

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE (WORKING SESSION) – FEBRUARY 2, 2009

**ENVIRONMENTAL MASTER PLAN
PRESENTATION BY DPRA INC.**

Recommendation

The City Manager, in consultation with the Deputy City Manager and Commissioner of Finance and Corporate Services, recommends that:

- 1) The presentation by DPRA Inc. and draft Community Sustainability and Environmental Master Plan (Attachment No.1) be received;
- 2) Any comments received from Committee of the Whole be incorporated into the final version of the Community Sustainability and Environmental Master Plan;
- 3) The plan proceed to a future Council meeting for approval in principle in accordance with Council direction of December 8, 2008.

Economic Impact

Direction to proceed with the preparation of the Environmental Master Plan has been obtained and was included in the 2007 Capital Budget. Actions identified in the plan have either obtained or will require budget approval as the program proceeds.

Communications Plan

A communications plan will be developed and ultimately implemented upon Council's final approval in principle of the Community Sustainability and Environmental Master Plan. The communication measures will target the public, the media, public sector agencies and stakeholders. The draft communications plan will be discussed at the February 3, 2009 Environment Committee meeting.

Purpose

The purpose of this report and the presentation by DPRA Inc. is to update Committee of the Whole on the draft Community Sustainability and Environmental Master Plan and to obtain comments prior to proceeding to Council for approval in principle.

The basis for the presentation is the plan forming Attachment No. 1 to this report. This version resulted from the input of the Environment Committee on December 8, 2008 and subsequent meetings with members of the Environment Committee.

Today's meeting will provide Committee of the Whole with the opportunity to provide comments and input into the finalization of the plan. As such the consultant will present an overview and will facilitate discussions. It is the intention that any comments received at this meeting be incorporated into the plan, prior to it proceeding to Council for approval. The timing of its submission to Council will be considered by the Environment Committee at its February 3, 2009 meeting.

Background – Analysis and Options

a) Recent Council Action

On December 8, 2008 Council ratified the following recommendation of the Environment Committee (December 8, 2008) by adopting the following resolution (in part):

- 1) That the presentation by DPRA and presentation material submitted, be received;
- 2) That the draft Community Sustainability and Environmental Master Plan be approved in principle and that the plan, incorporating Members of Council's comments of today, be presented to the Committee of the Whole (Working Session) meeting of February 2, 2009;
- 3) That the plan proceed to a future Council meeting for ratification of approval in principle;
- 4) That the plan be subject to on-going staff review and the incorporation of changes resulting from this report and consultant's presentation, comments from the Environment Committee and the Committee of the Whole (Working Session) of February 2, 2009;
- 5) That the consultant bring forward further suggestions on an appropriate name for the plan;

This report and presentation responds to clauses 2) and 4) of the resolution.

In respect of clause 5) the December 8, 2008 report to the Environment Committee recommended that the name of the "Environmental Master Plan" be changed to the "Community Sustainability and Environmental Master Plan". This change emerged from a Council – Staff Workshop held on October 27, 2008. The consensus was that the plan through the evolution of its defining elements and actions had also taken on the characteristics of a sustainability strategy. Therefore the new title would better reflect the breadth of the plan.

However, this title is not ideal as a program brand. As part of the preparation of the communications strategy, it was also recommended that staff report on the opportunities for developing a program brand to function in the same role that *Vaughan Tomorrow* plays for the Vaughan Consolidated Growth Management Strategy - 2031. In order to address clause 5) of the resolution, a plan for moving forward with this activity will be considered at the February 3, 2008 Environment Committee meeting.

b) Origin of the Environmental Master Plan

On September 25, 2006 Council adopted a recommendation originating with the Environmental Task Force which provided that a corporate-wide Environmental Master Plan (the "EMP") be developed as part of the Consolidated Growth Management Strategy – 2031 (now the *Vaughan Tomorrow* program). Staff was directed to prepare Terms of Reference for the EMP and report back with a draft, with timelines in concert with the preparation of the Growth Management Strategy. The Environmental Master Plan is one part of the Growth Management Strategy, which originates with the Strategic Plan (*Vaughan Vision 2020*) and includes the Official Plan Review and the preparation of a number of supporting Master Plans.

On February 12, 2007 Council directed that Staff proceed with the preparation of the Vaughan Consolidated Growth Management Strategy – 2031. On February 19, 2007 the Environmental Task Force approved the draft Terms of Reference for the Environmental Master Plan and authorized staff to issue a Request for Proposals to retain consulting services to assist in the preparation of the EMP. This decision was ratified by Council on March 19, 2007.

On March 19, Council also directed that the Environmental Task Force's name be changed to the Environment Committee and that its mandate be broadened. The new mandate also included responsibility for the Environmental Master Plan. On June 11,

2007 Council formally established the Environment Committee as a Special Purpose Committee of Council under the Procedural By-law and adopted operating Terms of Reference for the Committee. The amendment to the Procedural By-law was enacted on June 25, 2007.

On June 21, 2007 the Request for Proposal (RFP07-077) was issued for the preparation of the EMP. The City's evaluation committee reviewed the proposals over the summer and established the preferred proponent. On September 24, 2007 the Environment Committee approved the retention of the recommended consulting team, led by DPRA Inc., to prepare the City's Environmental Master Plan. This decision was ratified by Council on October 9, 2007. The final work plan was approved at Environment Committee on November 26, 2007 and ratified by Council on December 10, 2007.

c) Role of Consultation in the Development of the Plan

The Community Sustainability and Environmental Master Plan is directed to the operations and functions of the City of Vaughan. However, there is also a clear public dimension to the plan. Therefore, it was essential that input be gathered from representatives of both the corporation and the public. Ultimately, the information obtained through these processes was critical to the development of the plan. The respective processes are described below.

