

## **COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE - OCTOBER 1, 2007**

### **CHARACTER COMMUNITY WEEK – OCTOBER 15 - 20, 2007**

#### **Recommendation**

The City Manager in consultation with the Senior Management Team and the Character Community Working Committee recommends:

1. That the initiatives planned for Character Community Week be approved; and
2. That the City of Vaughan continues to develop public education and awareness initiatives in 2008 to support the Character Community Program.

#### **Economic impact**

No economic impact. Any future financial impact will be identified as part of the 2008 Operating Budget.

#### **Communications Plan**

A communication plan will create awareness about Character Community Week and will include but not be limited to the preparation of a news release, information in various City publications, the City's Website and advertisements in local newspapers.

#### **Purpose**

The purpose of this report is to outline the City of Vaughan initiatives to support Character Community Week from October 15 to 20, 2007.

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

Council at its meeting of June 18, 2007 requested staff to bring forward a report with respect to the City's participation in Character Community Week which is being held from October 15 to 20, 2007.

A Character Community Working Committee with representation from Council (Mayor Linda Jackson, Regional Councillor Joyce Frustaglio, and Councillor Sandra Yeung Racco) and staff was formed to develop initiatives to support the program.

The City of Vaughan is proud to be participating in the Character Community Program and is also a member of the York Character Community Council.

The mission of the Character Community Program is to work together to make Vaughan a Character Community by nurturing positive character attributes. The 11 Character Attributes are as follows: Optimism, Initiative, Perseverance, Respect, Responsibility, Honesty, Integrity, Compassion, Courage, Inclusiveness and Fairness.

A Character Community is one in which elected officials, community leaders in the education, business, faith community, law enforcement, media sectors and citizens-at-large recognize and promote the importance of good character.

In this collaboration everyone works together to ensure that families are strong, homes and streets are safe, education is effective, business is productive, neighbours care about one another and citizens are free to make wise choices for their lives and families.

In short, a Character Community has leaders who are models of the character attributes they advocate for their citizens.

## **Character Community Week Initiatives**

As part of the celebrations, a kick-off presentation is planned for the Committee of the Whole meeting of October 15, 2007 to officially draw attention to Character Community Week. Student and teacher representatives from both the public and separate school boards have been invited to share and present Character Community initiatives that are underway at their local school.

During Character Community Week members of City Council will be invited to various schools throughout the City to promote the Character Community Program and discuss with students the role municipal government plays in fostering the program and its 11 Character Attributes.

Each spring the Vaughan Chamber of Commerce hosts the Vaughan Business Achievement Awards. Part of the ceremony includes the City of Vaughan's commitment in recognizing the efforts of the business community through the Mayor's Award. The award criteria will promote the Character Community attributes and the importance of character in the business community.

Once again the Vaughan Business Enterprise Centre (VBEC) will be hosting the Vaughan Business Expo on Thursday November 1<sup>st</sup> at the Riviera Parque (2800 Highway 7 West). Information about the Vaughan Character Community Program will be on display to create awareness.

The City currently has a number of initiatives such as the Civic Hero Award and the Vaughan Chamber of Commerce Mayor's Award that incorporate attributes of the Character Community Program. Further branding to more closely align the program with the awards will be incorporated.

The City of Vaughan Human Resources department is in the process of developing an employee recognition program within which the Character Community attributes will be incorporated. During Character Community Week the department also plans to offer Lunch and Learn sessions for employees with guest speakers on hand to present informative and motivational presentations on the various Character Community themes.

### *Communication and Public Awareness*

Corporate Communications will produce a marketing communications plan to promote Character Community Week in Vaughan. The plan will promote the programs associated with this week both internally (to staff) and externally, through various communication vehicles including media coverage, website content, Citypage advertising, the Vibe, as well as generate publicity with feature stories in the local media on people with character.

## **Relationship to Vaughan Vision 2007**

This report is consistent with the priorities set forth in Vaughan Vision 2007, particularly A-2 promote health and wellness.

### **Regional implications**

No Regional implications.

## **Conclusion**

Council, at its meeting of June 18, 2007 requested staff to bring forward a report with respect to the City's participation in Character Community Week which is being held from October 15 to 20, 2007. A Committee with representation from Council and staff was created to establish a number of initiatives for Character Community Week. The program includes a series of public awareness and recognition initiatives to foster the importance of Vaughan as a Character Community.

**Attachments**

None

**Report Prepared By**

Diane LaPointe-Kay, Director, Recreation and Culture, ext. 8117

Respectfully submitted,

Michael DeAngelis  
City Manager