

Clause 8 in Report No. 18 of Committee of the Whole was adopted, without amendment, by the Council of The Regional Municipality of York at its meeting held on December 15, 2016.

8

Rail Safety Improvement Program
Transport Canada Funding

Committee of the Whole recommends adoption of the recommendations contained in the report dated November 18, 2016 from the Commissioner of Transportation Services recommending that:

1. Council endorse the following Regional projects for submission for funding under Transport Canada's Rail Safety Improvement Program:
 - a) Safety assessment and improvements at rail crossings to satisfy the Grade Crossing Regulations
 - b) Rail level crossing improvements to support implementation of train whistle cessation on southern section of the Stouffville GO Train line in York Region

Report dated November 18, 2016 from the Commissioner of Transportation Services now follows:

1. Recommendations

It is recommended that:

1. Council endorse the following Regional projects for submission for funding under Transport Canada's Rail Safety Improvement Program:
 - a) Safety assessment and improvements at rail crossings to satisfy the Grade Crossing Regulations
 - b) Rail level crossing improvements to support implementation of train whistle cessation on southern section of the Stouffville GO Train line in York Region

2. Purpose

This report updates Council on details of Transport Canada's Rail Safety Improvement Program and seeks Council's endorsement to submit a list of projects eligible for funding by December 23, 2016.

3. Background

Transport Canada introduced Grade Crossing Regulations that require municipalities to improve safety at rail crossings

Transport Canada introduced Grade Crossing Regulations (Regulations) through the Railway Safety Act in November 2014. The Regulations are intended to impose stricter and higher safety standards, clarify roles between road authorities and railway authorities and promote greater collaboration among stakeholders through information sharing.

There are two key milestones outlined in the Regulations:

- Sharing of information and data exchange between road and rail authorities before November 27, 2016
- Completion of safety assessments at all rail level crossing and implement improvements before November 2021

Transport Canada provides grants and contributions to municipalities to improve rail safety

On October 12, 2016, the Minister of Transport Canada announced the Rail Safety Improvement Program. The Federal government plans to invest \$55 million over a period of three years to improve rail safety in Canada. Transport Canada will determine whether projects are funded through contribution or grant based on project proposal information. Generally payment will be made in the form of a contribution with the exception of small-scale, low-risk projects or completed projects which may be paid as grants. Grants are capped at \$500,000 per project and contributions at \$10 million per fiscal year. Both basis of payment, grants and contributions, are available up to 80 per cent of total eligible expenses for any one project, therefore the Region will be responsible for 20 per cent.

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The new Rail Safety Improvement Program builds on previous federal programs. Increased overall funding is intended to expand the list of eligible recipients and broaden the scope of enhanced rail safety projects in Canada.

There are two key components under the new Rail Safety Improvement Program:

- Infrastructure, Technology and Research
- Education and Awareness

The Infrastructure, Technology and Research component funds projects that address immediate rail safety needs of communities, such as flashing lights, bells, gates, access control measures and roadway and intersection improvements. Transport Canada has made funding available through grants and contributions as follows:

- \$12 Million in 2016/2017
- \$20 Million in 2017/2018
- \$20 Million in 2018/2019

Transport Canada will contribute up to \$2.4 million for the Education and Awareness component. This component funds public education projects aimed at reducing railway-grade crossing collisions and trespassing incidents on railway property, particularly in high-risk areas.

Transport Canada has issued a call for proposals under the Rail Safety Improvement Program

A call for proposals for projects to be considered for fiscal year 2017/2018 is now open for both program components. The application deadline for the Infrastructure, Technology and Research component is December 23, 2016. The application deadline for the Education and Awareness component is January 31, 2017. Transport Canada requires all eligible projects be completed by March 31, 2019, whether single-year (12-month) or multi-year as determined by the project scope and agreed upon in the funding agreement.

4. Analysis and Implications

Staff have identified a list of projects for funding under the Infrastructure, Technology and Research component of the Rail Safety Improvement Program

Staff evaluated the Regional rail safety improvements project list, including rail safety enhancements, infrastructure initiatives and research and studies related to enhancing safety of rail line crossings, following release of the Rail Safety Improvement Program details. Identified projects adhere to program eligibility requirements and maximize federal contributions.

Table 1 summarizes Regional projects identified for submission under Transport Canada's Rail Safety Improvement Program.

