

CITY OF VAUGHAN

EXTRACT FROM COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 29, 2011

Item 1, Report No. 7, of the Priorities and Key Initiatives Committee, which was adopted without amendment by the Council of the City of Vaughan on November 29, 2011.

1 UPDATE ON THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY (EDS)

The Priorities and Key Initiatives Committee recommends:

- 1) **That the recommendation contained in the following report of the Director of Economic Development, dated November 14, 2011, be approved; and**
- 2) **That the presentation material entitled, “Economic Development Strategy 2011 Progress Update”, dated November 14, 2011, be received.**

Recommendation

The Director of Economic Development in consultation with the City Manager recommends that this report be received for information purposes only.

Contribution to Sustainability

Green Directions Vaughan embraces a *Sustainability First* principle and states that sustainability means we make decisions and take actions that ensure a healthy environment, vibrant communities and economic vitality for current and future generations. Under this definition, activities related to economic development contributes to the sustainability of the City.

Economic Impact

There is no economic impact with receipt of this report.

Communications Plan

A communications plan is not applicable to this report.

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with an annual overview of the actions and progress that has taken place in the implementation of the 10-year Economic Development Strategy: “Building a Gateway to Tomorrow’s Economy” which was approved by Council on September 16, 2010.

Background – Analysis and Options

Council adopted the Economic Development Strategy (EDS) entitled “*Building a Gateway to Tomorrow’s Economy*” in September 2010. The Economic Development Strategy for the City of Vaughan was developed based on a need to integrate economic development activities into a greater framework of partnerships and activities focused on creating a vibrant community life that is inclusive, progressive, environmentally responsible and sustainable. It is a 10-year plan that provides a compass for both public and private resources to achieve those goals, and ties together all of the work done through the Vaughan Vision 20|20 Growth Management Plans. As such, it presents Economic Development Department activities as a necessary component to achieving all of the goals and objectives for the City over the next 10 years. The Strategy has four main goals:

CITY OF VAUGHAN

EXTRACT FROM COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 29, 2011

Item 1, Priorities Report No. 7 – Page 2

- Position Vaughan as the “gateway” of economic activity in the Greater Toronto Area.
- Develop Vaughan as an incubator of entrepreneurial and economic activity for the economic region.
- Provide best-in-class economic development services.
- Grow Vaughan’s dynamic quality of place and creative economy.

Administrative

Within the past year, the Economic Development Department has begun the foundational work to implement the EDS, as well as continue to put best practices to work, collaborating with internal departments and external partners. The Manager of Tourism position was realigned and expanded as the Business Development Officer: Creative Economy and the position of Community Development Officer was redefined to be dedicated to economic cluster development and business retention. In addition, a newly created position (approved in the 2011 budget process) titled Research Coordinator will fill a critical function within the department and therefore be an important support role to accomplish the actions, objectives and goals that will position Vaughan as the “Gateway” to the Greater Toronto Area for economic activity.

The position will collect, manage and analyze data in support of economic development initiatives. The coordinator will be responsible for the providing accurate information in the department’s publications, managing data collection efforts, and providing timely and accurate information for all internal and external requests. In addition, as the strategy is shifting the role of economic development to a focus on business development, the research position will need to actively seek new data sources, suggest research topics, provide summaries and surveys of relevant literature, and play a critical support role in policy projects as well as performing economic impact analysis as needed.

Fulfilling the Strategy

Furthermore, with the program review and business planning process implemented during the summer of 2011, six programs were defined. These programs weave and connect the actions that will ultimately fulfill each of the goals. The six programs are:

- Business Investment & Attraction;
- VBEC-Small Business Development;
- Economic Cluster Development;
- Foreign Business Development;
- Employment Zone Development; and
- Corporate Branding & Marketing.

Business Investment & Attraction

The EDS focuses Business Investment and Attraction on three convergent sectors:

- Creative Economy;
- Innovative Research, Development and Design;
- Advanced Goods Production and Movement.

The convergent sectors are predicated on knowledge, learning and value-added economic activities that have transformative possibilities for a number of industry sectors.

Creative Economy

This sector includes tourism, arts-based business development, historic village revitalization, and placemaking projects.

CITY OF VAUGHAN

EXTRACT FROM COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 29, 2011

Item 1, Priorities Report No. 7 – Page 3

Following the conclusion of planning studies, the Economic Development Department was tasked with developing a revitalization strategy for Kleinburg's mainstreet. A key cultural and tourism centre for the City, Kleinburg faced some challenges with sustaining a vibrant commercial core, while serving the daily needs of area residents. The Kleinburg Economic Development Strategy (KEDS) completed in June 2011, positions Kleinburg as an outdoor recreation paradise and meeting place. It calls for a stronger Kleinburg Business Improvement Area (KBIA) association as the catalyst for Kleinburg's transformation, and proposes a retail mix that creates a draw for both residents and visitors.

