

CITY OF VAUGHAN

EXTRACT FROM COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF JUNE 4, 2013

Item 1, Report No. 4, of the Priorities and Key Initiatives Committee, which was adopted without amendment by the Council of the City of Vaughan on June 4, 2013.

1 **GREEN DIRECTIONS VAUGHAN COMMUNITY SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL MASTER PLAN IMPLEMENTATION UPDATE**

The Priorities and Key Initiatives Committee recommends:

- 1) That the recommendation contained in the following report of the Commissioner of Strategic and Corporate Services and the Manager of Environmental Sustainability, dated May 27, 2013, be approved; and
- 2) That Communication C2, presentation material, dated May 27, 2013, be received.

Recommendation

The Commissioner of Strategic and Corporate Services and the Manager of Environmental Sustainability in consultation with the Senior Management Team recommend:

1. That Attachment 1, 2 and 3, outlining progress to date in implementing the actions prescribed in *Green Directions Vaughan* and associated community sustainability and environmental indicators be received for information purposes; and,
2. That a Media Release be issued to inform the public of the advances made in implementing *Green Directions Vaughan* in the fourth year of implementation.

Contribution to Sustainability

Objective 6.1 of *Green Directions Vaughan (GDV)*, "To fully support the implementation of Green Directions at all levels of City operations", provides under Action 6.1.6 that, an annual report to the Environment Committee be prepared on the status of existing programs and accomplishments for the purpose of monitoring the implementation of the plan. With the sun setting of the Environment Committee in 2010, all subsequent update reports have been directed to the Priorities and Key Initiatives Committee. In addition, *GDV* subsection 4.2 Monitoring and Reporting on Progress notes that indicator reporting should complement the annual status update. Indicator reporting generates further awareness of the implementation progress.

Economic Impact

There will be no economic impact resulting from the adoption of this report.

Communications Plan

Following the fourth year of implementation of *Green Directions Vaughan* and first time reporting of indicators it would be worthwhile to issue a News Release highlighting this milestone. This is consistent with Goal 5 of *Green Directions Vaughan*, "To be leaders in advocacy and education on sustainability issues", where "Vaughan is committed to sharing its successes with the community". Staff will prepare a News Release showcasing areas of progress and notable indicators as *Green Directions Vaughan* implement continues. The Environmental Sustainability area of the Vaughan on-line website will highlight implementation status on all areas of the community sustainability and environmental master plan and feature all 24 *GDV* indicators.

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide the Priorities and Key Initiatives Committee with an update on the implementation of *Green Directions Vaughan* including reporting of 24 indicators.

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Background - Analysis and Options

Background

In April 2009 Council approved the *Green Directions Vaughan*, our Community Sustainability and Environmental Master Plan. As the City's sustainability plan, *Green Directions Vaughan* contains a set of recommended actions that address the range of municipal responsibilities including both operational and regulatory functions. It also serves as the City's Integrated Community Sustainability Plan (ICSP). The ICSP is a long-term plan designed to guide the community toward a more sustainable future by addressing environmental, cultural, social and economic issues.

Green Directions establishes a definition of "sustainability", an "environmental ethic" and a set of "principles" to guide the implementation of the plan. The definition of sustainability reflects the breadth of municipal responsibilities, where, "Sustainability means we make decisions and take actions that ensure a healthy environment, vibrant communities and economic vitality for current and future generations."

The plan identifies six categories that classify Vaughan's functions. These are further broken down into goals, objectives and a series of actions, which describe how each of the goals can be achieved. The categories and goals include:

What We Use:

Goal 1: To significantly reduce our use of natural resources and the amount of waste we generate.

How and Where we Grow:

Goal 2: To ensure sustainable development and redevelopment.

How We Get Around:

Goal 3: To ensure that Vaughan is a city that is easy to get around with low environmental impact.

How We Live:

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

How we Lead:

Goal 5: To be leaders in advocacy and education on sustainability issues.

How we Operate:

Goal 6: To ensure a supportive system for the implementation of *Green Directions*.

The objectives are more specific statements of the general goals and they describe how the goals will be achieved. Each of the goals has multiple objectives. The actions refer to tasks that need to be undertaken to achieve the prescribed objective. There can be multiple actions attached to each objective. Actions are assigned to a Commission for implementation within a specific timeframe.

