

CITY OF VAUGHAN

**EXTRACT FROM COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 26, 2007**

Item 1, Report No. 7, of the Committee of the Whole (Working Session), which was adopted without amendment by the Council of the City of Vaughan on February 26, 2007.

**1** **PROPOSED SENIORS HOUSING INITIATIVE  
ON THE VAUGHAN CIVIC CENTRE CAMPUS**

**The Committee of the Whole (Working Session) recommends that the following report of the Commissioner of Community Services, dated February 13, 2007, be received:**

**Recommendation**

The Commissioner of Community Services, in consultation with the Commissioner of Finance and Corporate Services and the Director of Legal Services recommends:

That Council provide direction.

**Economic Impact**

There is no economic impact as a result of this report.

**Purpose**

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with information and obtain direction based on the options outlined in this report.

**Background**

Detailed below is a chronology of events that provides Council with information.

From 1981 to 1999, City staff was responsible for the management of Maple Manor under the auspices of the City of Vaughan Non Profit Housing Corporation (CVNPHC).

Since June 1<sup>st</sup>, 1999, the Region of York Housing Corporation was responsible for Maple Manor through a management agreement. This management agreement was renewed on June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2002 to May 31<sup>st</sup>, 2003.

On April 14, 2003, Vaughan Council passed a resolution selecting the City's current Civic Centre site, as 2141 Major Mackenzie Drive in Maple, as the location for Vaughan's new Civic Centre.

On May 12, 2003, Council directed that the City of Vaughan undertake a competition to select the designs for the new City Hall building and a master plan for the entire Civic Centre site, including the municipal park to the south.

On July 14<sup>th</sup>, 2003, the Regional staff advised that they thought it not appropriate for them to be both the service manager for the social housing program and a provider of management services to a housing provider. They gave notice of termination of property management services to the City of Vaughan Non Profit Housing Corporation (CVNPHC) effective September 30, 2003.

On July 23, 2003, a public meeting was held to obtain input on the design of the Civic Centre campus and the new City Hall Building.

Further to the August 2, 2003 meeting of the CVNPHC on September 10, 2003, the Board of Directors and City staff met with the Regional Chair and staff to discuss the possibility of both parties working jointly on a proposal regarding the provision of new seniors housing on the Civic

## CITY OF VAUGHAN

### EXTRACT FROM COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 26, 2007

#### Item 1, CW(W)S Report No. 7 – Page 2

Centre lands. It was determined that a report be written on behalf of the CVNPHC to City of Vaughan Council to secure the approvals necessary to proceed with this initiative. The Region of York agreed to continue management services.

On Monday September 22, 2003, Council directed that staff formally pursue the development of a new seniors housing initiative on the current Civic Centre site, as a component of the new City Hall project. The Legal Department was requested to assist the review of the mortgage provisions and a working committee was established with representatives from the Board of Directors of the City of Vaughan Non Profit Housing Corporation, Community Services, Legal and Finance staff to devise a legal and financial strategy to support the proposed new seniors development. In addition, funds were requested in the Commissioner of Community Services budget to provide the necessary staff resources to commence this work.

On October 27, 2003 a public meeting was held to introduce the public to the four Architectural Teams that had been chosen. The public were updated on the progress of the competition and provided input into the design of the Civic Centre Site and the New City Hall, directly to the competing architects, prior to the preparation of their designs. Notices of this meeting were delivered to the residents of the Maple Manor.

On May 31<sup>st</sup>, 2004, the CVNPHC were advised that Regional staff would be giving notice of termination of management services and that termination would be effective in 120 days allowing time for the Non Profit to work toward options. The CVNPHC directed staff to send a letter to the Shareholder (City of Vaughan Council) requesting that they submit a request to the Region of York Housing and Residential Services Department to continue to provide management services for Maple Manor until the new housing project is in place. The CVNPHC also requested that staff file a formal application with the Region of York for funding of a new seniors housing initiative on the Civic Centre site and that staff to schedule a meeting with the Regional Chair and staff to discuss both issues.

On June 8, 2004, a meeting was held with some members of Council, the CVNPHC, City staff, the Regional Chair and staff. Regional staff stated that they would like to conclude the contract for management services of Maple Manor as soon as possible realizing that the Board would need to determine management by external property management firms or management by the City staff. Regional staff also advised that the current management fee provided was not sufficient to cover the costs incurred by the Regional staff to provide management services.

On Monday June 14, 2004, Council resolved as Shareholder of the City of Vaughan Non Profit Housing Corporation for staff to submit a request to the Region of York, Housing and Residential Services Department to continue to provide management services for Maple Manor until the new housing project is in place. Council as Shareholder also directed staff to file a formal application with the Region of York for funding of a new seniors housing initiative on the Civic Centre site, as the Region of York is the Service Manager responsible for delivering the current federal/provincial-housing program.

On June 29, 2004, the CVNPHC confirmed the direction given by City of Vaughan Council on September 27, 2003 to City staff and in turn directed staff to contact the Commissioner of Legal and Administrative Services and the Commissioner of Finance and Corporate Services to appoint a staff member to be a member of this Working Committee with the first meeting to be held at the City of Vaughan on June 29<sup>th</sup>, 2004 commencing at 4:30 p.m.

On September 14, 2004, the CVNPHC directed staff to set up a future meeting with the Shareholder (City of Vaughan Council) to discuss the future role of the City of Vaughan Non Profit Housing Corporation. Staff was also directed to begin preparation of a Request for Proposal for Management Services to be discussed at the next meeting of the Board.

