

**CITY OF VAUGHAN**  
**REPORT NO. 4 OF THE**  
**VAUGHAN METROPOLITAN CENTRE**  
**SUB-COMMITTEE**

***For consideration by the Committee of the Whole  
of the City of Vaughan  
on October 5, 2016***

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The Vaughan Metropolitan Centre Sub-Committee met at 3:07 p.m. on September 22, 2016.

Members Present: Mayor Maurizio Bevilacqua, Chair  
Regional Councillor Michael Di Biase  
Councillor Sandra Yeung Racco

The following items were dealt with:

**1** **HIGHWAY 7 STREET BANNER PROGRAM**

**The Vaughan Metropolitan Centre Sub-Committee advises Council:**

- 1) That the recommendation contained in the following report of the Deputy City Manager of Planning and Growth Management and the Senior Manager of Economic Development, was approved.**

**Recommendation**

The Deputy City Manager of Planning and Growth Management and the Senior Manager of Economic Development, in consultation with the Chief Corporate Initiatives and Intergovernmental Relations, Director of Development Planning, Director of Transportation Services, Parks and Forestry Operations and Manager of Urban Design and Cultural Heritage, recommend:

1. That Council authorize staff to partner with the Friends of the Greenbelt Foundation for the purposes of designing, manufacturing and installing street banners along Highway 7 in the Vaughan Metropolitan Centre (VMC); and
2. That Council authorize the City Clerk to execute a Memorandum of Understanding / Agreement between the City of Vaughan and the Friends of the Greenbelt Foundation for the Highway 7 Street Banner program.

**Contribution to Sustainability**

Green Directions Vaughan embraces a *Sustainability First* principle and states that sustainability means the City shall make decisions and take actions that ensure a healthy environment, vibrant communities and economic vitality for current and future generations. Wayfinding and signage programs contribute to the identity and image of the VMC, as a vibrant downtown that attracts residents and business investment.

### **Economic Impact**

There is no economic impact associated with the approval of this report. City staff will undertake the design and installation of the banners with existing staff resources. The Friends of the Greenbelt are committed to covering the full manufacturing or production costs of all banners to be installed on Highway 7.

### **Communications Plan**

City staff will work with the Foundation to seek opportunities to co-operatively promote its joint banner program. Staff has advised the Region of York and York Region Transit that street banners will be installed along the 3.5 kilometre stretch of Highway 7 that falls within the VMC.

#### **Key Messages:**

1. In partnership with York Region, the City has invested in streetscape enhancements along Highway 7, including enhanced street tree plantings, street furniture, custom pavement installations, pedestrian lighting, and signage bracket arms.
2. The VMC currently lacks any identity or wayfinding signage.
3. Consistent signage would serve to enhance public awareness of the VMC, while fulfilling wayfinding functions.
4. Banner signage developed in partnership with the Friends of the Greenbelt Foundation is consistent with what differentiates the VMC apart from other downtowns – the only downtown in the Greater Toronto Area that has a large natural heritage and open space system at its core, creating an intersection between the urban environment and Greenbelt.

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this report is to seek Council approval to partner with the Friends of the Greenbelt for the purposes of designing, manufacturing and installing street banners along Highway 7 in the VMC.

### **Background – Analysis and Options**

The VMC Secondary Plan articulates a vision for the downtown that incorporates the following principles: pedestrian-friendly, walkable public realm, transit supportive development, beautiful private and public interfaces, economic vitality and environmental sustainability. Consistent with and building upon the VMC Secondary Plan, the VMC Streetscape and Open Space Plan further articulates landscape strategies and design guidelines for creating high quality, publicly-accessible pedestrian circulation, social and recreational spaces.

Council adopted the report “*City-Wide Public Art Program*” (Committee of the Whole (Working Session) Report No. 26, Item 6) at the June 7<sup>th</sup>, 2016 Council meeting. With the adoption of this report, Council also approved the VMC Culture and Public Art Framework, an implementation plan which sets out a suite of actions and initiatives aimed at creating a sense of place for the VMC that attracts new residents and business investments to the downtown. In addition to public art, community and cultural engagements required to activate the VMC, streetscape and wayfinding measures also contribute to the identity of the VMC.

