

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE - APRIL 20, 2009

PROCLAMATION - 2009 NATIONAL PUBLIC WORKS WEEK

Recommendation

The Commissioner of Engineering and Public Works, recommends that:

1. Council proclaim the week of May 17-23, 2009, as "Public Works Week" in the City of Vaughan;
2. At the discretion of the Commissioner of Engineering and Public Works, appropriate staff from the Commission be authorized to assist the Ontario Public Works Association and the American Public Works Association in planning and executing the APWA Congress and Exposition, to be held in Toronto in 2014; and,
3. Council adopt the following resolution:

WHEREAS Public Works services provided in our community are an integral part of our citizen's everyday lives; and

WHEREAS the support of an understanding and informed citizenry is vital to the efficient operation of public works systems and programs such as water distribution, wastewater collection, street maintenance, and solid waste collection; and,

WHEREAS the health, safety and comfort of this community greatly depends on these facilities and services; and

WHEREAS the quality and effectiveness of these facilities, as well as their planning, design, construction, and maintenance is vitally dependant upon the efforts and skill of Public Works officials and staff; and

WHEREAS the efficiency of qualified and dedicated personnel who staff the Public Works Department is influenced by people's attitude and understanding of the importance of the work they perform,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT Council proclaim the week of May 17-23, 2009 as "Public Works Week" in the City of Vaughan, and request that all citizens and elected officials recognize the contributions which Public Works make every day to their health, safety, comfort, and quality of life in the community.

Economic Impact

N/A

Communications Plan

The Public Works Event being held on May 23, 2009 will be advertised in the local papers, on the City's web site, and on mobile signs throughout the City. In addition, a media release will be issued.

Purpose

To request that Council proclaim May 17-23, 2009 as "National Public Works Week" in the City of Vaughan, and to present an overview of the City's Public Works Week event to be held at the Joint Operations Centre on Saturday, May 23, 2009.

Background - Analysis and Options

A - Public Works Week Event

Since 1960, the American Public Works Association has sponsored National Public Works Week. The purpose of National Public Works Week is to celebrate the hard work and dedication of the many thousands of men and women in North America who provide and maintain the infrastructure and services collectively known as public works. For 2009, Public Works Week is the week of May 17-23.

The theme for this year is “Revitalize, Reinvest and Renew”. These words are meant to signal a change in thinking, and a new direction in practice.

Revitalizing our infrastructure means finding new ways to sustain performance, using new materials and increasing efficiency.

Reinvesting in our infrastructure will ensure safety, longevity, and positive quality of life.

Renewing our infrastructure means replacing and reinvigorating the systems and structures on which we depend.

The American Public Works Association has stated that, “The future is now, and public works professionals must lead the way in addressing the issues that have been out-of-sight/out-of-mind for too long.” Public Works Week is but one means of calling attention to the importance of Public Works in the community, and its role in ensuring these essential services are available for future generations.

On Saturday May 23, 2009, the Public Works Department will host its Public Works Week event at the Joint Operations Centre located at 2800 Rutherford Rd. This event will provide a public forum to educate, and get feedback from, residents about various road maintenance, water distribution, wastewater collection, and “Greening Vaughan” waste management initiatives. It will be held at the north-east employee parking lot (rain or shine) from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. and it is intended to enhance the public’s understanding of various practices and initiatives undertaken by the Public Works Department.

The event itself will be multi-faceted, and as a result, has the potential to draw a number of people. The event includes:

- A reuse event, whereby residents will be encouraged to donate their gently used items to a charitable organization (Goodwill)
- The Region’s Household Hazardous Waste facility will be open to accept materials
- The promotion of Kraft Paper Bags (City of Vaughan - Public Works)
- The sale of Blue Boxes (City of Vaughan – Public Works)
- The sale of Backyard Composters (City of Vaughan – Public Works)
- The sale of Green Bins and Kitchen Containers (City of Vaughan – Public Works)
- The promotion of “Greening Vaughan”, as well as other waste management initiatives (City of Vaughan – Public Works)
- Displays about Water Quality & Roads Maintenance (City of Vaughan – Public Works)
- The Mulch Give-Away (City of Vaughan – Parks & Forestry Department)
- York Region displays pertaining to Waste Management
- The use of free on-site document shredding services
- Displays and give-aways promoting energy efficiency hosted by PowerStream
- Emergency Preparedness information (City of Vaughan - Vaughan Fire and Rescue)
- Promotion of city-wide environmental programs (City of Vaughan - Economic Development)
- GIS and Survey displays (City of Vaughan - Engineering Services Department)