## CITY OF VAUGHAN

### EXTRACT FROM COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 26, 2007

#### Item 1, CW(WS) Report No. 7 – Page 3

On November 5, 2004, residents of Maple Manor were advised that the Region of York staff would be removing its property management services from Maple Manor and that staff had issued a RFP for Property Management Services for Maple Manor.

On December 7, 2004, the CVNPHC was provided with results of the Proposal No. RFP04-214, Property Management Services for Maple Manor, which closed on November 29, 2004. The CVNPHC resolved that the RFP of DMS Property Management be accepted pending a legal review of the management/operational services agreement with DMS Property Management Ltd to ensure that issues raised by the Board of Directors were included.

On February 14, 2005, Council gave staff direction to continue in discussions with the Regional staff in relocating Maple Manor and that a consultant be retained to work with staff on the business case.

On March 31st, 2005, the CVNPHC were informed that the residents of Maple Manor had received a Notice of Hearing on the City's of Vaughan's request to rezone the City Centre lands and that a Public Hearing had been scheduled for April 18, 2005. The CVNPHC encouraged residents to attend the meeting and requested that all future notices with respect to the redevelopment of Civic Centre lands and relocation of Maple Manor be sent to tenants of Maple Manor. The CVNPHC was informed that Maple Manor has been included under the City of Vaughan's master plan for the Vaughan Civic Centre Campus development as a proposed seniors affordable housing project to the south of the City Hall building.

On April 21, 2005, Regional Council approved the report entitled City of Vaughan Housing Development Opportunity, Vaughan Civic Centre, which authorized staff to undertake a pre-development study for developing up to 90 affordable housing units on the City of Vaughan Civic Centre Campus. The Regional Commissioner of Community Services and Housing was also authorized to apply to the Province of Ontario for funding under the Federal/Provincial Community Rental Housing Program (CRHP) for this project.

On May 26, 2005, a meeting was held with City and Regional staff to discuss the proposed affordable housing project on the Vaughan Civic Centre Campus and the relocation of Maple Manor. Regional staff stated that a pre-development study has been approved to look at potential costs and design options for a four-storey apartment building of up to 90 units focusing on seniors, but may, accommodate singles who are under the age of 60 and persons with disabilities. The terms of reference for this study would highlight the Vaughan Civic Campus architectural program and the requirements of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA). They also advised that a comprehensive business case would need to be prepared for presentation to the Region of York as Service Manager and once approved by Regional staff, the business case would be sent to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing for its approval. City staff requested from Regional staff a listing of requirements for the business case in addition to providing a listing of qualified housing consultants. It has been agreed upon that if the proposed affording housing project is given approval by both Regional and City of Vaughan Council, the existing tenants would be given the first option in renting in the new building.

On July 15, 2005, the CVNPHC was provided a project update. The CVNPHC resolved their support in principle concerning the new proposed affordable housing project at the Vaughan Civic Centre and the relocation of Maple Manor. In addition, the CVNPHC directed staff to invite Regional staff to a meeting to provide clarification of the roles and responsibilities each would undertake in this project.

On August 5, 2005, the General Manager met with the CVNPHC to discuss the business case. Regional staff recommended a list of consultants and offered to assist with the terms of reference for the business case. In addition, they also provided a listing of the Board of Director's roles and

## CITY OF VAUGHAN

### EXTRACT FROM COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 26, 2007

#### Item 1, CW(WS) Report No. 7 – Page 4

responsibilities that would be required up to the time of the CVNPHC's dissolution. Staff was directed to contact these consultants and request detailed cost estimates for the development of the business case.

In the fall of 2005, Tim Welch Consulting was retained by the CVNPHC to prepare the business case for the redevelopment of Maple Manor and a resident relocation plan. The business case would outline the required approvals process from the various levels of government in terms of legal agreements, provide financial viability of the Non Profit, and provide the outline for a relocation plan for the tenants of Maple Manor to the new proposed building. The Tenant Relocation Plan was undertaken to provide the formal and ongoing method of communication with the residents within the next three-year time frame during the redevelopment process.

On January 21, 2006, the Board was provided a draft report on the redevelopment of Maple Manor for their review.

On Tuesday April 4, 2006, the CVNPHC approved the business case for the redevelopment of Maple Manor and the Resident Relocation Plan. The CVNPHC requested that the Region review the documents and then forward the business case to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing for its approval. In addition, the CVNPHC requested that as part of the redevelopment process the Non Profit be permitted to use its capital reserve funds and any cash reserves in order to offset tenant relocation and demolition costs for Maple Manor. On April 5, 2005, the business case was sent to the Region for their review.

On May 3, 2006, Regional staff advised that they had completed their preliminary review of the business case and indicated that they required a copy of the letters patent for the CVNPHC and a formal motion from a City of Vaughan Council confirming that the City will assume responsibility for discharging of the outstanding mortgage for Maple Manor prior to the Region moving ahead with their commitments. Regional staff advised that once this documentation had been provided, the business case and all supporting documentation would be forwarded to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH) requesting Ministerial Consent for the redevelopment plan and consideration for forgiving the outstanding mortgage.

On July 20, 2006, the Region circulated a draft Memorandum of Understanding document to City staff for review which outlined various aspects concerning the City of Vaughan's intent to provide the lands on the Vaughan Civic Centre for the development of a seniors apartment building. Staff has not received direction to enter into negotiations concerning this document and thus it requiring direction to proceed on this matter.