These three documents provide the vision and policy framework to shape the City’s new downtown. The time has come for the realization of this vision, especially as the Mobility Hub and Edgeley Pond and Park – the two priority areas within the VMC – are starting to take shape with transit infrastructure, residences, office towers and community spaces under construction or substantially complete.

The extensive work that the City has undertaken in placemaking and city-building through these studies aligns and complements the Greenbelt Plan: promoting social, economic and environmental sustainability through thoughtful resource use; integration of urban and natural spaces to create

linkages that raise the awareness of natural heritage and cultural systems as the backbone of human settlement; and a foundation for social and economic development.

***Leveraging partnerships to offset the costs of projects***

The VMC Cultural and Public Art Framework recognizes that the number and scope of activities, initiatives and activation projects that can or will be undertaken is subject to budgetary constraints, as well as construction phasing and landowners' interests. Thus, when the Friends of the Greenbelt Foundation approached City staff for our interest in their Lamp Banner Signage initiative, it presented an opportunity to achieve signage and wayfinding objectives in the VMC and deliver on one of the early quick-wins identified through the study.

The Foundation first approached City staff in 2013. While initially interested in heritage areas as potential locations for the banner program, the Foundation became intrigued with the VMC as a new approach to message out the Greenbelt within an urban setting. Staff provided the Foundation with a briefing on the development and construction activity, and the City's public realm infrastructure.

A Draft Proposal (Attachment 1) from the Foundation was received, confirming that it was prepared to provide up to 120 banners, at no cost to the City, in exchange for the City covering installation and maintenance services. The partnership proposes that the Foundation would have 50 percent of the banners branded for the Greenbelt with the remainder being allocated to the City and Region. The Foundation would work co-operatively with the City to co-brand the banners to achieve the objectives of both organizations.

***Highway 7 is the most travelled corridor in the Region***

Having invested, in partnership with York Region, in enhanced-level streetscape capital improvements in the VMC, Highway 7 has enhanced public realm features, including boulevard tree plantings and planters, street furniture, custom pavement treatments, pedestrian lighting and bracket arms for banners. In 2015/2016, the City erected more than 100 street light poles, of which 63 have banner brackets and arms along Phase 1 of the Highway 7 vivaNext rapidway corridor – approximately 3.5 kilometres of roadway within the VMC.

Aside from the provincial highways, Highway 7 is the most intensively travelled road corridor within the Region. According to York Region's traffic data, in 2015 Highway 7 experienced average annual daily traffic (AADT) volumes exceeding 87,000 vehicles per day at the intersection of Highway 7 and Highway 400 and 94,000 vehicles at the Highway 7 and Jane Street intersection. Additionally, it is projected that daily transit ridership in the Mobility Hub may reach 19,000 by 2019.

Given the traffic volume of Highway 7, staff recommends that the proposed banner program be installed along Highway 7 to capitalize on the public exposure and visibility to raise the profile of the new downtown. The choice of Highway 7 within the VMC has its opportunities and challenges. The design of the banners must take into account: vehicular traffic volumes, speed of travel, visual distractions, automobile and pedestrian sightlines, visual clutter and competition with other physical realm elements.

***Banner Concepts - A thoughtful integration of vision, images and key messages***

In light of these considerations, and for the banners to be impactful, the design of the banners needs to be relatively simple but inviting. A starting point for the design is the VMC wordmark "It'll Move You" and branding message: "the Heart of Your New Downtown", both of which convey literally and figuratively the VMC as the heart of our community, belonging to all its residents and filled with grand aspirations.

Banner design and development will be undertaken as a joint City/Foundation effort. This ensures that the project has cohesive and complementary messaging that fulfills the objectives of both

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organizations. The banner concepts being proposed include the following themes:

- Transit-supportive growth
- Urban/natural interface - connectivity
- Environmental sustainability – green and natural
- Building complete communities – walkable, pedestrian-friendly
- Economic vitality – working, shopping and dining locally, including local food
- Celebrating heritage, arts and culture

With Council's approval of this report, staff will work with the Foundation on the creative concepts in preparation for a Q1 2017 launch.

Banners would be installed on Highway 7, starting from Highway 400 and moving eastward. Staff proposes that a two-phased approach be undertaken. Phase 1, taking place in 2017: installation of half of the banners as a teaser campaign in anticipation of the opening of the subway extension. In the following year, the balance of the banners would be installed, with images and text that addresses a broader vision of the VMC.