Staff have been active participants in KBIA meetings since May. In addition, Staff played an integral role with the property owner in landing a new Starbucks in the Kleinburg Core. Starbucks had its official opening on September 1 which was attended by Regional Councillor Rosati, Regional Councillor Schulte and Ward Councillor Iafrate. Adding a strong retail brand name to the core will potentially draw other retailers to that area and keep local population and tourists in the core.

Furthermore, Economic Development is working closely with the Planning Department to identify the needs of small business in the core and heritage areas to suggest incremental changes to its policies, i.e. patio licensing, so that Kleinburg's establishments can enjoy a more streamlined approvals process.

The Department has restructured its approach to Tourism development. In June 2011, the Department hosted a roundtable with more than 30 in attendance to introduce the new RTO 6 and brief key tourism and hospitality stakeholders on provincial and municipal tourism initiatives. Ministry of Tourism and Culture staff representing the Tourism Policy and Development Division; and Sharon Kennedy, the new Executive Director of RTO 6 delivered presentations.

While the City is no longer undertaking tourism marketing and promotion, it continues to support operators by developing a richer sector with additional investments in accommodations and attractions (product development). An additional 315 rooms came on the market in 2011, increasing our superior hotel asset class by 28%. The Department is working with an international leisure company to secure a branded attraction, building upon the family-based entertainment offerings that are unique to Vaughan. Although the final decision on the company's entry to the Canadian market is still pending, Vaughan is the top contender for one of three products.

Farmer's Market

After one season of operations at Market Lane in the Woodbridge core, the Woodbridge Village Farmers' Market relocated to the Woodbridge Pool and Memorial Arena due to unforeseen circumstances. However, staff had to work with the Market organizers and the recreation and culture department to secure a waiver for permit fees which would allow the Market organizers to refocus those dollars towards additional marketing activity. From the City's perspective, having an established farmers' market in Woodbridge has the potential to bring people together and can turn an under utilized space (parking lot) into a hive of activity, attracting extra business for stores and restaurants nearby. Further communication efforts from the department such as e-blasts promoting the Farmer's market to small businesses, and highlighting the market in the quarterly print edition of Business link helped the market achieve an average attendance each week of approximately 300 people.

Fostering Arts-Based Small Business

In April 2011, the York Region Arts Council organized its inaugural Arts and Culture Conference – "Arts Exposed", bringing together diverse cultural stakeholders from the public, private and non-profit sector to discuss the context of arts and culture in the Region and to strategize about cultural tourism and capacity development.

CITY OF VAUGHAN

EXTRACT FROM COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 29, 2011

Item 1, Priorities Report No. 7 – Page 4

The Vaughan Business Enterprise Centre (VBEC), was both a presenter and exhibitor at Arts Exposed. VBEC's presentation entitled "Working With a Net" discussed opportunities for business ventures in the arts, and putting business planning practices in place to make the transition from producers to business owners. Having received tremendous interest, work is underway to develop a series of workshops and specialty seminars in 2012 targeted to the Arts sector, including intellectual property protection.

Innovative Research, Development & Design

In the Innovative Research, Development & Design convergent sector, staff has begun background research looking into sector makeup, competitive advantages, funding mechanisms, and programs in other municipalities.

Staff met with York University, Seneca College, the Ontario Centres of Excellence and VentureLab, all of which deliver programs dedicated to innovation and commercialization; and established parameters for exchanging and sharing contacts and leads that would benefit from government programs and private sector assistance. Through an introduction by VentureLab and York Region, staff worked with Shimifrez, a 35-year old R&D based firm specializing in photochemical machining for the aerospace, medical, instrumentation and electronics industries, to establish a manufacturing operation in Vaughan.

Supporting colleges and universities to acquire applied research and innovation funding has benefits for our local industries. The City through Economic Development supported Seneca College's funding application for its Technology Access Centre (TAC) under the CCI-TAC Grant program. The TAC allows faculty and students to develop expertise in advanced technologies, such as simulation software and other technologies.

The City was also asked to support the Vaughan Hospital's Life Sciences Cluster Initiative application to the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario. The Vaughan Health Campus of Care secured \$10 million in financial support for the planning and development of a life sciences cluster in Vaughan.

The strategy identifies that cleantech/greentech are two emerging sectors of priority to the City and rooted in the convergent sector of innovative research, development and design. The Green Energy Act brought in by the Province has generated numerous opportunities, particularly in the solar sector for Vaughan. Working with PowerStream and York Region, the Department hosted its first-ever Solar Roundtable bringing together representatives from 16 manufacturers, installers, project developers and related industries to discuss synergies and opportunities for cooperation. Follow up activities have included providing business support to Sungrow Canada, Calisolar/6N Silicon and Solgate. Working through one of VBEC's mentors, Solgate successfully secured funding from the Work-Sharing Program, which amounted to a \$450,000 savings in staffing costs. Staff also worked with Calisolar/6N Silicon to complete a lease transaction for an expansion in the Vaughan Enterprise Zone.

