

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE - OCTOBER 11, 2005

TOURISM FOR BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT: SUMMARY OF DISCOVER VAUGHAN BASH 2005

Recommendation

The Commissioner of Economic/Technology Development and Communications, in consultation with the City Manager and the Senior Manager of Business Development, recommends:

1. That Council receive this report and
2. That staff be directed to proceed with the implementation of the action steps contained in the "City of Vaughan Tourism Strategy" document, as approved by Council on June 27, 2005, beginning with the immediate hiring of the Manager of Tourism.

Economic Impact

The Discover Vaughan Bash creates no negative economic impact. It raises monies earmarked for execution of the Tourism Strategy adopted by Council on June 27, 2005. Proceeds from the 2004 Discover Vaughan Bash were carried forward into the 2005 Operating Budget of the Economic/Technology Development department and the unused portion will be added to the net proceeds from the 2005 Bash.

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to present to Council the results of the Discover Vaughan Bash 2005 and to recommend the immediate hiring of the Manager of Tourism.

Background - Analysis and Options

In 2004, Council gave staff direction to organize a fundraiser in support of Tourism in Vaughan. Proceeds from that event, the Discover Vaughan Bash 2004, were approximately \$140,000 net. A part of these funds was earmarked for a tourism study and the development of a Tourism Strategy, which was presented to, and approved by, Council on June 27, 2005.

The 2nd Annual Discover Vaughan Bash took place at the Lucky Strike Lanes, in Vaughan Mills, on September 22. There were more than 450 people in attendance and the net proceeds are over \$100,000. The Bash enjoyed much success as all comments received have been extremely positive and guests appeared to have positively responded to the many activities that were offered via Lucky Strike Lanes and the Vaughan Mills facility.

Next Steps:

The tourism industry in Vaughan is looking to the City to support its business development efforts. In fact, the Vaughan Tourism Advisory Committee (VTAC) has been very well received and is gathering momentum and credibility with every milestone we reach in the evolution of our tourism role as a municipality.

The report approved by Council on June 27, 2005, included the recommendation that a Manager of Tourism be hired in Year One, which is identified as 2006. However, in order for the tourism operators in Vaughan to receive timely support for projects launching in time to be of benefit to their main season in 2006, which begins in May, the City's efforts in tourism programme development must begin immediately.

For this reason, staff is recommending an immediate hiring of the Manager of Tourism.

Relationship to Vaughan Vision 2007

The recommendations contained in the "City of Vaughan Tourism Strategy" are in support of the "Finance and Economic Development" strategic priority, specifically 2.5 "Strengthen the City's economic base" and 2.5.3 "develop a tourism strategy in conjunction with York Region".

This report is consistent with the priorities previously set by Council and the necessary resources have been allocated and approved.

Conclusion

Strengthening tourism in Vaughan will mean greater strength in the business community as a whole. It will further diversify our economic base and add an additional dimension to our business expansion and retention goals.

The City of Vaughan has grown into a vibrant, dynamic place to live, work and play. Almost one quarter of a million people choose Vaughan for its quality of life, for its diversity and excellent lifestyle. Augmenting our efforts to showcase the myriad activities, events, attractions and exceptional business community will further cement our sense of civic pride in our beautiful City.

Attachments

None

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Respectfully submitted,

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Commissioner of Economic/Technology Development and Communications