

CITY OF VAUGHAN
REPORT NO. 2 OF THE
VAUGHAN METROPOLITAN CENTRE
SUB-COMMITTEE

*For consideration by the Priorities and Key Initiatives Committee
of the City of Vaughan
on June 11, 2012*

The Vaughan Metropolitan Centre Sub-Committee met at 2:39 p.m. on April 12, 2012.

Members Present: Mayor Maurizio Bevilacqua, Chair
Regional Councillor Di Biase
Councillor Rosanna DeFrancesca
Councillor Sandra Racco

Also Present: Regional Councillor Deb Schulte

The following items were dealt with:

1 **STATION NAMING INITIATIVE – VERBAL REPORT**

The Vaughan Metropolitan Centre Sub-Committee advises that the following recommendation was approved:

That the verbal report of Clayton Harris, City Manager, be received.

2 **BUILDING A CREATIVE ECONOMY IN THE VMC**

The Vaughan Metropolitan Centre Sub-Committee advises that the following recommendation was approved:

Recommendation

The City Manager and the Commissioner of Planning, in consultation with the Directors of Policy Planning and Economic Development, recommend:

1. That the presentations made by Ken Greenberg, Pru Robey and Tonya Surman on encouraging the creative economy in the Vaughan Metropolitan Centre be received;
2. That staff organize a workshop in order to further discuss how to encourage and support creative occupations in the Vaughan Metropolitan Centre; and
3. That these recommendations be forwarded to the Priorities and Key Initiatives Committee.

Contribution to Sustainability

The Vaughan Metropolitan Centre (VMC) is a fundamental building block of the City's growth management strategy, and development will conform in all respects with the principles and policies of the Green Directions document.

**REPORT NO. 2 OF THE VAUGHAN METROPOLITAN CENTRE SUB-COMMITTEE
FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE PRIORITIES AND KEY INITIATIVES COMMITTEE
JUNE 11, 2012**

The development of a “creative economy” in the VMC contributes to the City’s economic sustainability which is one of the four pillars in Green Directions. It will help to leverage local strengths to drive innovation, job and wealth creation. It will assist in developing a richer, more dynamic, interesting and attractive, neighbourhood that in turn supports walking, cycling and an active public life.

Economic Impact

There will be no economic impact associated with the recommendations of this report, apart from the funding of a workshop which will be funded through existing departmental budgets.

Communications Plan

All Vaughan Metropolitan Centre landowners and related consultants have been invited to attend this Sub-Committee meeting. The meeting agenda has been posted on-line.

Purpose

This report’s purpose is to further discussions with respect to building a “creative economy” in the Vaughan Metropolitan Centre and to recommend some next steps on how to explore:

- building the intellectual assets of the cultural community;
- informing cultural decision-making and program development; and
- enhancing public understanding of how the arts contribute to the vitality and economic growth of communities.

Background - Analysis and Options

Creativity is the ability to take knowledge, ideas and other resources and combine them with imagination to create new ideas and products. Inherent in this definition is the concept of human capital; innovative ideas and imaginative products are the result of the intellectual capabilities of people.

Therefore the creative economy is a powerful and positive global force. Together, artists, cultural non-profits, and creative businesses produce and distribute cultural goods and services that can have a positive impact on the economy by generating jobs, revenue, and quality of life. A traditional definition of creativity may have been limited to the promotion of culture and the production of artistic endeavours. However, with the application of technology, creative and cultural industries are economic drivers that reach into other traditional industries in the form of product design; packaging; business process improvements; branding; marketing; alternate applications; etc. In a broader context, creative and cultural industries can also drive horizontal integration across industry divisions.

The knowledge economy which includes creative occupations constitute 35 percent of urban labour markets today. The knowledge economy is expected to grow to 40 percent of the labour force in the next decade. These jobs require people who are analytical in their thinking and who work somewhat autonomously and often creatively. It is generally accepted that the people who occupy these jobs are attracted to “quality of place”. Quality of place could be characterized by a rich, interesting, dynamic, attractive, diverse and transit supported environment.

