In Praise of Public Service
December 17, 2010

Good afternoon and welcome to the Holiday Staff Luncheon.

Today I want to talk about some very special people namely you. The people who work here in this great city.

To everyone here today: I hope you know how vitally important you are to our future. In a very meaningful way you touch the lives of people in the City of Vaughan every day in every way. Your caring approach, your ability to understand, your capacity to focus on the individual, and your innate ability to fulfill a great purpose are all hallmarks of dedicated public service. Today I am here to speak in praise of public service in praise of you.

I want to say thank you – thank you for delivering such important services with unfaltering commitment, energy and dedication. It’s important to me to recognize the professionalism of our City’s staff under the leadership of City Manager Clayton Harris. You make our city proud.

I’ve always thought of public service not as a job; but a vocation. Think and reflect about what the term "public service" actually means. There is no greater calling then to be of service to others. No higher purpose then to make a difference to people’s lives.

We see it here every day. In the people on the front lines taking calls from the public at Access Vaughan, in the recreation staff at our community centres, and in our parks and forestry workers who keep our green spaces beautiful.

We see it in our planners and engineers who keep the City growing and infrastructure up-to-date, in our building inspectors who keep everyone safe, in our Clerks who keep track of a mountain of paperwork, and in our finance staff who make sure all the numbers add up correctly.
We see it in our Public Works crews who make sure our household waste is collected and the streets are plowed, our Fleet workers who keep City vehicles on the road, in our Building and Facilities staff who maintain all City buildings, and in our Information and Technology workers who make sure our computers and blackberries keep working.

We see it in our communications team who help to tell the Vaughan story, our economic development team who work to grow our business base, and in our men and women in uniform, who put their lives on the line every day for the safety and security of people of Vaughan.

We see in our enforcement staff who uphold our by-laws, in our Legal team who safeguard the integrity of our system, and in Human Resources, who work to find the amazing employees that serve the residents of Vaughan. We all want this City to work well for everyone. And we can make that happen best by sharing ideas and working in partnership. Every single employee of this city matters to me, to our Council, the Administration and to our citizens.

I know you take your heart and soul to work and do the best for everyone around you. You are the heart beat of our city. Let's work together to understand what it is that enables people to give the public great service and encourage that attitude. Let’s work together to achieve a great City that will be praised for its character and integrity.

A City that will be acclaimed for its responsible, sustainable planning and economic leadership.

A City that will be renowned for its first class administration, its transparency, its accountability and respect for the hard-earned taxpayers dollars.

A City that will exercise a leadership role well beyond its borders, contributing its ideas and sharing its knowledge widely.
A City willing to get out of its comfort zone, willing to innovate, take on challenges driven by the knowledge that history does not reward those who play it safe.

To make an organization successful it takes leadership, a clear vision, strong values, great service and of course, great people.
I have great respect for the work you do and I understand how and why you manage to accomplish so much.

It is because of your commitment to service excellence, teamwork, integrity, respect that our city is a vibrant and dynamic city and its people like you who continue to make it better every day.

You should be proud of your achievements and realize that by working together we can build on our successes.
I applaud the work you do each and every day.
We are very fortunate to work in a City that takes pride in its quality of life and its strong sense of community.

It is important, especially during the holiday season, that we come together as a community to help others.

The spirit of generosity is a defining trait of our City and you’ve all shown it today by donating a toy for our first annual toy drive in support of the CP24 CHUM Christmas Wish. Thank you.

I want to wish each and every one of you the very best of the holiday season and all the best for the coming New Year.

Thank you.