

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE (WORKING SESSION) – SEPTEMBER 14, 2004

CITIZEN CARE CENTRE REPORT TO COUNCIL

Recommendation

The Commissioner of Economic/Technology Development and Communications, in consultation with the Manager of the Citizen Care Centre, recommends:

That the status report on the Citizen Care Centre, in the form of a PowerPoint presentation, be received. (Copies of the presentation will be distributed at the meeting.)

Purpose

To introduce this project's consultants, provide an update on the Citizen Care Centre's progress, and receive input from members of Council.

Background – Analysis and Options

In 2003, Council established the City's strategic direction through Vaughan Vision 2007, which envisions the City of Vaughan as a "model community that places citizens first through service excellence". As part of the rolling out of Vaughan Vision 2007, a cross-departmental staff work group analyzed the methods by which Vaughan citizens interact with the City. The goal was to identify opportunities to improve the quality of citizen interactions. Most communication between citizens and City staff are conducted over the telephone. A review of the quality of telephone interactions revealed that the City's current call-taking practices do not align well with the customer-service principles of Vaughan Vision.

Based on the experience of a number of other municipalities in Canada and the U.S., customer service centres have proven to be an effective means to increasing service levels, citizen satisfaction, public perception, and service delivery efficiency. In March 2004, City of Vaughan Council approved the development of a general inquiry citizen care centre to effectively service citizens, champion citizen issues, and expedite service delivery to citizens. City staff is now in the process of developing the strategy and planning the implementation of the centre for a February 2005 launch.

Through an extensive RFP process, Graycom Analysis was hired to assist the City with this project. Graycom is an independent telecommunications-consulting firm with 18 years experience in the public sector. The Graycom consulting team is assisting the City to identify and consider all issues pertinent to the development of an effective and efficient centre.

As an important first step, the team has spoken with a cross-section of departmental staff to identify key issues and concerns and to hear their ideas for making the centre a stronghold of information and advocacy for the citizens of Vaughan. Presentations have already been made to the Agenda Review Committee, SMT, and the City Manager.

As part of the Citizen Care Centre strategy, the following steps will be undertaken:

- a) Human resources (job descriptions), space planning and budget issues identified in September, and plans in place to address those issues.
- b) Alterations to the identified floor space completed by December, including workstation furniture, lighting, and other adjustments as may be required.

- c) Acquisition of telephony systems, desktop computers, and the first phase of computer applications installed by December.
- d) All staffing issues, coordinated by the Human Resources department in consultation with the Manager of the centre, will be completed by December, with the objective to have staff begin training and start their new assignment effective early in January 2005.
- e) Internal communications plans will be completed and implemented in time for the February, 2005 launch date.
- f) The public launch date will be determined at a later date and is dependent upon a number of factors, including the resolution of the various issues that may impact the schedule, and the accomplishment of the milestones listed above.

Relationship to Vaughan Vision 2007

This report is consistent with the priorities previously set by Council in Vaughan Vision 2007:

- 1.0 Service Delivery Excellence
- 6.0 Communications and Public Relations
 - 6.4 Strengthen Corporate Image and Identity
- 7.0 Technology and Innovation

Conclusion

Guidance is sought from Council with respect to the level of service that the centre will provide. A series of further departmental workshops will occur within the next few weeks and a draft strategy will be presented at a future Working Session.

Attachments

None

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Respectfully submitted by,

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