

## **COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MARCH 22, 2004**

### **SANTAFEST IN MAPLE**

#### **Recommendation**

The Commissioner of Economic/Technology Development and Communications, in consultation with the Director of Corporate Communications, recommends that:

- 1) The level of support provided by the City of Vaughan for the "SantaFest in Maple" parade be maintained at 2003 levels in order to ensure that this successful event remains community-based and community organized.

#### **Purpose**

The purpose of this report is to document the success of the SantaFest in Maple parade as a community based and organized event and demonstrate that this success could be undermined if the City of Vaughan assumes a more active role and reorganizes this "Community Event" as a "City Event" (as defined in "Corporate Protocols and Policies For Events" approved by Council, December 15, 2003).

#### **Background - Analysis and Options**

On August 25, 2003, Council amended Item 7, Committee of the Whole Report No. 57 as follows: "By directing that staff bring forward a report in the new year addressing the feasibility of having a City of Vaughan Santa Claus Parade."

Corporate Communications was directed to review the planning and staging of the "SantaFest in Maple" event for the purpose of evaluating opportunities to restructure this Community Event as a City Event.

The mandate of the Corporate Communications Department in organizing City events is to engage the entire community in city-wide activities in order to foster civic pride and community spirit.

The mission of SantaFest in Maple is "to promote community spirit, civic pride and foster partnership between businesses and the community in the celebration of the Christmas Holiday Season."

This goal is completely consistent with that of City-organized events.

SantaFest in Maple is a highly successful event that is community presented and hosted by community volunteers. SantaFest engages the participation, commitment and support of more than 1,500 individuals, merchants, and organizations, including local government. In 2003, the parade attracted more than 30,000 spectators and more than 2,000 children visited Santa at The Sports Village.

It is a reasonable conclusion that SantaFest is successful because it is a Community Event. Any attempt to reorganize it as a City Event could erode community support, as has been the case in at least one other municipality (see attachment, "Canada Day clash between city, volunteers").

In addition, the resources required to stage SantaFest as a City Event far exceed the staff resources currently available. For the 2003 event, City staff only attended two pre-event meetings and the event itself. The only expenses incurred by the City cover support services, i.e. road closures; advertising and media support.

The SantaFest Executive Committee consists of a Chair, two Vice Chairs, Secretary and Treasurer. Under these positions are 14 additional Support, Parade and Santa's Village committees that include the Technical, Admin Support, Fundraising and Sponsorship, Promotions, Volunteer, Awards Recognition, Hospitality, Public Works, Parade Route, Civic Centre, Parade Registration, Santa Float, and Merchandising committees (see attachment on Committee structure).

These committees meet on a monthly basis beginning in January of each year, with the exception of July and August, and twice a month beginning in September. Each sub-committee meets in addition to these executive meetings. There are also orientation sessions held before the parade each year.

The majority of committee members are working individuals. They all offer their time freely after their regular workday and on weekends throughout the year to ensure a successful event. It is estimated that committee members, volunteers and participants spend more than 10,000 hours to plan and stage the event.

### **Conclusion**

The organizers and volunteers of SantaFest in Maple are to be commended for their commitment and dedication in making an important contribution to the community. It is recommended that the City continue its support of this highly successful Community Event, as in past years.

### **Report prepared by:**

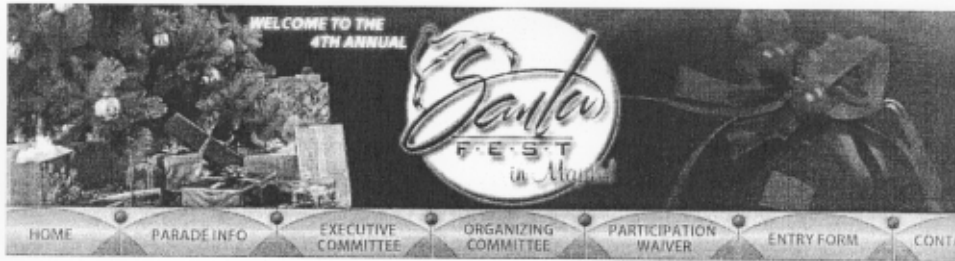
Madeline Zito, Director of Corporate Communications

### **Attachments:**

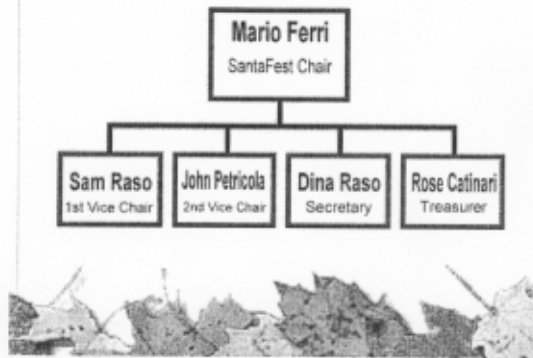
1. SantaFest organizational chart (2 pages)
2. News clipping: "Canada Day clash between city, volunteers" The East York Riverdale Mirror

Respectfully submitted,

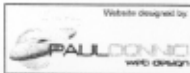
Frank Miele  
Commissioner of Economic/Technology Development and Communications



### 2003 SantaFest Executive Committee



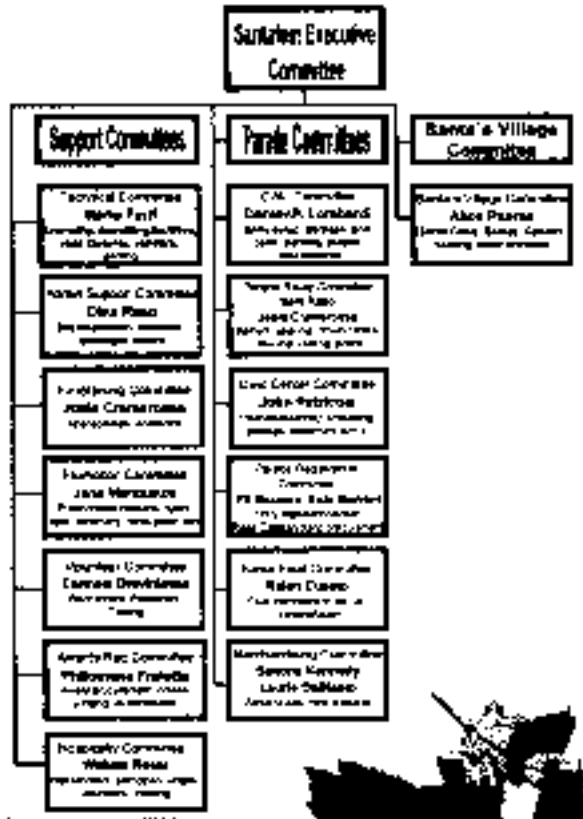
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### 2003 SantaFeet Organizing Committee Structure



10/19/02