On September 21, 2006, Regional Council approved reports on the "Demolition of Maple Manor, City of Vaughan Non Profit Housing Corporation" and "City of Vaughan – Housing Development Opportunity, Vaughan Civic Centre Campus – Update". The first report pertains to the CVNPHC business case for the redevelopment of Maple Manor and outlined that authorization was required through Ministerial Consent from Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing for the discharge of the mortgage for Maple Manor and that Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation was also required to agree to terminate the operating agreement between CMHC and CVNPHC. The second report requested that the Region enter into a Memorandum of Understanding between the City of Vaughan in order to set out the terms and conditions for a long term lease of a building site to accommodate up to 85 affordable rental housing apartments within the Vaughan Civic Centre Campus. In addition, the report requested approval to procure the services of an architect to proceed with the design and development of this project and establish an interim funding mechanism for the project.

Based on ongoing discussions with the Board of Directors of the CVNPHC and City staff, the Regional staff in order to obtain their necessary approvals took a report to Regional Council on September 21, 2006.

**CITY OF VAUGHAN**

**EXTRACT FROM COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 26, 2007**

Item 1, CW(WS) Report No. 7 – Page 5

On October 17, 2006, staff reported to the Board of Directors with an update concerning the redevelopment of Maple Manor on the proposed seniors building on the Civic Centre lands.

**Relationship to Vaughan Vision 2007**

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

**Conclusion**

A separate confidential report regarding the property issues is provided.

**Attachments**

None

**Report prepared by:**

Lynne A. Bonneville  
Administrative Manager, Ext. 8296  
Community Services

**CITY OF VAUGHAN**

**EXTRACT FROM COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 26, 2007**

Item 2, Report No. 7, of the Committee of the Whole (Working Session), which was adopted, as amended, by the Council of the City of Vaughan on February 26, 2007, as follows:

***By approving the confidential recommendation of the Committee of the Whole (Closed Session) of February 26, 2007.***

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**2**

**PROPERTY MATTER  
VAUGHAN CIVIC CENTRE CAMPUS**

**The Committee of the Whole (Working Session) recommends that the confidential recommendation of the Committee of the Whole (Working Session- Closed Session) of February 13, 2007, be approved.**

**CITY OF VAUGHAN**

**EXTRACT FROM COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 26, 2007**

Item 3, Report No. 7, of the Committee of the Whole (Working Session), which was adopted without amendment by the Council of the City of Vaughan on February 26, 2007.

**3 POLICY – RESPONSE BY CITY STAFF TO REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION  
FROM THE PUBLIC**

The Committee of the Whole (Working Session) recommends:

- 1) That the following report of the City Manager, dated February 13, 2007, be received;
- 2) That staff provide a further report to a future Committee of the Whole meeting incorporating the comments expressed by Members of Council; and
- 3) That the deputation of Mr. Paul DeBuono, 14 – 3650 Langstaff Road, Suite 391, Vaughan, L4L 9A8, be received.

**Recommendation**

The City Manager, in consultation with the Senior Management Team, recommends that:

1. The draft Policy, “Response by City Staff to Requests for Information from the Public”, forming Attachment No. 1 to this report, BE ADOPTED as City Policy and added to the City of Vaughan Policy Manual under Department: Administrative, immediately following Policy No. 03.01.

**Economic Impact**

No new funding will be required as a result of the approval of this report.

**Purpose**

To obtain approval for a new City Policy to establish guidelines for City staff in responding to information requests or inquiries made by the public and to provide the public with clear procedures for various types of information requests or inquiries.

**Background and Options**

**I. Origin**

Questions have been recently raised over how the City responds to inquiries from the public. This report will review current practices and identify any protocols or guidelines needed to clarify, improve or enhance the City’s existing policies and procedures in support of the principles of transparency and openness identified and emphasized in the recent amendments to the *Municipal Act, 2001* through Bill 130, the *Municipal Statute Law Amendment Act, 2006*.

**II. Current Policies**

Municipalities provide an array of services and facilities that affect people’s lives on a day-to-day basis. It is normal to receive inquiries from the public on an extensive number of subjects, ranging from the simple to the complex, and spanning all functions under the City’s mandate. Providing the public with timely replies to its questions is an obligation of good government to which the City of Vaughan has assigned a high priority. Municipal government is the most accessible level of government.

## CITY OF VAUGHAN

### EXTRACT FROM COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 26, 2007

#### Item 3, CW(WS) Report No. 7 – Page 2

The City has in place a number of policies and procedures designed to meet the information needs of the public, which are set out in the following paragraphs. Any person may make a deputation to Council in accordance with the procedure set out in the Procedural By-law. Regular Committee of the Whole meetings are held bi-weekly and deputations can be scheduled through the City Clerk's Office.

In January 2006, the City established *Access Vaughan*. This service is designed to ensure that inquiries and complaints are answered promptly by trained Citizen Service Representatives who have access to a computerized database of public information. In the year following the launch of this service, *Access Vaughan* answered a total of 174,682 calls. On average, the service answers 15,770 calls per month. This ranges from between 700 to 850 calls per day.

As part of its normal business, the City provides responses to numerous requests for information and complaints which fall under the day-to-day operating mandates of individual Departments. These departmental response functions deal primarily with site-specific, property-specific or individual specific matters like zoning inquiries, compliance letters, tax status, building inquiries, environmental inquiries, etc. They are of a routine nature and are processed expeditiously. They generally take the form of written responses originating with written correspondence from a member of the public or consultant.

In addition, the City has in place a Corporate Policy dealing with Media Relations for City Staff. The intent of this Policy is to develop and maintain effective communications with representatives of the print and broadcast media to facilitate the flow of information between the corporation and the public. Its purpose is to communicate consistent corporate messages in a timely and accurate manner and to respond appropriately to all enquiries in an open and professional manner to build an understanding of the work carried out by the City.