Once again, the City's Public Works Department will be participating in the 'York Region Area Municipalities Challenge', where area municipalities challenge each other in Municipal Works equipment operating contests. As part of the event, the Mayors of the area municipalities also compete against each other, driving trucks and/or other equipment through an obstacle course. This event takes place on May 20 at the Town of Richmond Hill's facility on Elgin Mills Road. In 2008, the City of Vaughan's Public Works Team took First Place overall, and won the Miller Cup.

As part of Public Works Week, the City will also hold its annual Public Works barbeque at the JOC for all Public Works, Engineering and Parks and Forestry employees.

Each year, the Ontario Public Works Association presents the "Bruce Brunton Award" to recognize municipalities who actively participate in, and engage the public in, Public Works Week and its events. Earlier this year, the City of Vaughan received an Honourable Mention award in the category of municipalities with 150,000+ population for its 2008 Public Works Week programs.

B - APWA Congress and Exposition in 2014

The City of Vaughan, and its Engineering and Public Works Commission, have been long standing supporters and members of the American Public Works Association, and continue to be so today. The City's Engineering and Public Works employees are active in the Ontario Public Works Association's (OPWA), activities, and employees have served on its Committees. The City's Director of Public Works has served on the Board of Directors for the OPWA, and was a presenter and speaker at the APWA's North American Snow Conference in 2003. As part of his affiliation with the OPWA, he was asked to appear before the 2014 APWA Congress Site Selection Committee in June of 2008, in support of bringing this event to Canada, specifically the Toronto area. On September 25, 2008 it was announced that the American Public Works Association chose Toronto as the location to hold its annual Congress and Exposition. This event will take place from August 17 – 20, 2014, and will draw several thousand public works professionals from around the world. The Congress and Exposition provides numerous educational opportunities through its various seminars, sessions, and equipment displays. The last time an APWA event was held in the Toronto area was in 1988.

Such an undertaking will require significant volunteer resources to put together to ensure its success. As such, the OPWA and the APWA will be looking to the various municipalities and organizations to supply staff to assist with the planning, set-up and execution of this significant event. As Vaughan staff play an active role in OPWA and APWA, and such involvement contributes to the professional development of staff, it is recommended that the Commissioner of Engineering and Public Works be authorized to allow, at his discretion, appropriate Engineering and Public works staff to assist in preparing for, and executing the, 2014 APWA Congress and Exposition.

Relationship to Vaughan Vision 2020

This report is consistent with the priorities previously set by Council, and complies with Vaughan Vision 2020's Goals and Objectives. The Public Works Week event ties into the Goal of "Service Excellence" and its Objective of "Lead and Promote Environmental Sustainability".

Participation in APWA and OPWA events ties in the Goal of "Staff Excellence" and its Objectives of "Support the Professional Development of Staff", as well as "Value and Encourage a Highly Motivated Workforce".

Conclusion

National Public Works Week provides a venue by which municipalities across North America can inform, educate, and in some cases, give back to the public, initiatives borne by Public Works departments.

To date, the Public Works Events have been well attended. As such, it is important to build on previous year's successes, and use this as another opportunity to promote not only the Public Works Week theme, but also promote the City's environmental initiatives as well.

The 2014 APWA Congress and Exposition will provide world class educational opportunities for Engineering and Public Works staff. In order to make the event successful, Vaughan may be requested to provide assistance in the planning, set-up, and execution of this event.

Attachments

N/A

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Respectfully submitted,

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