

## **CITY OF VAUGHAN**

### **EXTRACT FROM COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF JUNE 4, 2013**

Item 2, 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.

## **2 “ACTIVE TOGETHER” MASTER PLAN FOR PARKS, RECREATION AND LIBRARIES – 2013 REVIEW AND UPDATE**

**The Priorities and Key Initiatives Committee recommends:**

- 1) That the recommendation contained in the following report of the Commissioner of Community Services, dated May 27, 2013, be approved; and**
- 2) That the following Communications be received:**
  - C1 Ms. Margie Singleton, Chief Executive Officer, Vaughan Public Libraries, dated May 21, 2013; and**
  - C3 Presentation material, dated May 27, 2013.**

### **Recommendation**

The Commissioner of Community Services, in consultation with the Senior Management Team and the CEO of the Vaughan Public Libraries, recommends:

- 1) That the presentation by Jean Monteith and Steve Langlois, Monteith + Brown Planning Consultants, and presentation material be received; and,**
- 2) That the “Active Together” Master Plan – 2013 Review and Update, be approved in principle subject to reconciliation and implication assessment with other completed and ongoing City of Vaughan Master Plans.**

### **Contribution to Sustainability**

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

**Goal 2, Objective 2.2.3:**

- To develop Vaughan as a City with maximum green space and an urban form that supports our expected population growth.

**2.2.3 Continue to develop a Parkland/Open Space Acquisition Strategy.**

**Goal 4, Objective 4.1.1 and 4.1.9**

- To foster a city with strong social cohesion, an engaging arts scene, and a clear sense of its culture and heritage.
  - 4.1.1 Develop an implementation plan for the initiatives described in the City's Active Together Master Plan through a phased and budgeted program.**
  - 4.1.9 Support outdoor recreation activities that engage citizens and visitors in our natural and green spaces as described in Vaughan's Active Together Master Plan.**

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**Economic Impact**

This report has no economic impact at this time, as the 2013 Active Together Master Plan (ATMP) is intended as a detailed City parks, recreation and library needs assessment providing guidance on community priorities and the general course for meeting those needs. The full implementation of this Plan will generate future financial pressures but will be subject to several factors, including population growth, land and resource availability, and competing City initiatives. The true pressures related to the recommendations in the ATMP will be determined through the City's multi-year budget process, of which a number of the items discussed within the ATMP are recognized as part of the current 2013-16 Capital Budget and supported by the recent Development Charge Background Study. Should the proposed timing not align with the City's future funding capacity, it is possible for project timing to shift and/or lower priority items to be deferred.

As a result, an effort was undertaken to estimate the cost of implementing the ATMP. The recommendations on facility and park requirements based on the needs assessment and infrastructure timing contained in the ATMP have been analyzed and both Operating and Capital costs have been calculated using information provided by the subject departments. Summaries of this costing can be found in the Financial Summary section of this item.

**Communications Plan**

Communication was an essential component of the 2013 review and update of the 2008 Active Together Master Plan.

The public and stakeholder process included various strategies to consult with residents, key internal and external stakeholders (e.g. Council, community organizations, boards and agencies and staff) to determine needs, preferences, emerging trends, opportunities to remove barriers to participation and to define priorities for implementation. As the keys to successful communication and consultation are to achieve broad community involvement and consensus in the formulation, the consultation approach was geared to achieve this result.

The following internal and external communication and consultation efforts were utilized:

1. A communications plan and awareness strategy was developed consisting of the website, posters, TV monitors and recreation guide. The website includes copies of background information, presentations and the draft Active Together Master Plan – 2013 Review and Update.
2. External interviews were held including SAVI, other agencies and community organizations such as the school boards, Welcome Centre, Nature Conservancy, TRCA, and York Region.
3. Internal interviews and meetings were held with the Mayor, Councillors, Library Board, Senior Management Team and departments including Development Planning, Urban Design, Legal and Finance as well as the participating departments Recreation and Culture, Parks Development, Building and Facilities, Parks and Forestry Operations and the Vaughan Public Libraries.
4. An online stakeholder group survey was launched to obtain information on activities, usage metrics and future needs.
5. Three public information sessions were held to inform the public and obtain broad-based input.

