

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – FEBRUARY 2, 2010

PARKS DEVELOPMENT – SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVES

Recommendation

The Commissioner of Community Services, in consultation with the Director of Parks Development recommends:

- 1) That the presentation by the Parks Development Division titled "Parks Development - Sustainability Initiatives") be received; and,
- 2) That the attached report be received as information.

Contribution to Sustainability

The initiatives outlined in the presentation support the priorities previously set by Council in the Green Directions Vaughan, Community Sustainability Environmental Master Park Plan, specifically:

- Goal 3, Objective 3.1: To develop and sustain a network of sidewalks, paths and trails that supports all modes of non-vehicular transportation; and,
- Goal 1, Objective 1.3: To support enhanced standards of stormwater management at the City and work with others to care for Vaughan's watersheds; and,
- Goal 2, Objective 2.2: To develop Vaughan as a City with maximum green space and an urban form that supports our expected population growth.

Economic Impact

There is no economic impact associated with this report.

Communications Plan

Not Applicable.

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to advise Council of the status of the ongoing Parks Development sustainability initiatives specifically relating to the Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan (off-road systems) and key park/open space destinations that form the foundation of the network.

Background - Analysis and Options

Council approved the "Green Directions" Vaughan Community and Environmental Master Plan on April 14, 2009. Green Directions is a component of *Vaughan Tomorrow*, the City's comprehensive growth management plan. *Vaughan Tomorrow* is mandated by *Vaughan Vision 2020* in includes the preparation of a new official plan and a series of master plans that address the delivery of services and infrastructure.

The Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan was approved in principle by Council April 2, 2007. The recommendations and directions included in this plan will be embedded in the City-wide Transportation Master Plan that is a component of *Vaughan Tomorrow* and will shape policies respecting the planning and implementation of the on and off road pedestrian and bicycle networks throughout the City of Vaughan.

The effective implementation of the Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan requires the participation of several Departments including, but not limited to: Parks Development, Development / Transportation Engineering, Recreation & Culture, Development Planning, Finance and Policy

Planning. The physical construction of the pedestrian and bicycle networks is shared jointly by the Parks Development Department and the Development / Transportation Engineering Department.

Parks Development is responsible for implementing the components of the master plan within publicly owned parks/open space systems including connections to major municipal destination nodes (ie: parks, open spaces, community centres, transit hubs, etc...). Since approval of the Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan in 2007, key sections of both the Bartley Smith Greenway and William Granger Greenway have been implemented. In total, approximately 4 km of new trail network has been added and 9.16 kms have been brought up to City standard. Parks Development is constructing the off road trail network in a phased and systemic approach. Annually, funding is requested as part of the capital budget cycle for both the Don River and Humber River trail systems. The source of funding for the off road trail network is Citywide Development Charges – Parks Development.

In 2009/2010 several new sections of trail will be added to the network. These include multi-use trails on the Don River system between Planchett Road and Jacob Keffer Parkway and full buildout of the trail network within the Maple Nature Reserve. As part of the Humber River system works include multi-use trails through Boyd Park to Rutherford Road, trail upgrades and replacement of a temporary bridge in Glassco Park North (north of Major Mackenzie Drive), multi-use trail connection under the Rutherford Road overpass at the East Humber River including two new pedestrian bridge crossings south of Rutherford Road within the William Granger Greenway.

One of the key functions of the network of the on-road routes and off road trails is to facilitate connectivity between destination points. Two such destination points that have recently been added to the City of Vaughan's parks and open space network are the Elder's Mills Nature Reserve and the Maple Nature Reserve. The Elder's Mills Nature Reserve, located at the north east corner of Rutherford Road and Highway #27, is a key destination point along the Humber River system. Parks Development completed the rehabilitation / restoration of this 62 acre site in collaboration with the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority in 2007.

The open space includes several viewing platforms, an accessible trail throughout the property with connections to the residential subdivision, a 42m long pedestrian bridge, woodland and riparian restoration areas and a built wetland complex. The Maple Nature Reserve, located east of Dufferin Street just north of Major Mackenzie, within the Don River watershed has had several kilometers of new trails constructed in 2009 and is home to the Quonset Hut site rehabilitation project. This joint partnership project with the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority, through the removal of the existing storage buildings, will create a core forest area in excess of 10 hectares (25 acres) which is of significant size given the urbanizing character of the area. The rehabilitation of the site within the Maple Nature Reserve acts to enhance the watershed's natural cover and restore aquatic habitat while integrating additional recreation and environmental education opportunities. This project will be completed in the summer of 2010.

The implementation of the off-road trail networks, park and open space destinations as part of the trail networks, ongoing development of the Parks Development's "Sustainability Toolkit", recycling initiatives, exploration of urban agriculture and the development of a Parkland Acquisition Strategy are several ways Parks Development are contributing to sustainability in the City of Vaughan.

Relationship to Vaughan Vision 2020 / Strategic Plan

In consideration of the strategic priorities related to Vaughan Vision 2020, the initiatives included in this report demonstrate:

- STRATEGIC GOAL:
Service Excellence - Providing service excellence to citizens.

- STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES:

Pursue Excellence in Service Delivery; Enhance and Ensure Community Safety, Health and Wellness - To deliver high quality services and to promote health and wellness through design and program; and, Lead and Promote environmental sustainability.

This report is consistent with the priorities previously set by Council.

Regional Implications

There are no regional implications as a result of this report.

Conclusion

This report is provided for the information of Council.

Attachments

Not Applicable.

Report prepared by:

Stephanie Snow, Construction Coordinator, Ext. 3210
Paul Gardner, Director of Parks Development, Ext. 3209

Respectfully submitted,

Marlon Kallideen
Commissioner of Community Services