Table 1
Projects for Submission under the
Rail Safety Improvement Program

Project	Estimated Project Cost (000's)
Safety-related Infrastructure Improvements	
• Crossing improvements to enable train whistle cessation on the southern section of the Stouffville GO Train line	\$ 3,500
• Implement Safety Assessment Improvements	\$ 1,000
Safety-related Research or Studies	
• Conduct Safety Assessment at Rail Crossings	\$ 50
Total	\$ 4,550

A comprehensive rail safety crossing assessment throughout most of York Region is underway

A Rail Crossing Safety Assessment is underway in consultation with the local municipalities. Six of the nine local municipalities are participating. Township of King and Towns of Georgina and Newmarket are independently undertaking their own assessments. There are a total of 88 rail crossings under assessment. Forty-one rail crossings intersect Regional roads and 47 intersect local municipal roads. The total cost of the safety assessment at these crossings is

approximately \$50,000. The 88 rail crossings will be assessed using the new Regulations with recommendations issued to the appropriate road/rail authority.

Initial findings from the Rail Crossing Safety Assessment have identified various improvements within the Region's responsibility. This includes a variety of works such as pedestrian gates, pavement markings and signs, sidewalk and road improvements. The cost for implementing improvements at all rail crossings that require modifications to meet the new Regulations is approximately \$1 million. This estimate will be refined as the assessment is advanced and final recommendations determined. Attachment 1 shows the 88 rail crossing locations.

Several municipalities have expressed interest in implementing train whistle cessation at level road/rail crossings

Council endorsed an Anti-Whistling Policy in [June 2008](#). The policy contains criteria for implementing anti-whistling at rail crossings on Regional roads. The Region is responsible for the improvements required to implement anti-whistling, including pedestrian gates and signage on Regional roads intersecting rail crossings.

There has been recent interest from local municipalities regarding the Region's policy and participation in local municipal train whistle cessation projects. To date, the City of Markham has the most advanced train whistle cessation project.

The City of Markham completed an anti-whistling assessment along the Metrolinx Stouffville GO Line. Six rail crossings intersecting a Regional road requiring road and sidewalk improvements, pedestrian gates, grading, and warning signs were identified. The estimated cost for improvements is approximately \$3.5 million. Attachment 2 shows the location of these six rail crossing locations along the Metrolinx Stouffville GO Line.

The Region will continue to support local municipal train whistle cessation projects in accordance with Regional policy.

Federal infrastructure funding programs support priorities identified in Vision 2051 and 2015 to 2019 Strategic Plan

Federal infrastructure funding programs support the Livable Cities and Complete Communities goal area of Vision 2051. Funding programs also support the Region's efforts to Provide Responsive and Efficient Public Service, identified as a priority area in the 2015 to 2019 Strategic Plan.

5. Financial Considerations

Federal funding received by the Region relieves future pressures on development charge reserve and tax levy for those projects identified in Table 1 and included in the Region's approved 2016 capital budget or proposed 2017 capital budget. Approximately \$2.526 million development charge reserve and \$314 thousand in tax levy pressure would be reduced if all projects are approved and the maximum allocation is received. The Region would still be responsible for 20 per cent of the eligible capital expenditures for the listed projects in the proposed 2017 capital budget. The \$1 million for "Implement Safety Assessment Improvements" will not result in funding relief as it is not currently in the Region's proposed 2017 capital budget and would be incorporated in the future capital budgets. To fund the 20 per cent of eligible project cost will result in a \$200 thousand tax levy pressure.

6. Local Municipal Impact

Local municipalities were included in a Region-wide Rail Crossing Safety Assessment to satisfy Transport Canada's Rail Crossing Regulations. The Township of King and Towns of Georgina and Newmarket are independently undertaking an assessment. Staff from participating local municipalities is actively involved in the Region-wide Rail Crossing Safety Assessment and support the Region seeking funding from Transport Canada.

7. Conclusion

It is recommended that Council endorse submission of grant and funding contribution requests for Regional projects related to safety assessments and improvements at rail crossings to Transport Canada. Grants are available for up to 80 per cent of total eligible expenses for any one project.

For more information on this report, please contact Stephen Collins, Director Infrastructure Management and PMO, at 1-877-464-9675 ext. 75949.