The City of Vaughan’s Official Plan, its Economic Development Strategy: “Building a Gateway to Tomorrow’s Economy” and its Cultural Master Plan: “Creative Together” encourages and promotes the establishment and attraction of creative and cultural industries with the VMC recognized as the central hub of these activities.

Downtowns typically evolve over decades. The City of Vaughan has a unique opportunity to not only plan its downtown, but to see significant progress towards its development in a comparatively short

**REPORT NO. 2 OF THE VAUGHAN METROPOLITAN CENTRE SUB-COMMITTEE
FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE PRIORITIES AND KEY INITIATIVES COMMITTEE
JUNE 11, 2012**

period of time. Unlike elsewhere in the Greater Toronto Area, our new downtown is largely a greenfield site. The City has an unparalleled opportunity to shape both the private and public realm so that its places are engaging, beautiful and memorable; and enhances creative capacity and collaboration across many diverse cultural, ethnic and socio-economic groups.

To further describe what is meant by the “creative economy” and how it can be supported three presentations will be made:

1. Ken Greenberg, Principal, Greenberg Consultants Inc. on “Building a Competitive Advantage - Leveraging Your Existing Economic Strengths to Map Your Unique Competitive Advantage”. To compete for talent, cities need to leverage their existing assets. Before economic development plans are established, you need to know where your existing strengths lie. The presentation addresses strategies for:
 - Mapping assets to understand your advantages and weaknesses;
 - Conducting SWOT reviews to generate competitive advantage; and
 - Developing effective strategies to cultivate clusters that fit your city’s advantages.
2. Pru Robey, Director, Knowledge Exchange, Artscape on “Artscape – How to Establish Innovative Financing and Partnership Models to Support the Growth of Creative Industries”. For over 25 years, Artscape has developed a reputation as Canada’s leading practitioner in multi-tenant space development for the cultural creative sector. The presentation will address their new generation of projects and how to finance social initiatives and implement our creative economy by:
 - Designing the infrastructure needed to sustain and grow our cultural industries;
 - Engaging in inventive partnerships with public and private sectors; and
 - Adopting innovative financing models to fund new projects.
3. Tonya Surman, Centre for Social Innovation, on “How the Centre creates community workspaces, incubates emerging enterprises and develops new collaborative models and methods”. This model for business incubation assists in generating “purposeful collisions” between community volunteers, service providers, capital connections and start up and growing businesses with the support of entrepreneurial services. All with a focus on collaboration within a physical incubator space.

The City of Vaughan is home to many successful businesses, a number of which have a strong entrepreneurial base and are very innovative. There is a strong correlation between creative thinking, innovation and quality of place that will in turn attract and retain businesses in the VMC. This report and the presentations explore the linkages between quality of place, culture, innovation and the creative economy.

Next Steps

As a follow up to the presentations and ensuing discussion by the Sub-Committee, staff is recommending that we organize a workshop in order to further discuss how to encourage and support creative occupations as part of the economic development strategy. A broad spectrum of stakeholders would be invited: Vaughan Mayor and Members of Council, landowners, representatives of local businesses and cultural industries, the Vaughan Chamber of Commerce etc.

Relationship to Vaughan Vision 2020/Strategic Plan

This report is consistent with the priorities previously set by Council pursuant to Vaughan Vision 2020.

Regional Implications

There are no Regional implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

**REPORT NO. 2 OF THE VAUGHAN METROPOLITAN CENTRE SUB-COMMITTEE
FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE PRIORITIES AND KEY INITIATIVES COMMITTEE
JUNE 11, 2012**

- Define catalytic public realm design strategies and tactics that will promote cultural, social, commercial and recreational activities within the urban core, and enhance overall quality of life;
- Identify opportunities and implementation strategies to incorporate public art into the public realm;

Economic Impact

There are no immediate budgetary impacts resulting from this report and presentation.

Communications Plan

The Policy Planning Department will continue to meet individually with stakeholders including landowner groups as they are formed to resolve outstanding issues with the VMC Secondary Plan. Agendas for Committee meetings where the modified Plan will be considered will be posted on the City website as per normal Clerks Department postings for Committee of Council meetings.

