

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE - MARCH 23, 2010

CITY OF VAUGHAN MARATHON

Recommendation

The Commissioner of Community Services, in consultation with the Director of Recreation and Culture, recommends:

- 1) That the following report on a potential marathon in Vaughan be received.

Contribution to Sustainability

This report is consistent with the priorities previously set by Council in the Green Directions, Vaughan, Community Sustainability Environmental Master Plan.

Economic Impact

There is no economic impact to this report.

Communications Plan

No communication plan is required at this time.

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with information on the possible move of one of Toronto's marathons to Vaughan and to inform Council of the discussions with the organizers of the Run for Vaughan regarding the addition of a marathon option for their annual fundraising event.

Background - Analysis and Options

In light of the debate taking place by Toronto City Council to restrict the number of Marathons to a single event, at the Council meeting of February 16, 2010 Council directed staff to provide a report to the Committee of the Whole meeting of March 23, 2010 as follows:

1. Staff investigate the possibility of inviting the organizers of the Toronto events to consider holding one of these marathons in the City of Vaughan in the future;
2. A report be prepared for Council's consideration on the feasibility of a marathon taking place in the City;
3. Part of the consideration in the staff report include how the current organizers for the Run for Vaughan be involved in the planning and sponsorship for such an event; and,
4. The fund raising focus for such an event be to support the development of a hospital in the City of Vaughan.

In early February 2010, Toronto City Council debated the problem of two big marathons paralyzing downtown streets every year. Residents were fed up at traffic headaches from two races three weeks apart. Organizers had to find a compromise or see Toronto cancel both and put out a tender for one big marathon. The city's works committee gave the Good Life Fitness Toronto Marathon and the Scotiabank Toronto Waterfront Marathon until February 22 to stagger their dates or potentially lose both races.

With the possibility of one of the marathons needing to be relocated it was suggested that one of be brought to Vaughan. Both organizers preferred to stay in Toronto but if one of them needed to go, staff would contact them and discuss the possibility of moving the race to Vaughan. It was noted that organizing a marathon run could cost about \$15,000 in staff time.

On February 19 Toronto announced that the Good Life Fitness Toronto Marathon has agreed to move to May starting in 2011 and the Scotiabank Marathon will remain a September race. This solution would alleviate the problem of two marathons scheduled so close together creating traffic chaos twice in a matter of a few weeks. Toronto agreed to the proposal and both races will be staying in Toronto and there is no longer an opportunity for a marathon to move to Vaughan.

Run for Vaughan

The Run for Vaughan is a fundraising event in support of the development of the City of Vaughan's first hospital. The annual Run for Vaughan makes important contributions to the community by raising money to support the Vaughan's Healthcare Foundation Inc. The first Run for Vaughan was held in 2003 and so far over \$150,000 has been raised and donated to the Vaughan Healthcare Foundation. The Run for Vaughan model advocates that strong communities are built through partnerships, teamwork and community spirit and is a valuable example of community engagement.

The Run for Vaughan includes a 3k walk and 3k and 10k runs. Staff have had discussions with Mr. Asif Khan, one of the Run for Vaughan organizers, regarding the possible addition of a full scale marathon option and Mr. Khan confirmed their interest in this addition in the future, possibly as early as 2011. At the Committee of the Whole meeting of March 23rd, 2010, Mr. Khan will be making a deputation to request endorsement of the 2010 Run for Vaughan and to inform Council of their interest in reviewing the possibility of adding a marathon in the future. As part of their review, they will assess any resource requirements including assistance from the City such as Services-in-Kind and promoting the event. With their experience in organizing running events and their mandate to collaborate with and actively engage citizens they are the ideal community partner to launch a marathon in Vaughan.

Relationship to Vaughan Vision 2020/Strategic Plan

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

Regional Implications

None.

Conclusion

City of Toronto Council approved a plan to change the timing of one of Toronto's two annual marathon runs so there is no longer an opportunity to bring one to Vaughan.

The Run for Vaughan organizers have an established model for community engagement and have been organizing running events in Vaughan since 2003. The primary focus of the annual event is to raise money in support of the Vaughan's Healthcare Foundation Inc. and so far they have donated over \$150,000 towards this cause. With their experience in organizing running events and their mandate to collaborate with and actively engage citizens they are the ideal community partner to launch a marathon in Vaughan.

Attachments

None.

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Respectfully submitted,

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