VBEC – Small Business Development

The Strategy articulates an expanded role for VBEC, changing its scope from a transaction-driven office to one which is more closely aligned with the overall economic development efforts of the City. The goal of "Vaughan as a virtual incubator for economic activity" is a natural extension of VBEC's service model which utilizes the expertise and knowledge of a network of advisors to assist entrepreneurs. The concept is to create a proactive system of business support services and spaces that will provide businesses located in Vaughan with access to resources, tools and expertise that may not be accessed elsewhere without creating a traditional "brick and mortar" incubation site.

CITY OF VAUGHAN

EXTRACT FROM COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 29, 2011

Item 1, Priorities Report No. 7 – Page 5

The VBEC core business model delivers entrepreneurship training and small business support. The Ministry of Economic Development and Innovation has communicated that VBEC's service levels are exceptional amongst the Province's Small Business Enterprise Centre network, accounting for 10% of all consultations across the 57-office network. During the six-month period of April to September 2011, VBEC completed 728 business consultations, which resulted in generating employment of more than 475 jobs.

Building upon its partnership-based model, VBEC has developed strategic partnerships with community based organizations (COSTI, Human Endeavours /EPIC) as well as the Region of York, Powerstream and the Vaughan Chamber of Commerce. VBEC also established a presence with York University offering seminars and workshops on Entrepreneurship in Business and Arts.

VBEC expanded its programming for business and entrepreneurs with involvement in Enterprise in the Social Economy Conference – Organized by Human Endeavour to showcase social economy models.

In addition, VBEC delivers youth specific programs such as the Summer Company Program, the Centre's key youth initiative. The program is a provincially sponsored program for youth aged 15-29 who establish summer businesses. This year, the province approved 15 Vaughan students of which 14 were profitable. Many have continued operating their business past the conclusion of the program in addition to utilizing the mentorship and consultation services provided by VBEC.

Small Business Week, an annual signature event for VBEC took place during October 17-21. Over the course of the week, VBEC staff delivered 10 workshops to 278 participants. The workshops and seminars offered were: How to Reinvent Yourself & Your Business, Introduction to Accounting, Online Marketing & Social Media, Small Business Tax Tips. Speaking Engagement -Toastmasters, The Business of Artist to Entrepreneur, Introduction to Entrepreneurship, Social Media Marketing, How to Set Up Your Corporation and Mompreneurs.

Economic Cluster Development

The Economic Development Department undertakes a number of programs to grow the economic base by developing strong economic "clusters" or centres of competitive advantage which distinguishes Vaughan from its competitors. It is widely recognized that 80% of all investments in a community comes from the existing business base. Therefore, it is essential to provide existing businesses with one point-of-contact and to deliver seamless business assistance. The Economic Development Department assists local business with such issues as materials sourcing, employee orientations, corporate events, government funding initiatives, and issues resolutions.

By year-end Staff will have completed 50 corporate calls. During a corporate call, staff gathers information on more than 42 datapoints including product life cycle, market development, management, workforce development, technology utilization, sectoral growth, utilities and quality of life. Using the Synchronist Business Information System, an economic development business retention and expansion software program, this information is maintained along with the base information for Vaughan's more than 9,000 businesses. This database and resource library are essential because it provides competitive business intelligence, objective assessment and predictive information to inform decision-making and resource allocation within the Department, its partner organizations and the community.

CITY OF VAUGHAN

EXTRACT FROM COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 29, 2011

Item 1, Priorities Report No. 7 – Page 6

What distinguishes Vaughan's approach to business retention and expansion, is the benchmarking. The Synchronist system does not automate the process of documenting the past. Instead, its community of users allows Economic Development staff to predict the likely path of industry sectors based on the 42 data points collected and then overlays that information across jurisdictions in North America.

Thus far, transportation issues have been identified by a number of companies as a primary concern. Concerns about road volumes, signalization, and closures were raised during visits to Canadian Pacific's Intermodal Terminal and Longos Brothers new head offices. The Transportation Engineering and Economic Development Departments have met with company officials to discuss specific concerns, while the Business Link and e-Business newsletters have been used to highlight significant road closures or other service disruptions on an ongoing basis.

Beginning in 2012, the department will have a goal of completing a minimum of 125 corporate calls.

Foreign Business Development

Economic Relationships

The new EDS clearly identifies priority relationships with international cities grounded in business development objectives. However, a goal is to strike a balance that allows the Department and Council to focus its priorities on relationships that generate economic returns, while providing an appropriate level of support to cultural partnerships.

Over the past two years, the City has cultivated relationships with Yiwu, China to create placement opportunities for Canadian-made products in the Chinese market. At the invitation of the Yiwu City Government, in April 2011, the City undertook a business trip to China to open the Canada Mart at the Yiwu Cultural Trade Fair. Vaughan was the only municipality to participate in the opening ceremonies, which included the Ontario Trade Commissioner in Shanghai. Through the City's introduction, Vineland Estates has secured a contract with Zhejiang Vintners to introduce Ontario wines and spirits to the burgeoning Chinese market. Vineland's products were launched at the Yiwu Cultural Trade Fair.

