



RESOURCE ACCESS ROAD PROGRAM GUIDELINES

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Government of Yukon

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RESOURCE ACCESS ROAD PROGRAM GUIDELINES

Yukon's resource sector is part of a highly competitive global industry. Sustainable developments in this sector often call for effective collaboration between the private and public sectors. An early-stage private-public sector consideration for any resource-based project is the development of transportation corridors to undertake projects and to ship commodities to domestic and international markets. The Resource Access Road Program is designed to spur and enhance prospects for resource industry projects.

What is the Resource Access Road Program (RARP)?

The Yukon government (YG) 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 to the point where they can be maintained year-round. Under certain conditions, RARP can also be used to assist in the development of new roads, airstrips and docks.

Through RARP, \$500,000 is available annually for road upgrading, culvert and bridge work, and the development of airstrips and docks. Preliminary focus for RARP is directed at existing public resource access roads.

Road upgrading that can be undertaken with RARP funding includes

- clearing and grubbing;
- ditching (includes erosion protection);
- widening and straightening of roads;
- adding granular material;
- excavating soft spots;
- upgrading road surfaces; and
- limited short-term maintenance addressing snow removal and glacier control.

Culvert and bridge work could include

- culvert and multiplate installations;
- replacing, repairing or extending existing culverts or fluming;
- repairing, modifying or installing new bridges;
- excavation to improve drainage; and
- erosion protection (install or repair).

Who is involved?

Three 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 projects through to their completion. EcDev provides guidance in the undertaking of economic impact assessments that evaluate the net economic benefit to Yukon.

Why RARP?

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.

Resource-based industries also face the challenge of operating in a relatively volatile sector of the economy. At the peak of commodity business cycles, equipment, labour and materials are often high-priced and difficult to source. Conversely, the global financial economic crisis that is unfolding may serve to lower capital and operating costs, however, the financial capacity of resource-based companies has become greatly diminished. By providing financial and material support to the industry through the peaks and troughs of the commodity market cycle, RARP provides “all weather” support to industry and enhances the opportunity for success for start-up projects.

Yukon’s social and economic history is closely tied to the territory’s abundance of natural resources—minerals, oil & gas, and forests. Through this history, numerous resource access roads have been developed. Some are not maintained, while others are maintained only during the months of May to September. When exploration or development activities are ramped up, year-round access often becomes essential to the viability of a project.

How does RARP operate?

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

FOUR CORE PRINCIPLES

1. RARP Responds to Needs of Resource Developers

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

2. RARP Focuses on Fostering 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.

3. RARP Addresses Environmental Concerns

Land use and environmental issues must be addressed by applicants for all upgrading work undertaken pursuant to these Program Guidelines. Projects must comply with all Federal and Territorial environmental acts and regulations.

4. RARP Focuses on 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 a road network in need of upgrading. In limited cases, RARP may be applied to the development of new infrastructure projects.

APPLICATION AND APPROVAL PROCESS

Application forms are available on-line at www.hpw.gov.yk.ca and can be submitted directly to HPW.

Government of Yukon
Transportation Maintenance Branch (W-12)
Central Workshop - Building 275
9029 Quartz Road, Whitehorse, Yukon Y1A 4P9
Phone: (867) 667-3168 or
1-800-661-0408 ext. 5644
Fax: (867) 667-3608

Application forms require the following information to be documented by proponents:

- name and location of road and general description of work required
- name of person(s) or group making request and contact details
- maps, photographs or cost estimates if available
- status of the land (i.e. public, First Nations, private)
- primary users of the road, and contact names
- details of any contribution to the project by the proponent(s)
- demonstration of industry support for the project

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

- 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 YG maintenance will be performed.

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. The 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 Roads Maintenance Policy. *This does not mean that maintenance will be provided.*

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

RARP FUNDING CRITERIA

1. The road or installation to which RARP funding is requested must
 - 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.
2. The upgrading of a road under these Program Guidelines does not automatically qualify the road for maintenance by YG, unless the section upgraded currently receives maintenance.

3. Projects involving industrial/secondary roads that are not presently maintained by HPW may require some type of contribution or cost share by the proponent(s). The amount of cost share will be influenced by factors such as the use of the road, number of beneficiaries, size of the project, and expected benefits to the Yukon.
4. For cost share projects, the contribution by the proponent(s) can be in the form of
 - 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; material - such as culverts or granular material; and/or the use of equipment, at a value equivalent to the required contribution; or
 - a combination of direct financial contributions, and the provision of labour, material, and/or equipment contributions which are equivalent to the required contribution.
5. Projects which primarily benefit one resource developer may be considered on a cost share basis. Any YG 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.
6. Applicants must address Yukon Environmental and Socioeconomic Assessment Act (YESAA) requirements and comply with all permitting and licensing conditions.
7. The work proposed must result in a road, airstrip or dock 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).