Also, for a number of years, the City has had in place a process for responding to inquiries made under the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* ("MFIPPA"). The City Clerk's Department processes and responds to all written requests ("FOI" requests) by individuals, firms, the media and others for copies of records, documents or other information in the possession of the City. This process also is responsible for ensuring that personal information and other information and records which are protected from release under the MFIPPA legislation are not provided to any persons or entities not entitled to receive such information.

### **III. Responding to Non-Routine Inquiries**

It is appropriate to build on these foundations by adopting a Policy which will provide further clarification and assistance to both the public and City staff in processes and procedures for responding to all questions, including those that are not routine or do not fall under the umbrella of any current processes, policies or procedures, such as *Access Vaughan*, Departmental operational functions or MFIPPA requests. These non-routine types of requests are most often received in the form of written correspondence, either as hard copy or electronically by e-mail.

E-mail, while a useful communications medium, is not considered to be an appropriate tool for requests of this type. E-mails are primarily a messaging device and are not generally considered to be the norm for formal business communications. Since the City is being expected to provide full responses, possibly after much research, it is in the interests of the municipality to treat requests for information as normal business correspondence, i.e. a response by way of a signed hardcopy letter. It is reasonable to expect that such a response would be initiated by way of a letter in a hardcopy format.

## CITY OF VAUGHAN

### EXTRACT FROM COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 26, 2007

#### Item 3, CW(WS) Report No. 7 – Page 3

In addition, there are certain limitations in e-mail technology that also cause concerns. Systems are not necessarily secure. It is possible that an e-mail response by the City could be manipulated and forwarded on to other recipients. Alternatively, the source of an e-mail inquiry may not be readily verifiable, given incomplete e-mail sender names and addresses, the possibility of e-mail requests being delivered by someone other than the named author, the possibility of responses being picked up on the requestor's computer by a person other than the requestor, etc.

Its ease of use also predisposes e-mail to abuse, particularly in the form of "e-mail harassment". This could result in the City being inundated with inquiries, which have no valid purpose other than frivolously encumbering and disrupting operations of the City or in rapidly composed, unclear questions that might benefit from additional consideration. The City's Policies should be based on both the City and the inquiring party proceeding on the basis of formal business practice, using hardcopy correspondence.

Developing a comprehensive Policy will enhance the accountability as well as the transparency of the services available to the public and will clarify procedures for City staff.

#### **IV. Principles Guiding the Preparation of the Policy**

The draft Policy, entitled "Responses by City Staff to Requests for Information from the Public", forms Attachment No. 1 to this report. In developing the attached Policy, the following principles were taken into account:

1. Only written inquiries, signed and dated and including a reply address, will be acknowledged for response. Written inquiries include hard copy letters (mail, hand delivery, fax) and letters forming a PDF attachment (with an electronic signature) to an e-mail. Telephone (including voicemail) and e-mail requests will not result in a response to the inquiry. The initiator of the request will be advised of this Policy and will be requested to resubmit the request in writing.
2. The City's response will be by hard copy letter, sent by regular mail or for pickup on arrangement with City staff.
3. The process for responding to requests includes the following elements:
  - **Proper Assignment of the Inquiry:** The original correspondence should be sent to the appropriate department head. Should it be determined upon consultation that the response should be directed to a different City Department, then it will be redirected for preparation of a response.
  - **Appropriate Process:** If it is determined that the appropriate process for obtaining the requested information is the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA)*, the correspondent will be redirected to submit the request to the City Clerk's Department, which is responsible for reviewing and processing all *MFIPPA* requests.
  - **Prompt Response:** The objective is to provide a response within 10 working days from the date of receipt of the request by the responding Department. Where a response will require additional time, receipt will be acknowledged and an estimate of the timing of the response will be provided or, where applicable, advice on a more appropriate process for obtaining the desired response, e.g. through an *MFIPPA* request, contact with the operational Department, by making a deputation to Council, etc.

## CITY OF VAUGHAN

### EXTRACT FROM COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 26, 2007

#### Item 3, CW(WS) Report No. 7 – Page 4

- **Accurate Record Keeping:** The correspondence will be receipt dated by the relevant City Department and the original correspondence and copy of the response, if applicable, will be maintained by the responding Department, including a record of the disposition of the inquiry where no response has been given.
4. Where an inquiry requires the photocopying or reproduction of materials, fees will be charged in accordance with the Fees and Charges By-law.
  5. All inquiries and responses are considered to be matters of public record, unless personal information or other protected information is included.
  6. Responses to inquiries may be copied to the City's Senior Management Team, relevant City staff and the Mayor and Members of Council, as deemed necessary.
  7. Only factual information will be provided, defined as information that is already a matter of public record and subject to release to the public.
  8. There are limitations on the range of responses. While it is the objective to provide prompt responses to all questions from the public, there are circumstances where providing a response within the proposed time-frame may be inappropriate or unreasonable. Such circumstances may include:
    - The extent of the inquiry may be of a general nature or application, but of such magnitude that it would be inappropriate for staff to allocate the time to preparing a response without Council first directing the reprioritization of resources to an individual requestor. The correspondent would be directed to make a deputation to Council on the request.
    - The inquiry may involve a response to a situation that has general application or importance across the municipality, which would have city-wide implications rather than solely affecting an individual site, property, business or person. In such cases, direction from Council would be required to proceed with a study. The correspondent would be directed to make a deputation to Council to direct that such a study be undertaken. It should be noted that current City policy does not permit individual Councillors to direct Staff to prepare reports on a Councillor's sole request, but rather these must be directed by Council. A request from the public of this nature, which requires report or study, should also be a matter for Council's consideration and direction.
    - The request(s) may be frivolous or vexatious, or submitted for the purpose of disrupting the operations of the City. This may be due to the frequency of submission of requests from the same or similar sources or due to the nature of the inquiry (such as a threatening or harassing inquiry(s)). In the former case, the City Manager and/or Council should be requested to first determine the merits of the request, including whether it is frivolous or an abuse of City processes, and direct City staff accordingly. In the latter case, the letter may be forwarded to the appropriate authorities for further investigation.