During the Chinese business trip, the Vaughan delegation visited the Shanghai Business Mart, an international trading center featuring a mix of showrooms, trade offices, and information resources such as a virtual office that provide both international and domestic buyers and suppliers with first class facilities and services. Following the business trip, the Department has become a member of the Canada China Business Council (CCBC), a bilateral trade and investment facilitator. By having an active involvement with the CCBC, Vaughan gains access to Chinese business and political leaders as well as the virtual desk/office services of the Shanghai Business Mart. The virtual office is very strategic and will allow a Vaughan business the opportunity to thoroughly research and analyze the business opportunity(s) to enter into business into China prior to a substantial commitment of time and financial resources.

Social/Cultural Relationships

The City of Vaughan's diverse cultural base attracts visitors and delegations from many parts of the globe. In order, to manage visit requests, the City has implemented a protocol for delegation visits to allow for proper planning and administrative support. Since September 2010, the City has received 20 incoming delegations, including:

CITY OF VAUGHAN

EXTRACT FROM COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 29, 2011

Item 1, Priorities Report No. 7 – Page 7

- From China: Shandong, Yiwu (2), Hefei, Yangzhou (2), Zibo (2), Suining, Consul General of China
- From Italy: Treviso, Paese, Salerno, Cosenza, Delia, San Francesco de Paola, Friuli Venezia Giulia
- From Thailand: Canadian Consulate's office
- Sanjo, Japan (2)

Employment Zone Development

The City of Vaughan is undergoing significant growth, and has completed a considerable amount of planning to ensure that future development will be sustainable. Although the City takes a business attraction approach on the basis of convergent sectors, it also takes an approach based on key development areas. The Vaughan Metropolitan Centre (VMC) and the Vaughan Enterprise Zone (VEZ) are two of the more immediate areas.

The construction of the subway extension at the VMC, has triggered development interest in the City's new downtown. However, in and of itself, the subway construction has significant economic and transportation impact on the existing business community and the travelling public. In partnership with York Region Rapid Transit/VIVA communications team, the Transportation Engineering and Economic Development Department has taken the lead on a number of initiatives to inform area residents and businesses on the status of subway construction, traffic disruptions and detour routes. The City's website, Business Link newsletter, and social media channels regularly feature subway updates. In addition, the Department with Transportation and Engineering worked with the TTC to secure two subway station models at City Hall for public viewing. Initiatives like this begin to promote the subway and communicate the benefits to our citizens.

In preparation for the development enquiries arising from the VMC, the Department has begun to re-develop its VMC marketing materials. City staff have also assisted the developers of Expo City, the first large-scale high density condominium project located in the VMC, to develop their marketing materials for their sales presentation centre and website.

Additionally, the Department recently hosted a showcase event with the National Association of Industrial and Office Properties, Greater Toronto Chapter (NAIOP), an organization of leading professionals in commercial / industrial asset management, property development, financing and real estate. The breakfast presentation and bus tour, put a particular emphasis on development opportunities in the VMC and VEZ. The event was sold out with attendance in excess of 115 people.

Corporate Branding & Marketing

The Economic Development Department continues to lead in innovative marketing and branding. The City's usage of Quick Response (QR) code in its Economic Development Strategy was a first in municipal economic development. QR codes, a 2-dimensional barcode allows the City to effectively market and deliver large amounts of information via mobile smart phone technology. As the City moves into a multi-channel marketing platform, social media and associated technologies, are allowing us to reach a broader audience and generate greater customer engagement.

In 2011, the Economic Development Department completed a number of marketing collateral pieces, including an updated and more comprehensive Business Directory available for the first time on USB, Community Profile, Vaughan Enterprise Zone mapping and Vaughan Metropolitan Centre brochure. The Department also implemented a monthly electronic newsletter, *E-Business Link*, to complement the quarterly hardcopy Business Link newsletter that is currently distributed to more than 5,000 local businesses and contacts.

CITY OF VAUGHAN

EXTRACT FROM COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 29, 2011

Item 1, Priorities Report No. 7 – Page 8

For the business mission to China, the City produced new Chinese-language marketing collateral materials, in hardcopy and on USB-format. These materials have received a warm welcome during the mission as well as post-mission with visiting delegations. In addition, the department has translated its marketing materials to Italian which has also received an excellent reception.

Since 2010, the Economic Development Department has received six peer-level awards for marketing and collateral materials, from the Economic Developers Council of Ontario (EDCO), Economic Developers Association of Canada (EDAC) and the International Economic Development Council (IEDC). Of note, in 2011 Vaughan was recognized by IEDC, with two Excellence in Economic Development Awards – one for the Economic Development Strategy Executive Brochure in the Special Purpose Brochure category and the other award for E-Business Link in the category of Newsletters.