Rail Safety Improvement Program
Transport Canada Funding

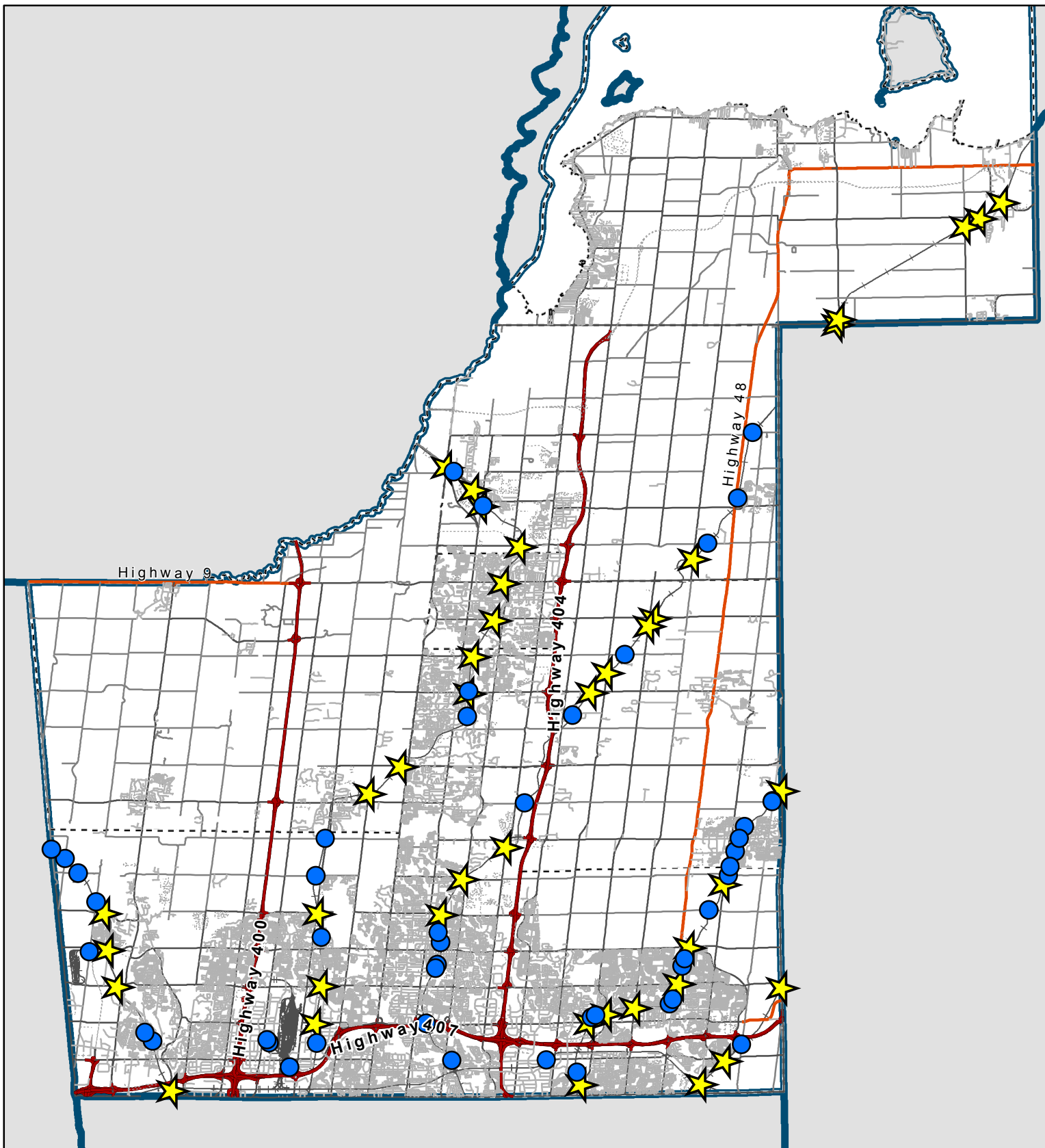
The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.