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6. Participation in the Sports Congress, Youth Forum and Vaughan Accessibility Advisory Committee meeting to engage the participants in planning for the future.
7. A random sample telephone survey of Vaughan households was conducted to collect statically significant data on the attitudes towards various aspects of parks, recreation and library facilities.

Once approved by Council, a communications plan building upon the above community consultation process will be developed in conjunction with the Corporate Communications Department.

#### **Purpose**

The purpose of this report is to have Council receive the presentation and approve in principle the Active Together Master Plan – 2013 Review and Update.

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

Parks, recreation and libraries are vital assets in communities and essential to the well-being of residents. They come in a myriad of shapes, sizes and amenities, provide a sense of place in the community and allow for social integration, physical activity, education, access to nature and discovery to name a few.

In 2008, recognizing that parks, recreation and library facilities are fundamental building blocks and that an integrated long range, responsible and sustainable strategy that guides their development is an essential planning component; the “Active Together” Master Plan was approved in principle. The 2008 Active Together Master Plan was designed to be a living document that would be adaptable to change and although it contained a long term projection of needs, it was recommended that it be reviewed every five years due to Vaughan’s significant growth, shifts in community needs and changes in planning and land use policies.

In the Fall of 2012, Community Services engaged the services of Monteith + Brown Planning Consultants to undertake a review and update of the 2008 Active Together Master Plan. As well a Technical Advisory Committee made up of staff in Recreation and Culture, Parks Developments, Parks and Forestry Operations, Building and Facilities, Urban Design, Finance and the Vaughan Public Libraries was formed to lead the review.

The primary objective of the review is to reassess and make recommendations on facility and park requirements for the next 8 to 10 years taking into account the ways Vaughan is evolving and where necessary, make adjustments to respond to changing needs.

Much has changed since the 2008 Active Together Master Plan including, but not limited to, the following:

- Continued growth and development;
- Development of a new Official Plan including some higher density areas;
- Changing demographics, particularly related to ethnicity, socio economic and aging;
- Opening of the new North Thornhill Community Centre and expansion of Vellore;
- Significant land acquisitions such as North Maple Regional Park and MacMillan Farm;
- Reconsideration of the Library Facilities Plan and the impact of technology;
- Continued expansion of recreation and library programs and services and increasing expectations from residents in term of quality customer service;

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- Emerging interest in activities such as off-leash dog walking, indoor tennis, rugby, football, picnic areas, etc., as well as an increasing emphasis on health, wellness and active living; and,
- Ever-pressing need for sustainable plans with planning strategies that seek a balance between budget resources and service provision recognizing that parks, recreation and libraries cannot and should not operate at full cost recovery levels.

#### **Active Together Master Plan – 2013 Review and Update**

The 2013 Active Together Master Plan (ATMP) builds upon the previous plan with renewed emphasis on the sustainable provision of parks, recreation and library facilities. Specifically the following tasks were completed:

1. The per capita facility and park supplies have been updated, along with key population characteristics;
2. Trends and local participation data have been reviewed within the Vaughan context;
3. Key municipal reports and planning documents (including the new Official Plan and various secondary plans, Long Range Financial Plan, Development Charges Background Study, Creative Together Plan, Program Services Review, Accessibility Plan, etc.) have been assessed, as have best practices from other municipalities;
4. Recommendations from the 2008 Active Together Master Plan have been reviewed and updated to reflect current circumstances and needs, with a focus on new strategies to emerging issues.

To assist with these tasks, user groups, stakeholders, the general public, organizations and agencies, and municipal officials and staff have been consulted extensively to identify issues, community needs, and future strategies.

*Note:* While services, operations and programming are indirectly considered as part of the analysis, there are no specific recommendations in this plan – the emphasis is on parks, recreation and library facilities.