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide an update and discuss next steps towards finalizing the VMC Secondary Plan prior to Committee and Council consideration in the fall of 2012.

Background - Analysis and Options

The VMC Secondary Plan was prepared based on broad based consultation and approved by Council in 2010. The Policy Planning Department intends to bring forward a modified Secondary Plan for Committee and Council prior to it being sent to the Region of York for approval in fall of 2012.

During the last several months a number of changing infrastructure and planning circumstances have prompted a need to modify the VMC Secondary Plan. Some of the most significant changes prompting a need for updates and revisions include:

- Discussions between Smart Centres, the Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) and York Region Rapid Transit (YRRT) culminating in the proposed relocation of the VMC bus transit terminal west and north of its approved location identified in the Spadina Subway environmental assessment, to a new location west of Millway Avenue and south of Portage Parkway on top of the Spadina Subway extension tail track.
- Preliminary findings of the Joint Transportation Study being conducted by the City and Region resulting in the need for modifications to the road network primarily in the vicinity of Regional Road 7 and Highway 400.
- Additional consultation with owners resulting in greater recognition of proposed development plans in the updated Secondary Plan.
- Recognizing a previously approved official plan amendment and zoning by-law amendment confirmed through an Ontario Municipal Board decision in the northeast quadrant of the Secondary Plan.
- Removing policies that would restrict strata title arrangements for structures located beneath or above public roads subject to certain conditions.

The majority of owners of the northwest and southwest quadrants are working more closely with the City, Region, MTO and other stakeholders towards achieving certainty on infrastructure and land use planning matters. Groups are being formed on a quadrant by quadrant basis and land use plans consolidated to inform the VMC Secondary Plan modifications and Joint Transportation Study

**REPORT NO. 2 OF THE VAUGHAN METROPOLITAN CENTRE SUB-COMMITTEE
FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE PRIORITIES AND KEY INITIATIVES COMMITTEE
JUNE 11, 2012**

process. Greater cooperation between landowners in multiple quadrants will be required to implement infrastructure works related to the Black Creek Optimization Study and to equitably distribute community wide benefit. As a result staff will continue to maintain the requirement for cost sharing in the Secondary Plan going forward.

Outstanding Issues

Discussion has been underway with stakeholders to identify remaining outstanding issues respecting the VMC Secondary Plan. These are summarized as follows:

- Requests to remove streets in certain locations in the two western quadrants of the VMC Secondary Plan.
- Requests to change public streets to private roads in certain locations but primarily in the southeast quadrant.
- Requests to realign the proposed Colossus overpass roadway just east of Highway 400 to minimize property impacts.
- Requests for additional height and density in certain locations.
- Concerns with the formula for calculating parkland dedication.
- Requests for updated policies to reflect the findings of the Black Creek Optimization Study and Master Plan Study.

The outstanding landowner requests outlined above will be considered by staff over the next few months. One key issue of concern to staff is the request for removal of streets or conversion of public streets to private streets received from a number of owners. Generally staff does not support such changes as it is felt the removal of public streets will erode the City's ability to create a connected grid system throughout the VMC over the long-term. On the issue of removing certain streets, staff is recommending modifying the Plan only in special circumstances, such as the relocation of the bus transit terminal, where the proposed east west street in this location cannot be completed due to the block area required to accommodate the transit station.

Next Steps

Over the next two months staff proposes to engage VMC stakeholders including landowners and agencies in a series of meetings to resolve outstanding issues to the extent possible prior to bringing forward a modified VMC Secondary Plan for Committee and Council consideration in early fall 2012.