November 18, 2016

Attachments (2)

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Accessible formats or communication supports are available upon request



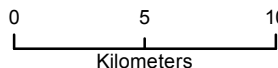
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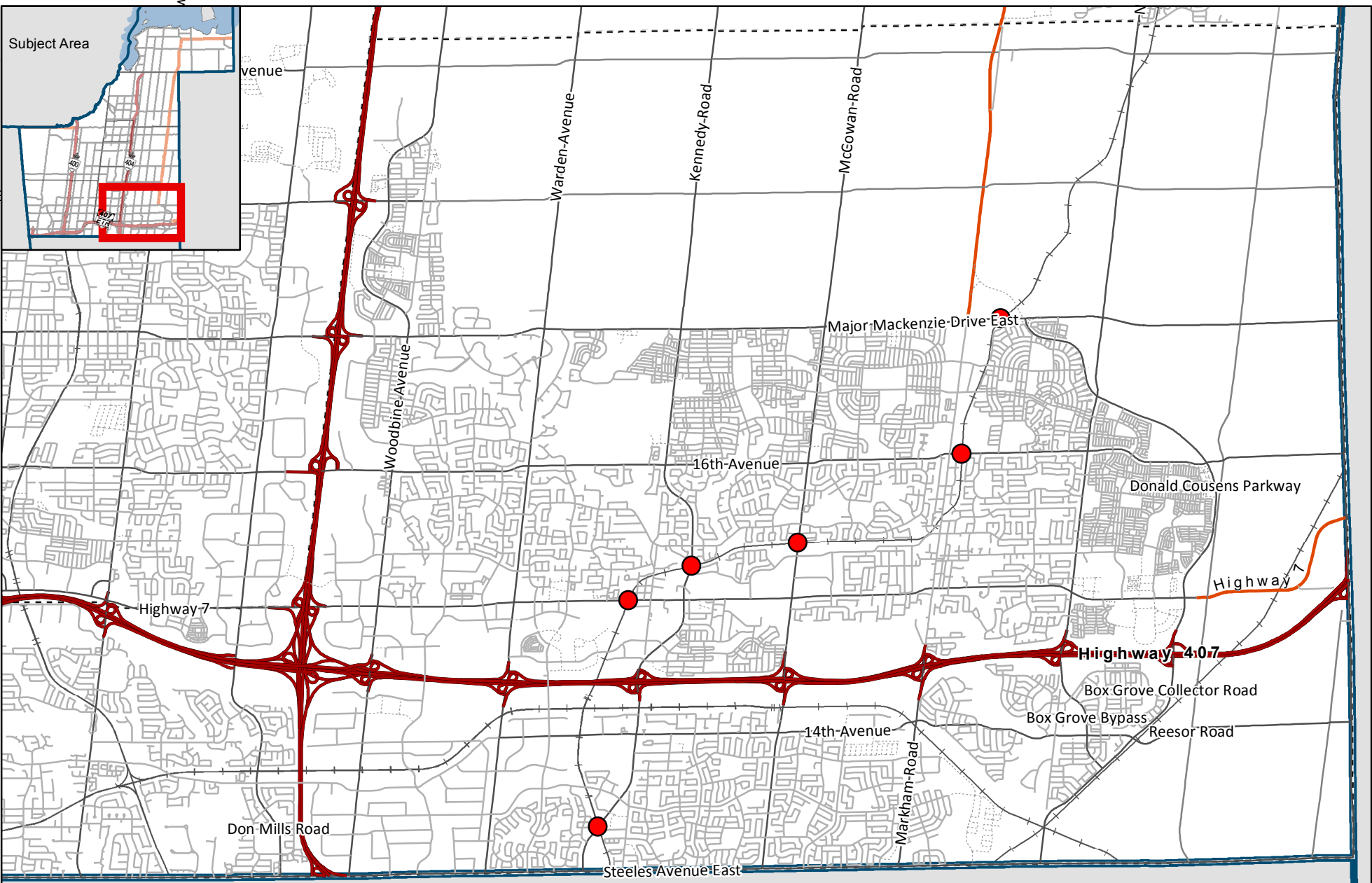
Rail Safety Assessment Crossings Location Map

Rail Safety Improvement Program
Transport Canada Funding
December 1, 2016



Legend

- ★ Rail Crossings on Regional Roads
- Rail Crossings on local Roads

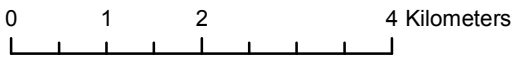


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Rail Crossings on Regional roads in City of Markham for Anti-Whistling Rail Safety Improvement Program Transport Canada Funding December 1, 2016



Legend

- Rail Crossings on Regional Roads for Anti-Whistling