Best of Class Economic Development

The practice of Economic Development can be characterized as multi-disciplinary, but cohesive efforts to attract new investment; and retain and expand local businesses. Partnerships and collaboration are key to dealing with a hyper segmented economy, while governments at all levels, face increasing financial constraints.

Coming through the various growth management and master plan studies of the past four years, under the leadership of the City Manager, Economic Development is now fully integrated in all functional areas. These collaborations allow the City to deliver services more efficiently and effectively to our business and residential constituents.

With the assistance of the Information Technology Management Department, the Economic Development Department is working on creating a Project Management model for its Economic Development Strategy. Our goal is to develop metrics for our key priorities and build a dashboard to clearly illustrate progress on those priority areas that can be accessed throughout the year.

Successful Completions

Successful completions are a key metric for the Department, and they can be defined as business investments, expansions, land/building transactions or major hirings, that have been completed with assistance from the Department. Examples of successful completions that occurred in 2010/2011 include: Sungrow Canada, Crane Supply, Martha's Garden/Sysco Foods, Shimifrez, Improve, Calisolar/6N Silicon, Saputo Foods, Toromont Canada, Transcontinental Printing, Longos Brothers Fruit Market, Korea Food Trading, Goeman's, Olympia Tile. Estimated floor space occupied for these firms is approximately 2 million square feet, and number of jobs created is approximately 800. Estimated investments in land or operations total \$24.5 million.

Staff are also currently working with clients in the financial business services, pharmaceuticals, food and beverage, tourism attractions, solar, metal fabrication and transportation and logistics sectors. These projects all have potential to be located in the coming months and potentially represent an additional 1,000 jobs and 1 million square feet of class A office and manufacturing space.

In addition, in 2010/2011 the Department responded to nine calls for proposals from the Ministry of Economic Development and Innovation. The solar sector (i.e. panel manufacturers, inverters, modules) make up the majority of proposals, however two proposals were related to pharmaceuticals. Vaughan sites have been short-listed and the Department is now awaiting further details as we compete for these international projects with a select group of US and Canadian cities.

CITY OF VAUGHAN

EXTRACT FROM COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 29, 2011

Item 1, Priorities Report No. 7 – Page 9

Next Steps

Taking the outlook that local businesses will continue to expand, albeit cautiously, the Economic Development Department intends to undertake the following objectives in 2012:

1. Jointly with Planning and Urban Design Departments, produce and support the Urban Design Awards, which highlights the City's commitment to placemaking and thus, creative economy. The importance of urban design, sustainability and livability is well documented in literature and is reaching common acceptance in real estate decision-making.
2. Identify opportunities to attract post-secondary institutions including a new university or college. These institutions not only foster innovation, they also work at the shop-floor level to improve business operations and processes.
3. Develop an inventory of targeted firms within the innovation value chain in Vaughan, building an understanding of who the key public and private sector players are, which support resources are present or missing, and what kinds of investment attraction targets exist to fill gaps or localize the supply chain. With this insight, the Department can focus on a more targeted attraction strategy, avoiding duplication with other groups who have associated interests.
4. Undertake sector-specific marketing initiatives in Innovative Research, Development and Design; Advanced Goods Production and Movement; and Creative / Cultural Industries. Seek opportunities to partner with key stakeholders such as the Vaughan Chamber of Commerce, Italian Chamber of Commerce, Canada China Business Council, and Vaughan Chinese Business Association to develop connections which advance these sectors.
5. Create a complete marketing plan for the Vaughan Metropolitan Centre that outlines key messages, target audiences and tactics.

These objectives begin in 2012 and will continue to grow in value and return on investment over the next ten years. These highlighted objectives will continue to complement the day-to-day activities that sustain Economic Development such as corporate calling, site selection and broker assistance and local business expansion.

Relationship to Vaughan Vision 2020 / Strategic Plan

This report is consistent with the priorities previously set by Council. Specifically, this report assists in fulfilling Vaughan Vision 2020 Goal: Manage Growth and Economic Well-being.

Regional Implications

The Economic Development Department continues to work in collaboration with York Region's Economic Strategy & Tourism Department, Greater Toronto Marketing Alliance, Toronto Regional Research Alliance, Vaughan Chamber of Commerce, Vaughan Chinese Business Association and the Ministry of Economic Development and Innovation to name a few of the key partners and stakeholders. Copies of all of the City's Economic Development materials have been distributed to the stakeholders throughout the year. In addition, as the Region moves forward with a new Economic Action Plan, the City's goals will be considered and highlighted in their work.

CITY OF VAUGHAN

EXTRACT FROM COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 29, 2011

Item 1, Priorities Report No. 7 – Page 10

Conclusion

The Strategy, “*Building a Gateway to Tomorrow’s Economy*” and the associated goals and objectives bring a focus to the economic development of the city. Where numerous opportunities exist for Vaughan over the next 10 years, the Strategy provides the framework to capitalize on the highest-value opportunities.

