

STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE – MAY 10, 2010

MARCH 2010 CITIZEN SURVEY

Recommendations

The Director of Corporate Communications and the Senior Manager of Strategic Planning, in consultation with the City Manager recommend:

1. That the presentation from Robert Hutton, Pollara Strategic Insights be received; and
2. That Attachment 1, a strategy to communicate the results of the Citizen Survey and the use of focus groups to gather further specific information in key issues facing the City be approved.

Contribution to Sustainability

The citizen survey provides information on issues of concern to citizens which include topics related to sustainability.

Economic Impact

Funds were included in the 2010 operating budget to conduct the survey.

Communications Plan

A communication strategy will support the publication of the survey results.

Purpose

This report presents the results of the 2010 Citizen Survey and the next steps in the process for utilizing the information in the decision-making process (i.e. focus groups).

Background - Analysis and Options

In 2007 and 2009, an Ipsos-Reid Quality of Life and Financial Planning survey was administered in the City of Vaughan. Questions were formulated to determine the most important issues facing the community, the quality of life in Vaughan, satisfaction with service delivery, value for tax dollars, and information requirements.

A competitive tendering process was held and Pollara Strategic Insights was awarded the bid for the 2010 Citizen Survey. This survey was administered in March 2010 and based on the previous Ipsos-Reid surveys, with additional questions including what information residents would like the City to communicate to them, and asking residents to rate the degree of importance and their level of satisfaction with City services.

Attachment 1 presents the key findings from the 2010 Citizen Survey. It concludes:

- 90% of residents are satisfied with the quality of life in Vaughan
- Divided in opinion regarding maintaining service levels through property tax increases and user fees or cutting service
- 79% of residents satisfied with the City of Vaughan services
- 69% of residents satisfied the City is building the City of Vaughan in the right way
- 58% feel there is a need for more effective communications

Next Steps

Building on this survey (i.e. focus groups) will facilitate the City gathering additional information and feedback on issues and service provision to citizens. The recommended next steps are two-fold:

1. To conduct a series of three focus groups--two with citizens and one with the business community--to gather more in-depth information on some of the key survey questions. These focus groups would be conducted in early 2011 through a collaborative approach with appropriate City departments.
2. Complete another citizen survey in 2011 building on the 2010 survey and the focus groups.

The proposed survey would be strategic in focus, asking questions to determine the level of citizen satisfaction of City services and the value they place on the services. It would also ask what are the key strategic issues facing the municipality which would inform the process to revise the Vaughan Vision 2020 with the new term of Council. The survey could be conducted on-line and the respondents would be asked to provide their e-mail addresses so that a virtual town hall of representative citizens could be created. This group can then be polled through online surveys on an ongoing basis by City departments.

Relationship to Vaughan Vision 2020/Strategic Plan

The citizen survey provides feedback on the City's implementation of the Vaughan Vision 2020 strategic plan.

Regional Implications

Any regional implications will be identified in the survey results

Conclusion

The 2010 Citizen Survey provides citizen feedback on key issues and services. There is an opportunity to implement other methods of gathering citizen information such as focus groups and an online citizen Town Hall platform. Proceeding with these options will provide quality information which can be used in the strategic decision-making process.

Attachments

Attachment 1 – A Strategy to Communicate the Citizen Survey results.

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Respectfully submitted,

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STRATEGY TO COMMUNICATE THE CITIZEN SURVEY RESULTS

OBJECTIVES

1. Communicate results to the media and the public
2. To post the survey results on the website
3. To gather further input from citizen focus groups on key issues facing the City
4. To develop a virtual representative 'town hall' of citizen's for future survey work

TARGET AUDIENCES

Internal

Council
All staff

External

Residents
Ratepayers' Associations
Community Groups
Business Community/Chamber of Commerce
Media

MESSAGES

1. We value your input
2. Public engagement and input is a key component to the Vaughan Vision
3. Reporting back to stakeholders is key

ACTION STEPS

ACTIVITY	RESOURCE	DUE DATE
2010 Citizen Survey Results <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post a report on 2010 Citizen Survey results on City's website • Promote results through City's e-newsletter and news releases 	Corp. Comm.	May
Focus Groups <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organize 3 focus groups, two with residents and one with local business • Involve participating City departments in developing questions for focus groups 	Corp. Comm. Strategic Planning City Departments	Early 2011
Citizen Value Survey <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborate with internal departments on developing a survey methodology • Use Citizen Survey and focus group results as a template and work towards developing a virtual 'town hall' of representative citizens 	Corp. Comm. Strategic Planning	2011