On May 25, 2010, a report was received on the implementation of *Green Directions Vaughan* following the first anniversary of its approval. The report highlighted the status of existing programs, key accomplishments, new initiatives and further opportunities for the purposes of monitoring the implementation of the plan. The primary focus of the report was directed to projects that are identified in the 2009-10 timeframe or those that were targeted as "on-going".

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On April 5, 2011, a report was ratified by Council on the implementation of *Green Directions Vaughan* following the second anniversary of its approval. A media release and web based report highlighting specific actions under each of the six goal areas were generated as a result of the report recommendations.

In March 2012, it was reported that over 94% of the eighty five actions outlined in *Green Directions Vaughan* had been initiated. Fourteen of the forty-four action items which have established time frames were completed. On November 26, 2012, PKI approved 24 baseline indicators which would be reported on annually along with the *Green Directions Vaughan* implementation update beginning with the 2012 update in Q2/2013.

Report Format

A significant portion of the success of *Green Directions Vaughan* will depend on the internal operations and functions that support its implementation. In order to monitor the implementation of the plan, action 6.1.6 indicates the City should prepare an annual report addressing, among other things:

- The status of existing programs
- New Initiatives
- Accomplishments
- Further opportunities.

Although action 6.1.6 makes reference to new initiatives, this report will focus predominantly on the action items that have been implemented, planned within the initial timeframe of *GDV* or classified as ongoing. In an effort to keep the Community Sustainability and Environmental Master Plan a dynamic and living document, the Environmental Sustainability Office will continue to explore new initiatives with Council particularly as *GDV* comes up for renewal.

As of March 2013, 96% of the 85 actions outlined in *Green Directions Vaughan* have been initiated. All of the actions yet to be initiated are dependent on activities currently underway and have been targeted for the later portion of the implementation timeframe. Six action items which have established time frames are fully completed as no further updates were provided. The owners of the actions with established time frames will be encouraged to finalize these actions throughout 2013 where possible.

Five actions within *Green Directions Vaughan* were determined to be progressing below expectations in 2012. These actions include: 1.1.6 Green Fleet strategy; 1.4.2 City facilities water reduction target; 1.4.3 City Facilities water use; 1.5.2 City facilities waste audit; 1.5.5 Green Procurement policy. Usually, these actions had been assigned a time frame earlier in the implementation schedule and had not yet been completed or the action reported was deemed to show very little advancement compared to previous years. In these cases, senior leadership was made aware of the situation and a methodology for enhancing implementation success was developed. It is expected that these efforts should lead to improved implementation results in 2013.

Attachment No.1 is based on the section within *GDV* that summarizes actions for each action item; the Goals, Objectives, Time Frames and Project Responsibility have been noted. A final column summarizes the update for each action item as of March 2013.

Highlights

In order to highlight the implementation progress of *Green Directions*, a few initiatives have been selected to report back on. These select projects are currently underway or have been recently

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completed. These representative projects also correspond to the three main pillars of sustainability; healthy environment, economic vitality and vibrant community. Further details about these highlighted initiatives noted below can be found in Attachment 2.

- Develop and implement a citizens engagement strategy
- Demonstrate support for renewable energy use and generation by businesses and citizens.
- Evaluate greenhouse gas emissions
- Develop a comprehensive Natural Heritage Strategy
- Encourage environmentally friendly or progressive businesses to set up in Vaughan

Indicators

Core indicators help to measure the impact of the outcomes and outputs of *Green Directions Vaughan*. In section 4.2 of *Green Directions Vaughan*, reference is made to reporting on changes in sustainability/environmental indicators for the purposes of reporting on implementation progress. Sustainability Indicators are also referenced in Appendix C of the Community Sustainability and Environmental Master Plan as the City of Vaughan's funding agreement with the Association of Municipalities of Ontario on Federal Gas Tax Revenues noted that indicators related to cleaner air, cleaner water and lower greenhouse gas emissions should be established. With implementation of *Green Directions Vaughan* well underway, it is important to establish indicators in order to monitor the changes that have occurred as a result of implementing the Master Plan.