In such instances, responses will generally not be provided, but instead confirmation will be provided as to the appropriate process and the correspondence will be referred to the appropriate authority for review or other directions or actions.

## CITY OF VAUGHAN

### EXTRACT FROM COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 26, 2007

Item 3, CW(WS) Report No. 7 – Page 5

#### Relationship to Vaughan Vision 2007

Adoption of the proposed Policy is consistent with the Vaughan Vision 2007 objective of “*Citizens first through service excellence*”, including:

- 1.2 Establish and communicate service level standards that are affordable and sustainable.
  - 1.2.2. Review current customer service practices and implement enhanced and consistent customer service standards.
  - 1.2.3. Communicate established service levels to the community.
- 1.3 Provide effective and efficient delivery of services.

#### Conclusion

Providing the public with timely and accurate responses to requests for information, inquiries or complaints is an important ongoing function of municipal government. The City of Vaughan has already established processes for dealing with a number of types of inquiries, through *Access Vaughan*, individual operating departments respecting site specific, property specific or individual specific requests for information, inquiries or complaints, and through the *MFIPPA* process for FOI requests. These processes operate well for routine inquiries. However, there are circumstances where questions will require more research and preparation time for response. For this reason it is recommended that Council adopt the attached proposed Policy to address these additional types of requests for information that extend beyond routine requests, by setting a time-frame of 10 working days for response or by redirection of the correspondent to scheduling a deputation to Council for further direction to be provided to City staff.

It is intended that the Policy provide guidance to staff in identifying and processing such inquiries and the corporate expectations regarding standard response time-lines. The Policy also provides direction as to when a response would not be appropriate but requires redirection to another more appropriate process (eg. *MFIPPA*). This Policy will also assist the public by providing clear information as how to submit an inquiry and how it will be processed upon receipt.

The proposed Policy will further enhance the City's ability to respond fully and promptly to public inquiries and will build on the foundation established by *Access Vaughan*, the current policies and processes and the *MFIPPA* process. Therefore, the draft Policy in Attachment No. 1 to this report is recommended by City staff.

#### Attachments

1. Draft City of Vaughan Policy: Response by City Staff to Requests for Information from the Public.

#### Report prepared by:

Janice Atwood-Petkovski, Commissioner of Legal & Administrative Services  
Carolyn Stobo, Solicitor/Special Services  
Roy McQuillin, Manager of Corporate Policy

(A copy of the attachments referred to in the foregoing have been forwarded to each Member of Council and a copy thereof is also on file in the office of the City Clerk.)

## CITY OF VAUGHAN

### EXTRACT FROM COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 26, 2007

Item 4, Report No. 7, of the Committee of the Whole (Working Session), which was adopted without amendment by the Council of the City of Vaughan on February 26, 2007.

#### **4 INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS PROGRAMME: A STRATEGY FOR GROWTH**

The Committee of the Whole (Working Session) recommends:

- 1) That the recommendation contained in the following report of the Commissioner of Economic/Technology Development and Communications, dated February 13, 2007, be approved; and
- 2) That \$50,000 be allocated to the Economic/Technology Development and Communications Operating Budget to cover the cost of International Partnerships in 2007.

#### **Recommendation**

The Commissioner of Economic/Technology Development and Communications, in consultation with the Director of Economic Development, recommends:

1. That the following report be received
2. That Council reconfirm its commitment to the City's International Partnerships Programme as an integral part of its broader economic development programme
3. That Council endorse the principle of *Continuity of Contact and Activity* between the City of Vaughan and its International Partner Cities, in order to foster trust and communication, and to bring about tangible economic and social benefits, on behalf of all the constituents of Vaughan
4. That staff be directed to develop work plans aimed at enhancing the benefits of partnership with our existing International Partners
5. That staff bring forward recommendations for new economic International Partnerships with suitable partner cities in China, northern Italy, USA and any other jurisdiction offering excellent growth opportunities for Vaughan.
6. That Council approve the replacement of all existing Sister City signage currently in place at specific intersections throughout the City, that appropriate signage be added for those International Partnerships not currently identified; and that \$30,000 be added to the Operating Budget for Economic/Technology Development to cover the cost of the new signage.

#### **Economic Impact**

The economic impact of this report is only as pertains to the one-time costs for the development and installation of new street signage for all existing International Partnerships: \$30,000.

#### **Purpose**

The purpose of this report is to update Council of the status of the Corporation's International Partnerships programme and to request that Council endorse the recommendations herein.

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

The International Partnership Policy of the City of Vaughan has been in place since 1991 and it indicates two forms of International Partnerships: *Friendship Agreements* and *Twin City*

**CITY OF VAUGHAN**

**EXTRACT FROM COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 26, 2007**

Item 4, CW(WS) Report No. 7 – Page 2

*Agreements.* These partnerships are also characterized by the type of collaboration they propose to cultivate: cultural or educational relationships or economic opportunity development. In 2006, the City of Vaughan also entered into an informal arrangement with an office of the University of Calabria at Cosenza, for the purpose of exploring innovative programmes for our young professionals and our business community.