Meeting the needs of local businesses remains a steadfast role for the Economic Development Department. Therefore, beyond attracting investment in the traditional manufacturing sectors, the Department is now focused on its new convergent sectors: Creative/Cultural Industries; Advanced Goods Production and Movement; and Innovative Research, Development and Design. These new sectors present a challenging learning curve, in understanding what types of companies and industries they include, their drivers and what activates them. The Economic Development Department has begun work in the Creative/Cultural Sector, with initial projects such as business support services and workshops for the Arts Sector. However, as plans develop for the VMC, Staff will be further advancing work on placemaking and community building as means of attracting those talented workers, and thus the creative sector employers looking to make an impact on the area when the Subway begins operation in 2015.

With the completion of the Kleinburg Economic Development Strategy, work has begun with the Kleinburg Business Improvement Area association to support and encourage revitalization in our historic cores. Our Tourism sector, having the marketing support of RTO 6, is seeing a level of advertising support not previously available, from radio ads to print and television spots. Our focus on Tourism product development and enrichment will help to create a destination that remains a visitors’ draw.

From the local area to the international marketplace, geo-political borders have become less important in a global economy. Companies are being driven to be more innovative, more niche oriented and ever more reliant on developing relationships outside of the Greater Toronto Area to open doors. Connections with external agencies such as international chambers, business aggregators, consulates and federal/provincial economic development agencies are required to facilitate introductions and maintain connections for an ongoing presence in foreign markets. Economic Development will continue to work with cities around the globe that will open new markets for Vaughan/ Canadian-made products.

Ensuring that key development zones such as the Vaughan Metropolitan Centre and Vaughan Enterprise Zone reach their potential as gateways for investments requires that we develop partnerships with landowners, stakeholders and those in the brokerage industry to raise the profile of these areas. The Department will continue to work on marketing and branding initiatives to ensure that our message is relevant, timely and effective in driving investment into the City. We will continue to look for and implement best practices in delivering best-of-class economic development.

As there is no consensus definition for economic development, there is no single strategy, policy, or program for achieving success. The unique mix of geographic, political, economic, and social attributes of Vaughan presents a distinctive set of challenges and opportunities, and different approaches to economic development are continually being sought.

Vaughan’s Economic Development Strategy provides a compass for the City and its private, non-profit, and public sector partners to move towards enhanced employment, investment, and quality of life in the city. It is not a statutory document, but rather a starting point for the City’s economic development work providing the ability to address unforeseen challenges with adaptable strategies.

CITY OF VAUGHAN

EXTRACT FROM COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 29, 2011

Item 1, Priorities Report No. 7 – Page 11

Attachments

N/A

Report prepared by:

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Tim Simmonds, Director of Economic Development

CITY OF VAUGHAN

EXTRACT FROM COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 29, 2011

Item 2, Report No. 7, of the Priorities and Key Initiatives Committee, which was adopted without amendment by the Council of the City of Vaughan on November 29, 2011.

2 GREEN DIRECTIONS VAUGHAN EDUCATION STRATEGIES

The Priorities and Key Initiatives Committee recommends:

- 1) That the recommendation contained in the following report of the City Manager and the Manager of Environmental Sustainability, dated November 14, 2011, be approved; and
- 2) That staff prepare a report for a Committee of the Whole (Working Session) meeting early in 2012, on options for dealing with the general issue of litter (including specific reference to Canada Post), as well as a historical review of all City actions undertaken to date on this issue.

Recommendation

The City Manager and the Manager of Environmental Sustainability in consultation with the Senior Management Team recommends that:

1. That the update on the Green Directions Vaughan Employee Education Strategy be received; and,
2. That staff initiate the implementation of the external environmental education strategy targeted at businesses and citizens as set out in Attachment 2.

Contribution to Sustainability

This report is consistent with the priorities previously set by Council in *Green Directions Vaughan*, the Community Sustainability and Environmental Master Plan:

- Action 5.1.5 provides that the City, “develop an environmental education strategy to familiarize staff with the provisions of *Green Directions Vaughan* expanding into an on-going education program”.
- Action 5.1.7 provides that the City “develop an environmental education strategy for businesses and citizens” which will highlight the steps that citizens and businesses can take to create a more sustainable Vaughan.

Economic Impact

Existing resources will be used to deliver the core components of the on-going environmental/sustainability staff education program as well as the *Green Directions Vaughan* Business Education Strategy and Citizen Education Strategy. Should components of these programs and/or strategies require funding above and beyond existing budgets; these components will proceed only when additional, external funding resources have been secured. In addition, partnerships with external organizations will be pursued wherever practical to help off-set the costs of delivery.

CITY OF VAUGHAN

EXTRACT FROM COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 29, 2011

Item 2, Priorities Report No. 7 – Page 2

Communications Plan

A communications plan is not required at this time. It will evolve with the development of each of the initiatives within the strategies targeted at staff, residents and businesses. Implementation progress on the staff environmental education program and the environmental education strategy for businesses and citizens will be tracked and reported on along with other actions specified within *Green Directions Vaughan*, our Community Sustainability and Environmental Master Plan, on an annual basis

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide the Priorities and Key Initiatives Committee with a status update on the environmental education strategies that target employees and another focusing on businesses and citizens and receive direction to continue to proceed.