In November 2012, Council adopted 24 quantitative indicators to measure the impact of the outcomes of *Green Directions Vaughan*. The indicators selected align with the strategic framework of the City; correspond to indicators being tracked in the Global City Indicators project; meaningful to the departments responsible for tracking them; and, compatible with existing benchmarks.

Initially, 2011 was intended to be established as the baseline year for the 24 indicators. However, two of the indicators pertaining to air quality, the 2011 and 2012 data sets have yet to be released by the Ministry of the Environment. Therefore, the most recent year has been highlighted in the summary table. Similarly, baseline numbers for water use and community greenhouse emissions were noted for the years for which the data was available. Another data set on land use, specifically on greenspace, is pending data verification and will be sent to Council under separate communication in Q2/2013.

Although it is still very early in the indicator tracking environment, it was encouraging to see notable improvements in several categories. The daily volume of water used per person experienced a 22% decrease between 2009 and 2012. The volume of building floor area, certified under recognized green building programs, increased by 77% from 2011 to 2012. Another measure for determining an active community (which monitors total participant hours in recreation programs) increased by 14% from 2011 to 2012. In terms of economic activity, the number of jobs provided by Vaughan based businesses increased slightly by 3% from 2011 to 2012.

A few of the indicators experienced a small drop between 2011 and 2012. Environmentally related public outreach events held by the City of Vaughan increased by one event but the overall number of attendees decreased by 19%. The Earth Hour celebration at City Hall, which attracted 500 participants, was added however participation in the 20 Minute Makeover decreased in 2012.

As discussed in the November 2012 PKI staff report, there are several initiatives which could provide useful comparators for *Green Directions Vaughan* indicators. These include Global City Indicators, the Toronto Region Conservation Authority Living City Report Card and the Green Cities Index. For this initial reporting on GDV indicators, it would be worthwhile to determine if a

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select few *GDV* indicators were in the same range as the aforementioned indicator sets. Table 1 outlines a few select indicators and appropriate benchmarks. Another *GDV* indicator, Building floor area certified under recognized green building programs compares very favourably with the Green Cities Index indicator of number of LEED certified buildings per 100,000 people. While developing the *GDV* indicator it was determined that there were 20 LEED certified buildings in Vaughan in 2011 (6.6/100,000 people) which is slightly above the Green City Index average of 6.4/100,000 people. Attachment 3 outlines all 24 indicators for 2011 and 2012.

Table 1: Benchmarking *GDV* Indicators

Indicator	Green Directions Vaughan	Benchmark indicator	Source
Residential waste diversion	69 %	50 %	Living City Report
Daily volume of water used per person	214 L	274 L (2009)	2011 Municipal Water Use – Environment Canada
Community Greenhouse Gas emissions	1.33 M tonnes eCO ₂	53 M tonnes eCO ₂ (GTA wide)	Living City Report

Relationship to Vaughan Vision 2020/Strategic Plan

This report is consistent with the *Green Directions Vaughan* objective to lead and promote environmental sustainability and implement the Community Sustainability and Environmental Master Plan.

Regional Implications

There are no Regional implications resulting from the adoption of this report.

Conclusion

The implementation phase of *Green Directions Vaughan*, the City of Vaughan's Community Sustainability and Environmental Master Plan continued throughout 2012. A number of the major initiatives have progressed significantly as to be expected during this maturing stage of the implementation process.

Five actions within *Green Directions Vaughan*, representing about 6% of the total actions, are progressing slowly. A methodology for enhancing implementation success of each of the actions has been established. It is anticipated that significant progress on these actions will be achieved in 2013.

The fourth year of reporting qualitatively was complemented by a set of 24 quantitative indicators. These quantitative indicators, approved by Council in November 2012, were derived from a combination of internal and external sources. Some of the indicators showed improvement between 2011 and 2012. However, given the infancy of indicator tracking more time is required to determine if the indicator results are reflective of the implementation of *Green Directions Vaughan*.

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Attachments

1. Green Directions Vaughan
Community Sustainability and Environmental Master Plan
Implementation Update
March 2013
2. Highlights- Green Directions Vaughan Implementation
3. Green Directions Vaughan Indicators

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(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.)