The current International Partnerships Vaughan has in place are:

<b>City</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Type of Agreement</b>	<b>Level of Activity</b>
Sora, Italy	1992	Twin City	Cultural/Educational
Sanjo, Japan	1993	Twin City	Cultural/Educational/Economic
Baguio, Philippines	1997	Twin City	Cultural/ Educational
Ramla, Israel	1993	Twin City	Cultural/ Educational
Delia, Italy	1998	Friendship City	Cultural/ Educational
Yangzhou, China	1995	Friendship City	Cultural/ Educational
Lanciano, Italy	2002	Friendship City	Cultural/Educational
Iscapi/University of Calabria, Cosenza, Italy (representing 80 municipalities in Region of Calabria)	2006	Cooperation Agreement	Multi-disciplinary: inter-governmental, educational, economic

Over the past several years, activities stemming from our International Partnerships have been varied, and have included visits to and from most of our International partner cities. We have hosted student groups from Israel, the Philippines, Japan and Italy. We have received institutional and business delegations from Japan, China and Italy. We have travelled to China, Japan, the Philippines, Israel and Italy. In addition, we have hosted special events, most recently *Lazio Week in Vaughan* in September 2006, in an effort to celebrate our relationship with one of our Sister Cities, in this case Sora, in the Italian Region of Lazio, but also to promote a greater awareness of the unique traditions and special characteristics of the region surrounding our Partner jurisdiction.

**VISITING DELEGATIONS TO VAUGHAN: January 2, 2006 – September 29, 2006**

There were a total of seventeen (17) delegations visiting Vaughan in the first 9 months of 2006. They are as follows:

<b>Date</b>	<b>Visitor</b>
January 6, 2006	Dignitaries from Italy (various Mayors from towns in Region of Basilicata)
February 24, 2006	MPP from Calabria, Italy
March 28, 2006	Delegation from Portugal
March 29, 2006	Delegation from Shenyang, P.R.of China
April 5, 2006	Student delegation, Ramla, Israel
April 20, 2006	Delegation from Jamaica
May 11, 2006	ISCAPI/University of Calabria delegates (agreement signed upon direction of Mayor)
June 13, 2006	Italian delegation - Tor Viscosa, Udine, Italy
June 27, 2006	Italian National Women's Soccer Team
June 30, 2006	Delegation from Sicily, Italy

## CITY OF VAUGHAN

### EXTRACT FROM COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 26, 2007

<u>Item 4, CW(WS) Report No. 7 – Page 3</u>	
July 14, 2006	Delegation of Mayors from several towns in Calabria, Italy
July 25, 2006	Consul General of Korea with visiting dignitaries
July 27, 2006	MP from Australia
August 17, 2006	Italian sports delegation (National Baseball Team)
September 18-24	Lazio delegation
October 5, 2006	delegation - province of Ragusa, Sicily
October 18, 2006	delegation from Beijing, China

### CRITERIA FOR SELECTING AN INTERNATIONAL PARTNER

Entering into a partnership with another jurisdiction is generally a decision made if there are a number of elements present which would make the partnership a beneficial one for both parties. In 1991, the City of Vaughan adopted its Twinning Policy, in which were outlined a number of desirable characteristics which should be kept in mind when evaluating a potential partner. They are still valid today and merit review:

1. The community should have approximately the same population as Vaughan.
2. The community should be economically compatible with Vaughan so as to provide opportunities for trade and commerce exchanges.
3. The community should be situated in an economically and politically stable environment.
4. The community, and/or its surrounding region, should offer strengths in industries that have been targeted for growth in Vaughan.
5. Opportunities for cultural, educational and professional exchanges should exist.
6. The community should have the full support of its municipal body, its business community and community as a whole for such a partnership.

Generally speaking, the selection of a potential partner begins with the identification of a desirable jurisdiction, generally by senior staff, followed by research to gather as much information about the specific characteristics of that jurisdiction and, subsequently, exploratory meetings in order to assess the level of interest by both parties, to exchange ideas and to arrive at a consensus regarding key objectives of the partnership. It is during this phase that a work plan emerges and an International Partnership agreement is developed.

### RESOURCES

Over the past six years, all activities have been handled principally by one staff. The annual budget for "Foreign Business Development" has fluctuated between \$10,000 and \$50,000. Due to budgetary pressures pushing the funding level downward each year, the funding level which had been stable at the \$50,000 mark for several years, was reduced to just \$10,000 in 2006.

In addition, in these same six years, activity levels have increased dramatically, with the number of man hours necessarily devoted to this programme increasing from 150 in 2001 to more than 500 in 2006. The average is approximately 300 hours per year.

Significantly affecting both types of "resources" is an external factor over which the City has little or no control: many of the delegations and visiting groups we receive are unsolicited and are not necessarily tied to any of our existing International Partnerships. In reviewing the chart of 2006 Visiting Delegations, it is evident that of the 17 groups received, only 2 of them can be directly tied to our International Partnerships: the Lazio Week delegation and the Student delegation from Israel.

## CITY OF VAUGHAN

### EXTRACT FROM COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 26, 2007

Item 4, CW(WS) Report No. 7 – Page 4

#### OBJECTIVES OF THE INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS PROGRAMME (IPP)

The objectives of any international partnership are tied to bringing economic and social benefits to each community's businesses and residents respectively.

The key objectives for Vaughan's IPP, are:

1. To *support local economic development* by giving local businesses an additional tool through which to achieve growth, access new markets and retain their competitive edge
2. To *support specific sectors of Vaughan's economy*, such as the tourism sector, through such methods as facilitating skills enhancement/professional development exchanges abroad subsequently importing acquired "authenticity" know-how back into Vaughan (eg. country of origin training for our local chefs).
3. To support local economic development by pursuing *Foreign Investment attraction*
4. To create *International opportunities for our Youth* and young professionals
5. To create investment opportunities for Vaughan businesses through Strategic Business Alliances (a directory was produced by staff and is currently being updated to assist in matching alliances).
6. To enhance Vaughan's image abroad as an excellent location for investment within the NAFTA area (International marketing via "Invest in Vaughan" presentations abroad).

