

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MAY 11, 2010

SIGN PROLIFERATION IN THE CITY OF VAUGHAN

Recommendation

Councillor Alan Shefman recommends that:

1. Staff prepare a report to Council outlining the scope of the perennial sign proliferation in residential areas in the City of Vaughan, and
2. Based upon the information revealed in the assessment of the problem, the report include recommendations for a five year comprehensive and long-range plan, including the immediate actions that can be taken to deal with the proliferation of these illegal signs especially on boulevards and on the reverse of traffic signs in our residential neighbourhoods.

Contribution to Sustainability

Developing and implementing a plan to maintain our residential neighbourhoods free of illegal placard signs will enhance the environment for all residents of the City. If the plan results in fewer of these signs being posted, it will lessen the environmental impact of the ongoing maintenance involved in removing these signs in the future.

Economic Impact

There may be financial implications dependent upon the plan being proposed when staff report back.

Communications Plan

To be determined based upon the plan presented to and approved by Council.

Purpose

Like many of municipalities in the GTA, the City of Vaughan is plagued by illegal placard signs posted throughout our residential neighbourhoods. Virtually every one of these signs is illegal as defined by City bylaws. These illegal signs intrude on the quality of our residential neighbourhoods and may pose a safety threat as they may distract motorists when they are posted on the reverse of traffic signs and on the standards supporting these traffic signs.

Enforcement of the City's bylaws addressing these illegal placard signs is limited through a lack of resources assigned to these responsibilities and difficulties in prosecuting offenders. Maintenance is also limited for similar reasons. A further problem relating to maintenance may also be related to Enforcement staff having lead responsibility for a non-enforcement matter.

While enforcement staff regularly monitor and enforce there is little long-term impact of this approach for either maintenance or enforcement. For most offenders it is small cost to post placards to advertise their services, and a constant battle for staff to prevent the growing proliferation. Clearly, what is required is a long-range and continuous plan and on-going evaluation to deal with the problem of maintaining the quality of our residential neighbourhoods.

Background - Analysis and Options

Illegal placard signs are a continuing problem in the City of Vaughan as in all municipalities. Even though sign removal blitzes take place from time to time, the problem persists. This Spring it seems that illegal placard signs are more prolific than ever.

Without a comprehensive approach to this problem our residential neighbourhoods will continue to suffer from excessive visual litter. Furthermore, the people who post these signs will continue to flaunt our bylaws.

Relationship to Vaughan Vision 2020/Strategic Plan

In consideration of the strategic priorities related to Vaughan Vision 2020, the recommendation addresses our STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE of:

Leading and promoting environmental sustainability – To preserve, protect and enhance Vaughan's natural and built environment through responsible leadership, and innovative policies, practices and education.

Furthermore this recommendation supports the approved Green Directions Vaughan Master Plan.

Regional Implications

Based upon the plan developed by Vaughan, it will be important to develop an agreement with the Region to establish a similar approach to illegal signs in areas of their jurisdiction.

Conclusion

A well developed long range plan to address the issue of illegal signs in residential areas will have a significant positive impact on the quality of the urban landscape of the residential neighbourhoods of the City of Vaughan.

Attachments

none

Report prepared by:

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Respectfully submitted,

Alan Shefman
Councillor, Ward 5