Background - Analysis and Options

Employee Education Strategy

In April 2009, Council approved *Green Directions Vaughan*, the City's first Community Sustainability and Environmental Master Plan. On December 14, 2009 the Environment Committee considered a report which provided an implementation update on *Green Directions* and the outlook for 2010. The Environment Committee adopted the following recommendation: "That staff provide an internal cultural plan in anticipation of the move to City Hall". Discussion surrounding this item included the role of culture change in achieving a more sustainable city, how staff education can play an important role in this process and the opportunity that the opening of the new Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Gold City Hall presented an educational opportunity both as an individual initiative and as the starting point for a broader educational plan. Following the March 9, 2010 update on the employee education strategy, the Environment Committee directed staff "to proceed with the development of a comprehensive environmental/sustainability education strategy to familiarize staff in all facilities with the policies of *Green Directions*, which can be expanded into an on-going program.

Extensive research of best practices of public and private organizations delivering environmental education programs to employees as well as an on-line staff survey provided good baseline information for development of the strategy. In addition, an Employee Environmental Education Internal Advisory Team, consisting of ten employees from various City departments, met regularly over 2010-11 to develop a series of programs and campaigns to help create awareness of key issues and integrate environmental sustainability into the core culture of City staff.

On January 31, 2011, a report to the Priorities and Key Initiatives Committee outlined the components of an Employee Environmental Education strategy including the thirteen components and campaigns/programs. A formal launch and open house was held on April 8 in the City Hall atrium. The open house featured a poster display of all the initiatives that would fall under the *Green Directions Vaughan*-Employee Education Strategy. A dozen, short introductory presentations were also made to outside staff and Vaughan Public Library staff over the first four months of 2011.

The Employee Education Strategy consists of four existing initiatives and nine new initiatives. Some of the existing initiatives such as the Employee Trip Reduction Program and the Lunch 'n' Learn series, have multiple campaigns within the initiative. Other existing initiatives such as Earth Hour and the 20 minute makeover are shorter campaigns that are delivered at specific times of the year annually.

CITY OF VAUGHAN

EXTRACT FROM COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 29, 2011

Item 2, Priorities Report No. 7 – Page 3

As for the nine new initiatives, LEEDing by example and the new normal fact sheet are targeted towards employees moving into the new City Hall. Both initiatives have enhanced employee knowledge about the green attributes of the building and how staff can contribute to a positive environmental impact within the building. The e-Newsletter and the Vaughan On-line *Green Directions*-Employee Education web page provide information on key initiatives and success stories; resources that help build the foundation for a strong environmental ethic among employees. "Caught Green Handed" is a new employee recognition program linked with the "We are Vaughan" program. Vaughan Unplugged is a one week, inter-departmental, energy reduction, challenge event. The final initiatives involve developing a reporting mechanism to highlight key metrics and incorporating environmental sustainability into the future revision of the Employee Handbook. Attachment 1 provides an update on the programs and campaigns and relevant metrics.

The City of Vaughan participated in The Natural Step Canada project "Embedding Sustainability in the Core Culture of Municipal Organizations" over the third quarter of 2011. The project followed up the cutting edge report in 2010 on Embedding Sustainability in Organizational Culture by the Network for Business Sustainability. The report presents a portfolio of practices gleaned from a systematic review of the entire body of research on sustainability and organizational culture. Based on the portfolio approach to embedding sustainability into organizational culture, 10 municipalities including the City of Vaughan, provided comment on whether the approach was relevant to them, what they would adjust, and what their best practices and challenges were. This project presents a snapshot of examples of the best of what is happening right now in Canadian municipal organizations to build and nurture cultures of sustainability. These examples are intended to inspire ideas and provide input to those leading culture change initiatives in the municipal context. Early results from the project were presented by The Natural Step Canada at the Eco-City World Summit in Montreal in August 2011.

The Embedding Sustainability in the Core Culture of Municipal Organizations project report will be of great benefit to the Environmental Sustainability Employee Engagement Internal Advisory Team. This team, formerly known as the Employee Environmental Education Internal Advisory Team, will meet quarterly to review and provide insights to the Environmental Sustainability Office on continual improvement opportunities for the employee environmental education program and environmental sustainability employee engagement practices.

Business and Citizen Environmental Education Strategy

In order to develop the business and citizen environmental education, consultations were held with a number of stakeholders. Internal stakeholders included Economic Development, Vaughan Small Business Enterprise Centre, Public Works-Solid Waste Management, Recreation and Culture and Parks Operations. External stakeholder's consultation included the Region of York Environmental Promotions Division, Vaughan Chamber of Commerce and Sustainable Vaughan.