#### ACHIEVING OUR OBJECTIVES:

The stated objectives require specific and targeted activities and initiatives to deliver desired outcomes. Well-developed work plans aimed at creating a direct benefit in a very targeted area will bring measurable results as well as intangible, image-enhancing gains in the longer term. Staff is proposing the development of work plans relating to each of the City's existing International partners and to follow this same format for any future partnerships. Work plans should also have a "sunset clause" through which both communities can have the opportunity to re-assess, at intervals, the efficacy of the partnership and can access an option to continue with the relationship or make changes.

#### THINK GLOBALLY, ACT LOCALLY

Vaughan's economy is strong and diversified. Local industries, however, must always strive to seek out and identify that next opportunity to grow, anticipating trends and looking with confidence to the future as leaders in their field determined to remain at the top of their industry.

However, in the past decade, there have been significant shifts in the world economy that have impacted all industries and their business development processes. While Vaughan industries are enjoying a favourable climate, global economic pressures are not divorced from local economic realities. Changes in behaviour and attitudes with respect to trade, by nations halfway around the globe, have forced changes in the way our own industries interact and grow.

According to research by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), integration into the world economy has proven a powerful means for countries to promote economic growth and development. Over the past 20 years, the IMF research shows that the growth of world trade has averaged 6%, driven by two factors: reduction in trade barriers in many jurisdictions and technological developments. Developing countries that have opened their own economies to take full advantage of the opportunities for economic development through trade have enjoyed remarkable growth, and have been able to attract the bulk of foreign direct investment going to developing countries. This is true of China and India since they embraced trade liberalization and other market-oriented reforms.

## CITY OF VAUGHAN

### EXTRACT FROM COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 26, 2007

#### Item 4, CW(WS) Report No. 7 – Page 5

These changes in the global trading and development patterns directly or indirectly affect our local industries, shrinking the globe and narrowing the gap between them and their competitors half a world away, impacting their ability to remain competitive within this new global order. Staff believes that our International Partnerships Programme can distill the benefits in this global shift down to our local industries by pro-actively helping them maintain their competitive edge, by working to keep our local economy strong and diversified and by seeking innovative opportunities to utilize, even export, our technologies and know-how.

Several tools, all part of Economic Development's attraction and retention strategy, are used to bring benefits to local industries:

- Strategic Alliances directory (currently being updated by staff)
- Ambassador Programme (renewal proposed in 2007 ETDD Operating budget)
- Business retention: ongoing efforts to solicit feedback from industries in order to maintain service excellence.

Staff in ETDD believe that businesses go where they are invited but they stay and expand where they are well-treated. To this end, we regularly strive to identify emerging issues of relevance to our industries. For example, we are currently preparing the Terms of Reference for an Employment Sector study, per concerns of local employers who see great challenges ahead in retaining/finding skilled employees in York Region.

When asked about which services they view as valuable to their foreign market development efforts, they have indicated they would welcome assistance with identifying opportunities and view the City affording them access to new markets in a very positive light. Several leading Vaughan industries have indicated to senior Economic Development staff that they believe contacts facilitated by the Municipality could fast track opportunity development within certain foreign jurisdictions (eg. China, United Arab Emirates). In addition, they believe that some municipal support for their Research and Development efforts, particularly in the form of grants or tax abatement in support of R+D, would assist them in developing new technologies that would ultimately lead to economic benefits for the broader Vaughan economy. Lastly, our larger industries hold the opinion that, where there is an interest on their part, in entering into a foreign joint venture within a jurisdiction where Vaughan has an International Partnership, Vaughan's assistance with the "due diligence" portion of the joint venture development would be invaluable, given that as a Municipal structure, we would have access to a plethora of verified/verifiable information that they would need to expend considerably more effort to collect.

#### GOING FORWARD: A renewal of the IPP

Indicators point to global economic forces being focused on three major areas of the globe: China, India, parts of southeast Asia and the USA.

**CHINA:** Staff proposes to strengthen the IPP in China, in cooperation with the Federal and Provincial governments here in Canada, the Canadian Consulate network in China, appropriately networked private sector groups, business associations and local businesses, by undertaking a business trip to China in November 2007.

**USA:** In addition, staff has been reviewing several opportunities in the USA for potential economic partnerships. Over the course of the past few years, the presence of companies in Vaughan which are wholly or partly owned by American parent companies has grown significantly. They include Extended Stay America, Georgia Gulf, Cedar Fair LP, Mills Corporation, NASCAR Speedpark, Tootsie Roll Industries, UPS, Lucky Strike Lanes, Bausch + Lomb, Cousins-Currie Limited, Knoll Furniture, Jones New York, Jeld-Wen Windows and Doors, Carpenter Company, Conair Limited, Crown Cork & Seal, to name a few.

## CITY OF VAUGHAN

### EXTRACT FROM COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 26, 2007

#### Item 4, CW(WS) Report No. 7 – Page 6

Staff feels that, given the very significant impact of the economic relationship between Canada and the USA, and its obvious impact on Vaughan's economy, the absence of an American economic partnership within our International Partnerships Programme is a glaring omission that we believe should be addressed.

To this end, there are several municipalities that have been researched which meet most of the criteriae for selecting an international partner. Staff will continue to research these opportunities and provide a future report to Council for direction.