#### **What We Have Heard**

- Demand for more libraries (top survey response), specifically at the North Thornhill Community Centre;
- Vaughan is lagging behind in the development and promotion of trails;
- Several requests for more sports fields (soccer, softball, cricket, football);
- Requests for park amenities, such as off-leash dog parks, water play facilities, picnic areas, etc.;
- The equitable distribution of community facilities should be a priority e.g., community space in Kleinburg;
- Older community centres need to be upgraded to meet the current level of service offered at newer facilities.

#### **Key Themes Addressed in the Update**

- Impact of changing growth patterns on facility and park needs and distribution – residential intensification means we need to start thinking differently about how to deal with recreation needs e.g., partnerships, revitalization of existing assets, indoor space, etc.;
- Growing demand for adult and older adult activities;

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- More unstructured and drop-in activities;
- Addressing emerging needs, such as off-leash areas, artificial turf, picnic areas, new soccer field sizes, etc.;
- Expanding the system of library facilities;
- Strategies for older recreation facilities;
- Maximizing parkland dedication;
- Funding and financial sustainability.

#### **Guiding Principles**

The following guiding principles are recommended in the updated ATMP when designing, funding, and constructing and to some degree operating parks, recreation and library facilities:

1. **Integrated and coordinated** – Co-location of parks, recreation and library, and other civic facilities should continue to be a priority for the City. Section 7.2.1.4 of the City's new Official Plan states that it is a policy of Council: "To encourage and support the development of joint and/or shared community facilities, such as schools, community centres, libraries, daycare or other appropriate facilities on shared sites and, where appropriate, adjacent to public parks."
2. **Multi-use and multi-generational** – Multi-use facilities are generally preferred over stand-alone single purpose facilities, the development of which is discouraged due to operational inefficiencies and the narrow range of uses that can be accommodated.
3. **Accessible and connected** – New community centres, libraries and district parks should, at a minimum, be located in highly accessible locations and on transit routes, have high visual identification and be designed in consultation with community representatives to ensure spaces are responsive to their users. This is supported in Section 7.2.1 of the City's new Official Plan, which states: "Conveniently located and accessible community services and facilities are critical to the success of municipal programs and services, and contribute directly to the health and social well-being of communities. Community services and facilities should be integrated into existing and New Community Areas, and located within intensification areas and other central locations in order to facilitate access and use."
4. **Flexible** – The inclusion of flexible multi-purpose spaces should be considered in the design of all community centres, public libraries, and appropriate civic facilities.
5. **Delivered in partnership with others** – Where appropriate and in the public's best interest, the City should pursue partnerships in the provision and delivery of parks and facilities. Guidance may be sought from the Council-approved program framework to determine potential involvement of various parties.
6. **Provided in response to target market needs** – This ATMP provides a basis for identifying and prioritizing City-wide and community specific needs and should be referenced as opportunities arise. Facilities and parks should be designed for their intended function, be it City-wide, community or neighbourhood.
7. **Provided in a timely fashion** – Where required, land for major facilities should be secured well in advance of construction to leverage lower land values and promote integrated planning.
8. **Affordable and financially sustainable** – Fiscal responsibility will be a key principle in the provision of parks and facilities (e.g. achieving cost recovery targets), as well as affordable access.

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9. **Environmentally responsible** – New and substantially renovated community recreation and library facilities should be designed to incorporate “green” technologies to a level supported by LEED or equivalent standards, thereby reinforcing the City’s role as a leader in environmental efficiency and stewardship.
10. **Inclusive of persons with disabilities** – The City should continue to ensure that regulations established in the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) are met at all community facilities and parks.
11. **Identifiable** – The City should ensure that adequate and consistent signage exists at all parks, trails, and recreation and library facilities.

#### **Key Recommendations**

##### Community Centres:

- **Improved Signage** - explore options for installing electronic roadside signage and promotional banner or other means of signage that would effectively help to promote major facilities and libraries;
- **Public access to free wireless network** – provide access to WiFi at municipal community centres. WiFi is currently available at all Vaughan Public Library locations and City Hall only;
- **Pursue partnerships** with community agencies and the development community in areas with below average access to municipal community centres;
- **Community Centre Renewal** i.e., Fr. Ermanno Bulfon, Garnet A. Williams, and Dufferin Clark;
- **Community Centres:**
  - **Block 11** (Carrville) – arenas\* (2), gymnasium, program space, library;
  - **Block 41** (North Vellore) – arenas\* (2), aquatic centre, fitness, gymnasium, program space, library;
  - **Block 30E** (Vaughan Metropolitan Centre) – aquatic centre\*\*, fitness, gymnasium, program space, resource library;
- **Neighbourhood Hubs:**
  - Kleinburg/Nashville, Block 27 & Vaughan Mills (locations tbd) – gymnasium, fitness studio, program space, library branch (tbd);
  - Future locations to be determined (distribution gaps and growth areas).