Relationship to Vaughan Vision 2020/ Strategic Plan

This report is consistent with the priorities set forth in Vaughan Vision 2020 Strategic Plan, through the following initiatives, specifically:

Service Excellence:

- Lead & Promote Environmental Sustainability
- Preserve our Heritage & Support Diversity, Arts & Culture

Organizational Excellence:

- Manage Corporate Assets
- Ensure Financial Sustainability
- Manage Growth & Economic Well-being

**REPORT NO. 2 OF THE VAUGHAN METROPOLITAN CENTRE SUB-COMMITTEE
FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE PRIORITIES AND KEY INITIATIVES COMMITTEE
JUNE 11, 2012**

Regional Implications

The Region of York is a vital stakeholder in the process. The Region is part of the VMC Implementation Team comprised of different levels of government and agencies and is participating in all City initiated studies. The Secondary Plan supports key elements of the Region of York Official Plan, adopted by Regional Council on December 16, 2009. Specifically, the implementation of the plan's following objectives stated in Sections 5.4 Regional Centres and Corridors, and 7.2, Moving People and Goods:

"To achieve complete, diverse, compact, vibrant, integrated and well-designed Regional Centres that serve as focal points for housing, employment, cultural and community facilities, and transit connections."

"To ensure streets support all modes of transportation including walking, cycling, transit, automobile use, and the efficient movement of goods."

"To plan and protect future urban and rural streets to accommodate transportation demands."

Conclusion

Staff has prepared this report to apprise the VMC Sub-committee of the status of the proposed changes to the VMC Secondary Plan and to discuss next steps towards finalizing the Plan prior to Committee of the Whole and Council consideration in the fall of 2012.

Attachments

1. Location Map – Vaughan Metropolitan Centre Study
2. VMC Boundaries – Vaughan Metropolitan Centre Study

Report prepared by:

Anna Sicilia, ext. 8063
John MacKenzie, ext. 8445

(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.)

4

**2012 PROPOSED MEETING DATES FOR THE
VAUGHAN METROPOLITAN SUBCOMMITTEE OF COUNCIL**

The Vaughan Metropolitan Centre Sub-Committee advises that the following recommendation was approved:

Recommendation

The Commissioner of Planning in consultation with the City Manager recommends:

1. That staff be directed to schedule meetings on June 28, September 13, November 22, 2012 and other dates, if deemed necessary, at the call of the Chair.

Contribution to Sustainability

The meetings of the Subcommittee support sustainability objectives of the City including but not limited to:

**REPORT NO. 2 OF THE VAUGHAN METROPOLITAN CENTRE SUB-COMMITTEE
FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE PRIORITIES AND KEY INITIATIVES COMMITTEE
JUNE 11, 2012**

Goal 4: To create a vibrant community for citizens, businesses and visitors.

Objective 4.1 "To foster a city with strong social cohesion, an engaging arts scene, and a clear sense of its culture and heritage"

Objective 4.2 "To ensure that the City of Vaughan attracts businesses and investment that will result in well-paying jobs for Vaughan citizens, a sustainable tax base, and continuing prosperity into the 21st century"

Goal 5: To be a leader on sustainability issues.

- Communicate a streetscape and open space framework that is both resilient and adaptable to support short, medium and long term urban transformations;
- Integrate transit infrastructure with the emerging urban fabric;
- Support the pedestrian, cyclist, transit and motorist experience for all ages and abilities;
- Define catalytic public realm design strategies and tactics that will promote cultural, social, commercial and recreational activities within the urban core, and enhance overall quality of life;
- Identify opportunities and implementation strategies to incorporate public art into the public realm;

Economic Impact

There are no budget impacts resulting from this report.

Communications Plan

The Clerks Department and the Policy Planning Department will continue to apprise stakeholders identified through the VMC Secondary Plan and ongoing planning and infrastructure studies of Subcommittee meetings once they are scheduled. Notification of future meetings is proposed to occur through email, regular mail and through posting on the City's website. Agendas will be prepared by the City Clerk's Office. Agendas shall be posted on the City's web site one week prior to the scheduled date of the meeting or as soon as practicable.

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to propose future dates for the VMC Subcommittee of Council and to outline the rationale for the timing of these proposed meeting dates.

