

## **COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE NOVEMBER 19, 2007**

### **CIVIC ELECTRONIC (DYNAMIC) SIGNS**

#### **Recommendation**

Councillor Alan Shefman recommends:

1. That staff conduct a study and report to Council on the logistics and costs of erecting a network of electronic (dynamic) information signs in the city,
2. That the study consider an initial five year plan and then an ongoing process, to erect these signs beginning with those to be located at all community centres and then, at other key locations as defined by the plan.
3. That the study include a review of possible options for these signs that would address:
  - a. The issue of aesthetics (design) – that these signs will be part of our urban design and need to not only convey the information, but also must add quality to our streetscapes;
  - b. The variety of available technology to control the messages placed on the signs – including the ability for all signs to be controlled at a central location, the readability of the messages and the possible safety issues associated with such signs.
4. That the study include a financial plan to fund this project beginning with the 2009 budget.
5. That consideration be given to establish a pilot project at one or more locations to test the utility of such a program prior to the full-blown implementation.

#### **Economic Impact**

The cost for the purchase and installation of the signs and in the future, the operation and maintenance costs. These costs will be provided as part of the study.

#### **Communication Plan**

A component of the implementation of this project will be to alert the citizens of the City of Vaughan of a new source of information for events taking place in the city. A communication plan would need to be developed if this project is approved.

#### **Background – Analysis and Options**

1. Without a doubt one of the greatest challenges that any governmental body has is to keep its citizens informed of current events and issues.
2. While the city provides information in a variety of forms, but primarily through the print media on our city pages, many residents miss information that may be important to them. Furthermore, too often information that the city feels is very important for residents to be made aware of is not communicated through traditional ways. Also, the costs for doing mail distributions of important information continues to increase, mitigating against this approach to communications except in extraordinary situations.
3. Too often the city is criticized when a resident finds out after a decision is made or an event held, even though notice had been given using traditional means.
4. Establishing permanent locations for sources of information on current events and issues will allow residents to develop a pattern of watchfulness that is not possible with other forms of communications,
5. The City has been making use of mobile signs to inform residents of events. Currently there are signs on the streets on such issues as the 2008 budget consultations, the Santa Claus Parade, Greening Vaughan, etc., etc. These signs add to the clutter on our streets and are disliked by many citizens

### **Purpose**

1. To develop new and enhanced methods to keep the residents of the City informed of current events and issues that are taking place.
2. To gather the necessary information to be able to make an informed decision regarding the implementation of a network of electronic information signs in the city.
3. To develop a network of electronic communications signs throughout the City of Vaughan at key locations to provide a new and dynamic method to keep residents of the city informed of events and issues.
4. To address the issue of the increasing clutter of mobile signs used by the City to inform residents of events and issues.

### **Relationship to Vaughan Vision**

1. Update the City communications strategy
2. Develop a new model for civic engagement and enhance our public consultation strategy
3. Plan and manage growth (vis-à-vis urban design)

### **Regional Implications**

none

### **Conclusion**

In order for the City to continue to expand its approaches to communication and engagement with its residents, new ideas need to be considered. This recommendation will provide Council with the information it will need to make an informed decision on whether the costs for establishing a network of electronic signage across the City is viable.

### **Attachments**

Photographs

### **Report prepared by:**

Debi Traub, Council Executive Assistant

Respectfully submitted,

Councillor Alan Shefman

THE BENJAMIN VAUGHAN COMPLEX

Westmount Collegiate Institute  
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City Play House  
1000 New Westminister Drive



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