contributions which are equivalent to the required contribution.

Projects which primarily benefit one resource developer may be considered on a cost share basis. Any Yukon Government contribution will be determined based on the merit of the project and at the discretion of a committee representing and reporting to the Deputy Ministers of Highways and Public Works and Energy Mines and Resources.

STANDARDS:

The standard to which the work is performed will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. The required standard of work will be dictated by the following requirements:

- Traffic volumes, maximum gross vehicle weight requirements and industry usage;
- Speed of traffic;
- Geometrics of the road (horizontal and vertical alignment determine safety); and
- Whether Yukon Government maintenance will be requested.

The work proposed must result in a project that is appropriate to the amount and type of traffic that is projected to use it. Applications focused on existing road inventory should plan to apply existing standards (or better).

APPLICATION PROCESS:

Applicants can apply directly to Yukon Government through several avenues:

Online: Yukon.ca/doing-business/funding-and-support-business/apply-funding-build-or-upgrade-resource-access-road

In person at: Transportation Program Development Coordinator
Transportation Engineering Branch
461 Range Road
Whitehorse, Yukon
Y1A 3A4

By Email: road.programs@yukon.ca

Proponents are encouraged to submit requests as early as possible. Depending on the project, permits or environmental regulations may be required and can take additional time, which will affect the timing of the construction project. Examples include Land Use Permits which may take up to six (6) weeks, Water Licenses may take up to six (6) months and Yukon Environmental and Socio-Economic Assessments reviews may take up to six (6) months.

Projects not approved in the current year, and requests for projects received after all funds have been committed, will be placed on a list for consideration in the next fiscal year. Provision of funding from year to year is not guaranteed. If ongoing road maintenance is desired, a subsequent application will have to be made under the Rural Road Maintenance Policy, *this application does not mean maintenance will be provided.*

APPROVAL PROCESS:

An evaluation of all projects will be conducted by TEB and the proponent(s) will be contacted regarding the status of the project, or if additional information is required. If the project is approved, the proponent(s) will be notified of the next step in the process, whether additional permitting is required or notification of commencement of work.

When cost share arrangements are part of a project, the proponent(s) and HPW will sign an agreement prior to any work being performed. Any work done prior to all documentation being approved will not be eligible for the approved project. The likelihood of project approval will increase with a higher percentage of contribution from the proponent(s).