\* *Arena development may be linked to re-purposing of Maple Arena and/or Memorial (Woodbridge) Arena*

\*\* *Pool development may be linked to re-purposing of Woodbridge Pool (therapeutic pool to remain)*

##### Libraries:

- **Branches:** North Thornhill Community Centre, Vellore Village Community Centre, Block 11 Community Centre\*, Block 41 Community Centre, Kleinburg (larger branch, possible co-location with neighbourhood hub), future branch development beyond 2021 (tbd);

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- **Resource Libraries:** Civic Centre\*, Vaughan Metropolitan Centre

\* *Reassess Maple Library*

#### Outdoor Recreation:

- **Parkland** – acquisition may be necessary to address shortfall (see Parkland, below);
- **Off Road Trails** – to be considered in future studies;
- **Soccer Fields** – 38 additional fields by 2031, range of sizes/types;
- **Ball Diamonds** – explore options for creating more adult diamonds (4 conversions and 12+ new diamonds), repurpose under-utilized and low quality diamonds;
- **Other Sports Fields** – 2 cricket pitches and 2 multi-use fields recommended (rugby and football);
- **Courts** – more tennis and basketball courts in growing areas;
- **Skateboarding** – 3 larger skate parks across the City, continued development of smaller “skate zones”;
- **Water play Facilities** – one per residential block;
- **Playgrounds** – within 500-metres of all urban residences;
- **Off-leash Dog Parks** – one in each quadrant (3 more) (explore options for smaller, more localized off-leash areas);
- **Outdoor Skating Rinks** – continued development in growth areas;
- **Picnic Areas** – additional sites will be required.

#### Parkland:

- City-wide target for “active parkland” = 2.2 hectares per 1,000 resident – current ratio is 1.9ha/1,000, but this excludes the undeveloped North Maple Regional Park (80ha);
- Develop an Urban Parkland hierarchy and conveyance policies for parkland dedication in higher density areas;
- Develop a Parkland Acquisition Strategy to identify alternative parkland provision mechanisms and potential priority properties for acquisition.

#### Financial Summary

1. **Operating Costs** – The total estimated operating cost impacts of the recommendations in the ATMP are detailed in the table below. All costs shown are net of revenues.

<b>Total Operating Cost</b>	<b>Short-Term (2013-2016)</b>	<b>Medium-Term (2017-2021)</b>	<b>Long-Term (2022-2031)</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Operating Costs + Infrastructure Funding</b>	\$6,702,436	\$8,141,675	\$12,778,036	\$27,622,147
<b>Average Yearly Tax Impact</b>	\$1,675,609	\$1,628,335	\$1,277,804	\$1,453,797
<b>Estimated Average Yearly Tax % Impact</b>	1.01%	0.89%	0.62%	0.77%

In addition to the above table, there are one-time Co-Funding payments attached to the timing of new growth based facilities (see summary below). These costs are typically funded through the City's capital from taxation budget and compete with other growth

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related or corporate initiative projects. Due to the variability of City projects, it is difficult to estimate the financial impact. However, pressure on this funding source is significant, which could result in shifting the timing of the recommendations in ATMP in order to balance projects year-to-year both with ATMP recommendations and other City-wide infrastructure projects competing for the same funds. For this reason, an estimated tax rate increase is not provided. It should be noted the average four year historical capital from taxation amount for ATMP related services was \$1.5 million and the average in the multi-year budget is \$2.1 million, both slightly below the ATMP forecast average.