To help scope the business component of the environmental education, a research project was conducted in the fourth quarter of 2010 by a volunteer student intern to identify areas of importance to small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) in Vaughan that will make concrete contributions to sustainability. The sustainability focus was on maintaining business growth and prosperity while addressing issues of waste management and recycling, water conservation, climate change, toxics reduction, and air quality. The research identified the primary motivations for SMEs to take environmental action, and their primary barriers to doing so. It also made recommendations for the content of the environmental education strategy based on these motivations and barriers. The recommendations covered issues such as training, recognition, mentoring, informational resources and incentives.

CITY OF VAUGHAN

EXTRACT FROM COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 29, 2011

Item 2, Priorities Report No. 7 – Page 4

The Green Directions Vaughan Business Education Strategy consists of five initiatives. Two of the proposed initiatives, the 20 minute makeover and Earth Hour, are existing initiatives that will be promoted more extensively to the business community. Both these initiatives are shorter campaigns that are delivered at specific times of the year annually.

As for the new initiatives, the Information Sharing project provides short, success stories of Vaughan businesses to generate awareness among peers. The Award/Recognition program with a connection to the Vaughan Chamber of Commerce awards will recognize businesses that are leading efforts to minimize their environmental footprint. The Business Education webpage, which will be a dedicated site on our external Environment webpage, will be based on the pillars of outreach/news, tools and resources.

The Green Directions Vaughan Citizen Education Strategy consists of nine initiatives. Two of the proposed initiatives, the 20 minute makeover and Earth Hour, are existing initiatives that will be continued. Another two proposed initiatives, the Citizen Education web page and the City Hall LEED Gold promotion, build on the work that has been initiated previously. The existing external web page work will be augmented with additional resources and tools to promote environmental sustainability. The interactive tool promoting the environmental features of City Hall will also be promoted to the public via the City of Vaughan website.

As for the new initiatives, the information sharing initiative proposes to use a variety of existing newsletters, newspapers and social media outlets to generate awareness and highlights on topical environmental sustainability issues. The Partners for a more Sustainable Vaughan initiative involves creating a registry of volunteers to participate in outreach events and activities that educate and inspire others to take action on key environmental issues. Both the Target-youth and Target-multi-cultural groups are specific engagement activities intended to build momentum towards environmental sustainability with key subsectors within the City of Vaughan. Finally, the 300,000 acts of green initiative is a web based challenge which encourages residents to commit to small behaviour changes that benefit the environment. Each commitment is tracked with the goal of achieving 300,000 over the course of a pre-established period of time.

Attachment 2 highlights the elements of both the *Green Directions Vaughan* Business Education Strategy and Citizen Education Strategy.

Relationship to Vaughan Vision 2020/Strategic Plan

This report is consistent with the Vaughan Vision 20|20 strategic goal of providing service excellence to citizens and the strategic objective to lead and promote environmental sustainability. This report is consistent with the priorities previously set by Council and the necessary resources have been allocated and approved.

Regional Implications

N/A

Conclusion

Green Directions Vaughan has established that sustainability is a shared responsibility among government, our citizens and businesses. Education has long been recognized as a necessary means for advancing sustainability within a community with key concepts and actions. As the implementation of *Green Directions Vaughan* moves forward, education of employees, citizens and businesses will continue to be a priority. Continuing to implement the Employee Education program will help foster the transition to a corporate culture of sustainability. Many of the initiatives that encompass the Employee Education Strategy are at various stages of implementation with metrics being tracked.

CITY OF VAUGHAN

EXTRACT FROM COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 29, 2011

Item 2, Priorities Report No. 7 – Page 5

The Employee Education Strategy has set the foundation for the environmental education strategy for citizens and businesses. Some of the same elements have been incorporated in all three approaches. The Green Directions Vaughan Business Education Strategy and the Citizen Education Strategy, consisting of five and nine initiatives respectively, are well positioned to provide information for individuals to learn from and take action on as well as challenge individuals to establish new behaviours.

It is recommended that staff continue with the implementation of the environmental education program for employees and proceed with initiating the implementation of the environmental education strategy targeted at businesses and citizens as set out in this report.

Attachments

1. *Green Directions Vaughan*- Employee Education program metrics
2. *Green Directions Vaughan*- Business Education Strategy and Citizen Education Strategy.

Report prepared by:

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Manager of Environmental Sustainability

(A copy of the attachments referred to in the foregoing have been forwarded to each Member of Council and a copy thereof is also on file in the office of the City Clerk.)

CITY OF VAUGHAN

EXTRACT FROM COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 29, 2011

Item 3, Report No. 7, of the Priorities and Key Initiatives Committee, which was adopted without amendment by the Council of the City of Vaughan on November 29, 2011.

3. CONSIDERATION OF AD HOC COMMITTEE REPORTS

The Priorities and Key Initiatives Committee recommends:

That the Vaughan Metropolitan Centre Sub-Committee, Report No. 1, be received.