

CANADA POST COMMUNITY SUPERMAILBOXES

Recommendation

The Commissioner of Engineering and Public Works in consultation with the Commissioner of Community Services recommends:

1. That this report be received;
2. That Canada Post be requested to take action with its contractors to ensure that super mailbox sites are regularly maintained to keep them clean and free from debris and litter; and
3. That the following recommendation of the Intergovernmental Relations Committee of April 7, 2005 be approved:

That Council approach the local MP's to inform them of the issues relating to the litter at the Canada Post Community Supermailboxes and ask that action be taken by Canada Post to conform to our Environmental Guidelines.

Purpose

At its meeting of April 7, 2005, the Intergovernmental Relations Committee requested this report be forwarded to the Committee of the Whole.

Background - Analysis and Options

At its meeting of March 10, 2005, the Intergovernmental Relations Committee requested:

“That Engineering staff attend the next Intergovernmental Relations Committee meeting and report to the committee the Site Plan Process with respect to Canada Post Super-Mailboxes.”

Process and Criteria in Locating Canada Post Community Mailboxes

Although door-to-door delivery still exists, centralized mail delivery through Community Mailboxes is utilized in all new residential and commercial developments in Canada. Canada Post has many criteria for locating the Community Mailboxes within a subdivision, including the size of the development and the number of homes each centralized mailbox will serve. The Community Mailboxes are typically located in convenient central locations close to individual residences, bearing in mind the local immediate impacts on the adjacent property homeowner.

It is typical that at the commencement of the subdivision detailed design stage, the Engineering Consultant will coordinate with Canada Post in locating the Community Mailboxes throughout the subdivision. The locations of the Community Mailboxes will be constrained by the above ground municipal services (i.e., street furniture such as utility switch-gears, etc.) and by the proximity of the mailboxes to certain arterial streets and community land uses such as parks. City staff will also review the proposed locations of the mailboxes in accordance with the following guidelines:

1. The mailboxes should not be located in front of park blocks;
2. The mailboxes should not be located in front of roadway lay-bys;
3. It is preferred that the mailboxes be along local streets where traffic is not a major issue; and

4. It is preferred that the mailboxes be located along flankage lots behind privacy fences.

Community Mailbox locations are shown on the Utility Co-ordination Drawing for each subdivision which form a part of the Construction Drawings for the subdivision. Initially, Canada Post places temporary mailboxes following sufficient occupancies in the development, which are later replaced by the Community Mailboxes.

Boulevard Maintenance around Community Mailboxes

In response to numerous complaints of litter around Community Mailboxes, the Parks Department contacted Canada Post in January 2004. At that time, Canada Post explained that they would, on request, place a letter in each box at each location where litter was a problem asking people not to litter and to give them the option through their "Consumer Choice" program to ask that no junk mail be delivered. They would not, however, clean up discarded junk mail nor would they place and clean litter bins.

It was explained to Canada Post that the design of the boxes with a 3-4 cm gap between each one making them an ideal slot for people to stuff unwanted junk mail. It was suggested that all of these gaps be closed. Canada Post has not acted on that suggestion.

Canada Post has over 1,144 community mailboxes in Vaughan. It would be a very expensive undertaking for the City to place and collect litter bins near all of these boxes. Litter bins at mailboxes would not be acceptable to local retailers who pay to have flyers delivered only to have them thrown in bins placed by the municipality.

Canada Post has a contractor in winter to remove snow from the front of Super Mail boxes. They do not, however, remove snow from around the box. Vaughan is often called by residents to clean snow off the boulevard at the rear of the super mailboxes so that residents can park their cars near the box and access it from the road side.

Conclusion

As indicated in this report, the number and locations for Community Mailboxes are determined by Canada Post in accordance with City Criteria. Installation is carried out through subdivision development.

Although the Community Mailboxes are located primarily on City boulevards, the City does not have the resources necessary for debris and litter pick up in the area of the mailboxes. Canada Post should be requested to ensure that its contractor perform the required services on a regular and frequent basis.

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Respectfully submitted,

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