

## **COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – JUNE 23, 2009**

### **PILOT PROJECT: SOLAR-POWERED FLASHING BEACON**

#### **Recommendation:**

Councillor Tony Carella recommends that the next flashing traffic beacon that the City of Vaughan installs be the subject of a pilot project to test the alternative supply of electricity by photovoltaic cell mounted above said beacon, and that staff report on the results of this pilot project twelve months following the start of the test period.

#### **Contribution to Sustainability**

Consistent with *Green Directions Vaughan*, this initiative will contribute to the reduction of our use of natural resources (via the burning of coal or natural gas to generate electricity) and minimize energy consumption.

#### **Economic Impact**

Minimal. Any added beacons (with or without photovoltaic cells) will be provided for in future budgets, as needed. The use of solar energy will result in a net reduction in the operational cost of electricity for such beacons.

#### **Communication Plan**

Corporate Communications shall issue a media release once the project is underway

#### **Purpose**

To demonstrate the feasibility of photovoltaic technology as a means of reducing electricity costs.

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

Photovoltaic technology is developing at lightning speed, and there are numerous opportunities to demonstrate the benefit of such technology in a variety of settings. For example, in many jurisdictions, emergency telephone systems that line major highways are now powered by photovoltaic cells.

Ontario's new *Green Energy Act* is expected to provide a substantial boost in interest across the province around the benefits of photovoltaic power generation, with the promise that thousands of homeowners will eventually adopt it as a way of not only reducing the amount of energy drawn from the province's electrical grid, but also as a way of producing on site electricity to be sold to the grid, thereby driving energy costs of a typical single family dwelling down by an estimated 66.6%.

#### **Relationship to Vaughan Vision 2020:**

This report is consistent with the priorities previously set by Council and the necessary resources have been allocated and approved.

#### **Regional Implications:**

None

#### **Attachment:**

None

**Conclusion:**

An opportunity presents itself to demonstrate how photovoltaic technology can reduce on-going electricity costs, an initiative consistent with the intent of the Province of Ontario's new Green Energy Act.

**Report prepared by:**

Councillor Tony Carella, FRSA

Respectfully submitted,

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Councillor - Ward 2