Internal Consultation

In preparing the plan the following methods were used to engage Vaughan Council and staff in the development of the plan.

- Interviews with individual Members of Council;
- Interviews with the City Manager, Deputy City Manager and Commissions;
- Monthly progress updates to the Environment Committee;
- Meetings with the Senior Management Team;
- Meetings with a Staff Project Team made up primarily of Directors and Managers;
- Presentation to a Committee of the Whole (Working Session);
- Liaison with the *Vaughan Tomorrow* team; and
- Workshops with staff and the Environment Committee and Members of Council.

Public Consultation

Several methods were used to engage the public. Initial input from the general public was coordinated with the Official Plan Review Team through the *Vaughan Tomorrow* Speaker Series and Visioning Workshops, which were held in the spring of 2008. The topic of the first event (April 10, 2008) of the Speaker Series was "Defining a Sustainable Future", which examined the meaning of sustainable community development and its implications for the growth and development of the city. Jim Micak President of DPRA Inc. was one of the participating speakers.

The intention of the Visioning Workshops was to explore the challenges and opportunities facing the city and its communities. A total of five workshops were held in:

- Maple on May 21, 2008;
- Thornhill on May 27, 2008;
- Kleinburg on June 4, 2008;
- Woodbridge on June 11, 2008 and
- Concord/Thornhill on June 23, 2008.

A number of questions were posed to the participants including, "What does a sustainable city mean to you?" The responses were helpful in determining the scope of the plan. In particular, it confirmed that the public's definition of sustainability went beyond the natural environment and extended into the realm of community, economic and social issues. This view was consistent with the idea of developing "complete communities" as defined by the *Places to Grow* plan and with working to achieve "triple bottom-line" solutions.

To further broaden the perspective a Stakeholder Committee was struck. It was composed of people from organizations in a variety of fields or sectors of society that have expertise and/or an interest in environmental/sustainability issues and policies. The committee format allowed them to share ideas and provide the City with their views and input on the preparation of the EMP. A total of three workshops were held. They were scheduled throughout the process to inform the various phases of plan development. They took place on February 20, 2008, June 16, 2008 and on October 30, 2008. A total of 21 organizations participated. In addition, representatives from Policy Planning and the consultant for the OP Review (Urban Strategies Inc.) attended. The following groups were represented at least one of the three workshops:

- Smart Commute North Toronto/Vaughan;
- McMichael Canadian Collection Art Gallery;
- West Humber Naturalists;
- Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation;
- Vaughan Chamber of Commerce;
- Bridgeport Group Ltd.;
- United Way of York Region;
- Windfall Ecology;
- COSTI;
- Toronto Chapter, World Green Building Council;
- York Region Environmental Alliance;
- Evergreen Foundation;
- Vaughan Public Libraries;
- BILD;
- York Region Catholic School Board;
- PowerStream;
- York Region District School Board;
- Seniors Association of Vaughan Initiative (SAVI);
- Vaughan Youth Councillor;
- Human Services Planning Branch, York Region;
- Clean Air Partnership.

These organizations added a variety of institutional, public and professional viewpoints to the development of the plan; and the committee served as a sounding board for the policy development process as the plan progressed.

The final leg of the public consultation process was the scheduling of a public meeting to obtain input on the draft Community Sustainability and Environmental Master Plan. The meeting took place on November 20, 2008. The draft document was posted on the *Vaughan Tomorrow* website on November 7, 2008 to give the public an opportunity to review it in advance. A total of 28 people attended the meeting, which was facilitated by DPRA Inc. The attendance provided for two effective breakout groups.

Those in attendance were both knowledgeable and well-engaged in the process. The input was insightful and helpful in refining of the plan.

Relationship to Vaughan Vision 2020

This report is consistent with the Vaughan Vision 2020 objective to "Lead and Promote Environmental Sustainability" by developing and implementing an Environmental Master Plan as part of the Growth Management Strategy 2031.

Regional Impact

Not Applicable.

Conclusion

The Community Sustainability and Environmental Master Plan is one piece of a comprehensive organizational response to the many issues the city is now facing. These include, in the longer-term the continuing problems facing our natural environment and the need to accommodate major growth in a more sustainable manner; and in the shorter-term, a slowing economy requiring financial prudence and the strategic allocation of resources.

The City is building into its operations the recognition of the need to act in a sustainable manner and respect the objectives of the "triple bottom-line" by pursuing a healthy environment, vibrant communities and a strong economy. This is and will be reflected in the City's planning documents that will guide its operations, growth and change over the next 25-years. The Community Sustainability and Environmental Master Plan will work with the originating strategic plan *Vaughan Vision 2020* and as part of the *Vaughan Tomorrow* growth management program (the Official Plan Review and Master Plans) to achieve these objectives.

Therefore, it is recommended that the recommendations of this report be approved and that the Community Sustainability and Environmental Master Plan proceed to Council for final ratification at first opportunity, subject to incorporation of any comments that may emerge from this meeting.

Attachments

1. Draft Community Sustainability and Environmental Master Plan, January, 2009 (Councillors Only);

Report Prepared by:

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Respectfully submitted,

Michael DeAngelis
City Manager