<b>Total Co-Funding Cost</b>	<b>Short-Term (2013-2016)</b>	<b>Medium-Term (2017-2021)</b>	<b>Long-Term (2022-2031)</b>	<b>Total</b>
Co-Funding Costs	\$9,614,865	\$21,091,001	\$15,919,940	\$46,625,806
Average Yearly Co-Funding Cost	\$2,403,716	\$4,218,200	\$1,591,994	\$2,453,990

- 2. Capital Costs** – In addition to the operating costs, detailed financial analysis was prepared in relation to the capital costs in the short, medium and long term. These costs are funded from a number of sources including Development Charges, Cash In Lieu and Co-Funding. The following table shows gross capital costs, which include the Co-Funding amounts discussed in the operating section above.

<b>Total Capital Cost</b>	<b>Short-Term (2013-2016)</b>	<b>Medium-Term (2017-2021)</b>	<b>Long-Term (2022-2031)</b>	<b>Total</b>
Gross Capital Cost	\$101,708,327	\$226,491,920	\$212,587,093	\$540,787,340
Average Yearly Capital Cost	\$25,427,082	\$45,298,384	\$21,258,709	\$28,462,492

The majority of the capital cost is growth related and therefore DC funded. The proposed timing of the projects will generate pressures on the DC reserve balances. In the short-term, the DC reserves are adequate. In the medium and long terms there may be issues with the timing of projects and DC collection as current City policy mandates that capital projects are not approved until funds are on hand.

CIL is used for parkland purchases and the timing of the purchases in ATMP is in-line with the expected CIL balances. The ATMP identifies land availability as an issue and may necessitate acquiring more land in advance to protect City interests, which would place additional pressure on the CIL reserve level. Depending on the timing of land purchases, it may be necessary to seek other funding sources. A land acquisition strategy would be a great asset in this regard.

- 3. Renewal of Existing Infrastructure** – Recently the City has put in place an Infrastructure Reserve Policy. The operating costs shown above include a provision for future repair and replacement of all the additions being recommended in the ATMP. However, a significant gap exists in funding renewal for existing assets. Though this issue is consistent for most Canadian municipalities, this is an issue that needs to be addressed as this network of infrastructure provides the foundation supporting Recreation, Library and Park programs and services. As illustrated in the Financial Master Plan (FMP), resources will be required to overcome this challenge. The FMP detailed a City-wide funding gap net of reserves which is expected to grow. Within this balance is a backlog in the magnitude of \$28 million related to buildings and parks. These figures will further substantiate through the development of a corporate-wide asset management initiative.



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To address a small portion of the above, the ATMP speaks to the potential of using CIL to partially fund the renewal of existing park infrastructure. This action can be considered, but will place additional pressure on the City's ability to acquire parkland.

#### **Relationship to Vaughan Vision 2020/Strategic Plan**

In consideration of the strategic priorities related to Vaughan Vision 2020, this report will provide:

- **STRATEGIC GOAL:**  
Service Excellence – Providing service excellence to citizens.
- **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES:**  
Enhance and Ensure Community Safety, Health and Wellness.

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

#### **Regional Implications**

Not applicable.

#### **Conclusion**

The 2013 Active Together Master Plan (ATMP) addresses short-term and long-term parks and facility requirements for the City of Vaughan and Vaughan Public Libraries. Following an extensive review including in-depth research, stakeholder consultation and analysis, the ATMP outlines a sustainable strategy that meets the evolving needs of Vaughan residents. Staff recommend that Council approve the updated 2013 ATMP in principle subject to recompilation with other completed and ongoing City of Vaughan Master Plans.

#### **Attachments**

1. Active Together Master Plan – 2013 Review and Update (Members of Council only)

The Active Together Master Plan is on the City website, at:

[www.vaughan.ca/services/recreation/Active%20Together/Pages/Active-Together-Master-Plan.aspx](http://www.vaughan.ca/services/recreation/Active%20Together/Pages/Active-Together-Master-Plan.aspx)

#### **Report Prepared By**

Mary Reali, Director of Recreation and Culture, ext. 8234

Howard Balter, Program Costing & Special Projects Manager, Financial Services, ext 8338

(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.)