

FREE-MULCH GIVEAWAYS

Recommendation

The Commissioner of Community Services, in consultation with the Director of Parks and the Director of Public Works recommends:

1. That staff and resources be allocated to support two free mulch giveaways:
 - a) One outside of the Asian Long-horned Beetle regulated zone on Saturday, May 14, 2005; and,
 - b) One within the Asian Long-horned beetle regulated zone on Saturday, October 29, 2005; and,
2. That the additional cost of \$2,000 be absorbed within the 2005 Parks and Forestry Department Operating budget.

Economic Impact

There is no economical impact as it is anticipated that the \$2,000 will be absorbed in the current approved 2005 operating budget.

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide the feasibility of hosting two free mulch giveaways and to obtain Council's approval to host the events.

Background - Analysis and Options

At the November 8, 2004 Council Meeting, Council directed staff to explore the feasibility of holding a free mulch giveaway day for Vaughan residents outside the regulated zone. In addition, at the Asian Long-horned Beetle Intergovernmental Task Force meeting of March 9, 2005, staff was requested to include a 2nd free mulch giveaway day to residents in the ALHB infested and regulated zone. The following information is provided to address the feasibility of these two initiatives.

On November 20, 2004, The Parks and Forestry Department held a free mulch giveaway day at the Woodbridge Yard. The event was very successful and staff received very positive feedback from the residents. The City of Vaughan Parks and Forestry section have an extensive mulching program and supports this initiative as there are many benefits to mulching which includes:

- Increased moisture retention around trees
- Lessens trunk damage from grass cutting mowers and weed eaters
- Recycles woody brush instead of paying for unnecessary disposal
- Improves soil fertility
- Controls weeds around the base of trees
- Enhances the appearance of trees

Staff recommends that Saturday, May 14, 2005 be approved as the first free mulch giveaway day, outside of the regulated zone, as it coincides with the Public Works Department's kick off of the public works week. The event will be held at the Joint Operations Centre, located at 2800 Rutherford Road and will run from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Parks staff also recommends that the second free mulch giveaway day, which would be within the regulated zone, be held on Saturday, October 29th, 2005. The event will be held at the Woodbridge yard located on Langstaff Road, between Pine Valley Drive and Islington Avenue, from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

For both of the free mulch giveaway days, staff will ensure that the appropriate notices are provided to the public. The events will be advertised on the City of Vaughan's *City Page*, as well as the corporate web site and at the community centres.

Equipment for loading mulch, containers (donated bags) for transporting, the mulch material and staff time are required to run these events at cost of \$2,000.

Cost Breakdown

36 Staff Hours	\$ 1000.00
Equipment hours	\$ 600.00
Advertisements for October 29 th	<u>\$ 400.00*</u>
TOTAL	\$2,000.00

*Advertising costs for the Public Works Week kick off event and mulch giveaway at the JOC on May 14th, will be covered by Public Works.

Relationship to Vaughan Vision 2007

Providing free-mulch and educating the public on the benefits of tree mulching has direct impact on safeguarding our environment.

This report is consistent with the priorities previously set by Council and the necessary resources have not been allocated and approved.

Conclusion

With the devastation to our trees due to the Asian Long-horned Beetle in Vaughan, our urban forest has been significantly impacted. The longevity and health of our trees can be greatly improved by the application of mulch. This is another example of Vaughan's commitment to protecting the environment through responsible leadership, practices and education.

Attachments

None

Report Prepared By

Marjie Fraser, Director of Parks, Ext. 6137

Respectfully submitted,

Marlon Kallideen
Commissioner of Community Services