Background - Analysis and Options

The VMC Subcommittee of Council reports to the Priorities and Key Initiatives Committee of Council and was established with a mandate to make recommendations that create the municipal framework and policy environment, consistent with Vaughan's broader city-building objectives. The Subcommittee will help to facilitate significant development of the VMC in a timeframe consistent with the opening of the subway and Highway 7 rapidway, including consideration the following:

- i) Planning policies;
- ii) Infrastructure implementation principles;
- iii) Requirements related to external approvals
- iv) Economic development strategy; and
- v) Communications/Advocacy

**REPORT NO. 2 OF THE VAUGHAN METROPOLITAN CENTRE SUB-COMMITTEE
FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE PRIORITIES AND KEY INITIATIVES COMMITTEE
JUNE 11, 2012**

The VMC Subcommittee provides an important forum for discussing the above issues. In addition, to the VMC Subcommittee process, there are a number of VMC related matters that are being addressed through the Committee of the Whole. For example, development applications and awards of contracts for VMC infrastructure projects such as the Black Creek Optimization Study and the Open Space Master Plan Strategy are subject to review and approval by the Committee of the Whole. Furthermore, proposed modifications to the Vaughan Metropolitan Centre Secondary Plan and site specific redevelopment applications are addressed through the Committee of the Whole. However, the VMC Subcommittee is distinguished from the Committee of the Whole in that broader VMC wide policy, economic development, infrastructure, approval, and communication issues are addressed on an area wide basis and not limited to individual applications.

It is important to have a regular forum for discussion on City building initiatives for the VMC. Staff are recommending meetings on a bi-monthly basis. This timing for VMC Subcommittee meetings would recognize the timing for established VMC Implementation Team meetings. The VMC staff Implementation Team comprises of senior manager representation from provincial ministries and agencies, the Region of York, the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority and City departments. The staff Implementation Team has been established to help expedite infrastructure and planning studies to set the stage for major redevelopment concurrent with subway operation. The VMC Implementation Team meeting is co-chaired by the Commissioner of Planning of Vaughan and the Director of Planning for the Region of York and meets monthly.

Staff feel it would be appropriate to report in on progress to the VMC Subcommittee on a bi-monthly basis considering the multi-year nature of the VMC project. In light of the above regular meetings of staff and the Committee of the Whole structure where VMC land use planning and infrastructure matters can be addressed, staff recommends that the VMC Subcommittee of PKI meet on a bi-monthly basis.

The City Clerk has confirmed that the dates of June 28, September 13, November 22, are available for such meetings recognizing existing committee meetings, the summer break and a the hiatus of Committee that occurs during the winter festive holiday season. Meetings are proposed to occur in the afternoons from 1:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m. in Committee Room 242/243.

Relationship to Vaughan Vision 2020/ Strategic Plan

This report on facilitating meeting dates for this Subcommittee is consistent with the priorities set forth in Vaughan Vision 2020 Strategic plan, through the following initiatives, specifically:

Service Excellence:

- Lead & Promote Environmental Sustainability
- Preserve our Heritage & Support Diversity, Arts & Culture

Organizational Excellence:

- Manage Corporate Assets
- Ensure Financial Sustainability
- Manage Growth & Economic Well-being

Regional Implications

The Region of York is a vital stakeholder in the process, and typically monitors the Subcommittee meetings and participates in City initiated studies discussed at the Subcommittee meetings.

**REPORT NO. 2 OF THE VAUGHAN METROPOLITAN CENTRE SUB-COMMITTEE
FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE PRIORITIES AND KEY INITIATIVES COMMITTEE
JUNE 11, 2012**

Conclusion

Staff has prepared this report on proposed meeting dates to assist the Subcommittee and stakeholders in planning for upcoming meetings. The proposed meeting schedule for the remainder of 2012, if endorsed by the Subcommittee of Council, will help provide a forum for important discussions to achieve Vaughan Metropolitan Center city building objectives and demonstrates the commitment to building a great downtown for the City.

Report prepared by:

Diana Birchall, Director of Policy Planning, ext 8411
John MacKenzie, Commissioner of Planning, ext 8445

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The meeting adjourned at 5:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Hon. Maurizio Bevilacqua, Mayor, Chair