

# **RURAL ROAD UPGRADING PROGRAM GUIDELINES**

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change from Infrastructure to Highways and Public Works.  
No change to Program content.)*



# RURAL ROAD UPGRADING PROGRAM GUIDELINES

## OVERVIEW

Development of the Rural Road Maintenance Policy in 1991 created an avenue to deal with the issue of adding rural roads to the inventory of maintained roads in the Yukon. If minimum criteria are met, the policy allows for maintenance of a particular road by the Yukon Government. However, many roads do not meet the minimum standard set out in the policy and are ineligible for the program. These roads are placed on a list for future upgrading but the available funds have, in the past, been very limited.

There are other roads in the Territory that may never meet the minimum criteria to qualify for maintenance, and/or the users do not want government maintenance, however there is a benefit to the users and the public if the road receives upgrading. These roads have a variety of problems that make them difficult to travel, or impassable, during certain times of the year. The work required and funds needed to upgrade these roads are sometimes very minimal but there has not been a program in place to access the necessary funds.

Also, many of the rural roads, which are currently receiving maintenance by the Yukon Government, are in need of upgrading.

The Rural Road Upgrading Program Guidelines provide an application process where, subject to approval of funds by the Yukon Legislative Assembly, upgrading may be provided for roads that fit into the categories listed above.

## DEFINITIONS

“YG”: Government of Yukon

“H&PW”: Department of Highways and Public Works

“rural road”: generally means a road used for rural residential, recreational, commercial, or institutional purposes, located on public land outside municipal boundaries

“user”: local residents, First Nations, licensed or registered commercial users (such as: trappers, outfitters, wood cutters, tour companies, etc.), registered institutions

## **POLICY OBJECTIVES**

1. To upgrade non-industrial rural roads in the Yukon, whether currently maintained by YG or not.
2. To upgrade rural roads based on requests and input from rural residents and property owners.
3. To accomplish the work with local Contractors.
4. To evaluate projects on a geographical basis in order to spread the work around the Territory.
5. To develop cost share arrangements for projects that are not in the current inventory of government maintained roads.

## **PRINCIPLES**

The Rural Roads Upgrading Program Guidelines are based on the following general principles.

### **A. *Responsiveness to Needs of Rural Yukoners***

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

### **B. *Public Participation***

The public from all rural areas of the Yukon are invited to bring projects forward. Requests can be made directly to government, through MLA's or the local government organization. The proponent(s) are encouraged to demonstrate local support for the project.

### **C. *Local Economic Opportunities***

The emphasis will be on spreading the work around the Yukon, and stimulating the local economy by accomplishing the work with local Contractors.

### **D. *Environmental Considerations***

Consideration for land use and environmental issues will apply to all upgrading work undertaken pursuant to these Program Guidelines. Projects must comply with all Federal and Territorial environmental acts and regulations.

## E. Costs

Proponent(s), property owner(s) or primary user(s), of upgrading projects on roads not currently maintained by YG are encouraged to pay a proportional share of the costs of the upgrade. It is expected that large-scale projects with limited users will be unaffordable under this program, unless there is a high cost share component for the work required. Due to limited funding, larger projects may have to be funded over multiple years.

Costs incurred by H&PW shall form part of the Rural Road Upgrading Program funding. The cost of material supplied by Transportation Maintenance, such as crushed aggregate and culverts, will be included in the initial cost estimate and be charged to the individual project. Administration costs charged to projects generally range from 6.5% to 10%.

## CRITERIA

1. Funding is limited to the upgrading or minor relocation of existing roads and parts thereof, such as culverts and bridges.

Road upgrading could consist of:

- clearing and/or grubbing
- ditching
- widening and straightening of roads
- adding granular material
- excavating soft spots
- upgrading road surfaces

Culvert and bridge work could consist of:

- new culvert or multiplate installations,
- replacing, repairing or extending existing culverts or fluming,
- repairing or modifying bridges,
- excavation to improve drainage,
- installing or repairing erosion protection.

Projects could also include the installation or modification of boat ramps on highways or rural roads, or improvements to other transportation infrastructure.

2. The road, or facility, must be:
  - available for use by the public;
  - within a surveyed right-of-way where designated;
  - located on public land, or if on private land, must be formally recognized as a highway (i.e. "public road").
3. 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.

4. Projects involving rural roads that are not presently maintained by Transportation Maintenance will generally 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.

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;
  - a combination of direct financial contributions, and the provision of labour, material, and/or equipment contributions which are equivalent to the required contribution.
5. Under exceptional circumstances, the Minister of Highways and Public Works may approve projects within municipalities. A cost share will be required for project approval.
  6. Projects, which primarily benefit one user group, 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 the Minister of Highways and Public Works.

## **STANDARDS**

The standard to which the work is performed will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. There are many factors involved, including but not limited to:

- the desires of the residents
- traffic volumes
- speed of traffic
- geometrics of the road (horizontal and vertical alignment determine safety) and
- whether YG maintenance will be performed.

For roads that are currently in the inventory of roads maintained by YG, or likely to become part of the inventory, the recommended minimum standard is a 6.0 m road width with 4.0 m of clearing width on each side of the road. After evaluation of the road, a higher standard may be used if warranted by the factors listed above.

For roads that are not likely to become part of the inventory of maintained roads, the minimum standard should be a 4.5 m road width with 2.0 m of clearing width on each side. However, due to the wide variety of possible projects, each project will be evaluated in terms of compliance with this standard to determine if the recommended standard is appropriate for the specific proposed project.

## APPLICATION AND APPROVAL PROCESS

1. You can apply directly to the government, through the Transportation Maintenance Branch of H&PW, through your MLA or through your local government organization (where applicable). 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.
2. In order to assess projects, the following information will be required:
  - name and location of road and general description of work required
  - 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
  - name of person(s) or group making request and contact name, address and phone / fax numbers
  - details of any contribution to the project by the proponent(s)
  - demonstration of local support for the project

If road maintenance is desired, application will have to be made under the Rural Roads Maintenance Policy. *This does not mean that maintenance will be provided.* The criteria within the Rural Roads Maintenance Policy will govern whether the road qualifies for maintenance by YG.

The Rural Road Maintenance and Rural Road Upgrading Programs are both administered by the Transportation Maintenance Branch.

3. Proponent(s) are encouraged to submit requests as early as possible. Depending on the project, permits requiring lengthy application times may be required. For example, an application for a Land Use Permit from the Yukon Government takes a minimum of 60 days to be approved. A Water Use License application from the Water Board could take up to 6 months in some cases.
4. An evaluation of all projects will be conducted by Transportation Maintenance Branch, and the proponent(s) will be contacted regarding the status of the project, or if more information is required. If the project is approved, the proponent(s) will be notified of the next step in the process, whether it is the work commencing or the application for the required permits.
5. When cost share arrangements are part of a project, the proponent(s) and H&PW will sign an agreement prior to any work being performed. The likelihood of project approval will increase with a higher percentage of contribution from the proponent(s).