**ITALY:** Similarly, while Vaughan has a number of cultural and educational partnerships in Italy, there are opportunities which could benefit our own business community which are currently not being explored. Staff is of the opinion that we must focus Vaughan's future ties with Italy in the economic powerhouses within Italy's northern Regions, such as Lombardy, Friuli, Veneto and Emilia Romagna. Any future business missions made to Italy would not only strengthen our ties with our existing partner cities but, moreover, create new economic ties with cities in these areas which, collectively, are known as one of Europe's most economically significant regions.

Staff, in collaboration with the Italian Chamber of Commerce of Toronto, proposes to undertake a business mission to Italy sometime in June 2007.

Workplans for the missions to China/Far East, USA and Italy will be completed to identify key objectives, action steps and specific performance measurement indicators.

**INCOMING BUSINESS DELEGATIONS IN 2007:** In addition, within 2007, incoming business missions from Italy, resulting from work done by the City's delegation during its visit to Italy in 2005 and follow-up work initiated by staff in 2006, are planned from the City of Bergamo, the Chamber of Commerce of Parma and the broader region of Emilia-Romagna, and, possibly the Province of Milano. In addition, staff is working with local businesses to secure internship placements for 4 of 15 university students who will be coming to study english at York University through a partnership between York U. and I.S.C.a.P.I., the same agency with which Vaughan signed a collaborative agreement in May 2006 at the request of the Mayor at the time. I.S.C.a.P.I. will also work with City staff to bring a showcase of fine tapestries and jewellery to Vaughan in October of 2007. Lastly, follow-up work is planned for 2007 to continue the strengthening of the City's relationship with it's longest-standing Sister City, the City of Sora, in Lazio, Italy, such as the preparation of professional exchanges aimed at offering local business operators/professionals in the Tourism industry, the opportunity to acquire new skills and benefit from an exchange of best practices with their counterparts from the region of Lazio.

Staff will prepare workplans for each of these initiatives, outlining the intended objectives, appropriate action steps and measurable performance indicators. A copy of the workplan template is appended to this report as Appendix B.

#### **SISTER CITY SIGNAGE:**

The City of Vaughan currently has signage marking five (5) of its seven (7) International partnerships at various strategic points across the City. The signs are in various stages of disrepair and have been flagged by Vaughan residents who hail from the respective communities in question as eyesores badly in need of replacement.

Staff has prepared an analysis of costs and benefits associated with replacing each of our five (5) existing signs as well as new ones for those two (2) partnerships not currently signed. Two potential suppliers have provided quotes which are included in the Sister City Signage Report, appended to this report as Appendix A.

Staff is requesting that Council support the request for new signage and that it provide direction to staff as to which of the two types of signage it wishes to purchase and that the appropriate budget be allocated for such a purchase.

## CITY OF VAUGHAN

### EXTRACT FROM COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 26, 2007

#### Item 4, CW(W.S) Report No. 7 – Page 7

##### CONTINUITY OF CONTACT and ACTIVITY

The objectives listed above, and the work plans pertaining to each, propose actions which are measurable and achievable, providing the IPP is afforded continuous and consistent support as an active programme within the broader economic development programme, with suitable funding and resources to sustain it on an ongoing basis.

When Council adopted the International Partnership Policy in 1991, it essentially agreed with the stated principles governing the ongoing management of the programme. One such governing premise is that International Partnerships require resources in the form of financing, time and manpower. In addition, it was accepted that International partnerships must be nurtured in order to bear fruit and that these efforts must be constant over time to be truly beneficial to our businesses and residents. This consistency has been absent over the life of the Programme and staff is proposing that Council endorse staff efforts to strengthen the City's International Partnerships Programme in order to bring benefits to our local business community and our local residents.

To this end, staff is respectfully recommending that Council:

1. reconfirm its commitment to Vaughan's International Partnership Programme by endorsing the recommendations contained in this report and,
2. ensure constant levels of funding at \$50,000 per annum\*.

\*Except for the 2007 Foreign Business Development Budget which will be at \$40,000.

##### Relationship to Vaughan Vision 2007

This report outlines a programme in support of several of the goals identified in the Vaughan Vision document:

1. Serve our Citizens (A-4 Promote Economic Development)
2. Manage our Resources (B-1 Ensure Long-Term and Short-Term Financial Stability; B-2 Expand Revenues & Tax Base)

This report recommends a change from the priorities previously set by Council and the necessary resources have not been allocated.

##### Conclusion

The City of Vaughan currently has seven (7) International Partners and one (1) Collaboration Agreement in place. The activity levels of each of these partnerships has varied significantly over the past fifteen (15) years and, consequently, it has been fairly difficult to gain the full potential benefits of each of the relationships on behalf of our citizens and businesses.

For this reason, staff is proposing a renewed vision for the International Partnerships Programme, one that focuses on a studied, consistent and results-oriented approach. In addition to renewing our existing relationships with our current partners, most of which are cultural and/or educational in nature, staff proposes that where possible with the existing partnerships and certainly with all new partners, economic projects/initiatives be the main focus.

Staff will be undertaking a series of breakfast meetings, with the participation of captains of major industry sectors represented in Vaughan, as well as appropriate business associations, and other members, to ensure consistent dialogue with our industries that will allow staff to gather valuable intelligence regarding their current needs as well as to capture innovative ideas and evidence of emerging trends/issues of relevance. We can, thusly, anticipate our business communities needs and work with them to meet their challenges.

CITY OF VAUGHAN

**EXTRACT FROM COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 26, 2007**

Item 4, CW(WS) Report No. 7 – Page 8

**Attachments**

Sister City Signage Report – Appendix A  
Sample Workplan Template- Appendix B

**Report prepared by:**

Emilia Valentini, Director of Economic Development

(A copy of the attachments referred to in the foregoing have been forwarded to each Member of Council and a copy thereof is also on file in the office of the City Clerk.)