The phased approach allows the City to transition its focus from public transit investments, to a more holistic level of community building that includes the recognition of its urban and natural spaces, parks, shopping, dining, culture and entertainment. This strategic approach recognizes that transit will occupy the public psyche and media's attention in 2017, given the planned subway and regional bus terminal openings as well as the vivaNext enhanced services on Highway 7. The later phase installation shifts focus to creating a larger sense of place, coinciding with the public realm capital infrastructure projects (e.g. Transit Square, TTC Plaza, Millway Avenue redevelopment, Edgeley Pond retrofit and the YMCA, targeted opening in 2019), and associated cultural and community activations scheduled to begin in late 2017 to early 2018.

Taking this approach, the City can extend, change-out and refresh its branded wayfinding without incurring additional costs. The public whether travelling in autos, public transit, by bike or by foot, will start to see and feel the excitement of a subway coming and improved bus transit system, cultural and community activations, and at the same time, the wayfinding re-establishes the physical context of the VMC with recognized branding and signage as the City's new downtown.

#### ***Operations and Maintenance Considerations***

Under the provisions of the agreement, Transportation Services, Parks and Forestry Operations will install and maintain the banners as a services-in-kind contribution to the partnership. Expected physical lifecycle of the banners is less than one year. The proposal for the placement of the 120 banners factors in potential banner replacement needs due to wear and tear.

Continuation of the banner program beyond 2018 is subject to funding availability from the Foundation. Notwithstanding the completion of this initiative, staff is working on additional wayfinding and signage initiatives, including but not limited to, wayfinding and signage associated with Edgeley Pond and Park and potentially a gateway sign along Highway 7.

#### **Relationship to Term of Council Service Excellence Strategy Map (2014-2018)**

This report is consistent with the priorities set out in the Term of Council Service Excellence Strategy Map:

1. Facilitate the development of the VMC, and
2. Continue to cultivate an environmentally sustainable city.

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**Regional Implications**

In addition to those banners created for the Foundation and the City, it is also proposed that the Region will have a banner at each of the VMC entry points. The proposed street banner programs will be installed on the regional right-of-ways. As such, City staff will circulate a copy of this report to the appropriate department and seek their assistance and co-operation with the installation of the banners ensuring that there are no conflicts with any other work or construction in the boulevards and roadways.

**Conclusion**

The VMC Culture and Public Art Framework, completed earlier in 2016, articulates a series of 'quick wins' and short-term actions to raise community awareness and engagement in the downtown. This banner initiative is the earliest tactic to put the VMC brand front and centre with local residents and visitors. The banner partnership with the Friends of the Greenbelt Foundation allows the City to generate excitement about the VMC while creating linkages to the Greenbelt and nearby natural heritage systems that sustain and feed the urban core and our City as a whole.

**Attachment**

1. Friends of the Greenbelt – Draft Proposal

**Report prepared by:**

Amy Roots, VMC Project Manager, Planning, ext. 8035  
Shirley Kam, Senior Manager of Economic Development, ext. 8874

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

**2    YMCA CENTRE OF COMMUNITY, LIBRARY AND RECREATION SPACE PROJECT UPDATE  
VAUGHAN METROPOLITAN CENTRE**

**The Vaughan Metropolitan Centre Sub-Committee advises Council:**

- 1) That the recommendation contained in the following report of the Chief of Corporate Initiatives & Intergovernmental Relations, dated September 22, 2016, was approved; and
- 2) That the presentation by Mr. Andrew Filarski and Mr. Ted Watson of MacLennan Jaunkalns Miller Architects (MJMA), Toronto and C1, presentation material titled "*Vaughan Metropolitan Centre YMCA Centre of Community, Library and Recreation*", was received.

**Recommendation**

The Chief of Corporate Initiatives & Intergovernmental Relations in consultation with the Deputy City Manager Community Services and Chief Executive Officer Vaughan Public Libraries, recommend:

1. That this report and the accompanying presentation BE RECEIVED.

**Contribution to Sustainability**

As described in the City's Strategic Plan, Vaughan Vision 20|20, Vaughan will continue to be a community of choice that promotes diversity, innovation and opportunity for all citizens, fostering a vibrant community life that is inclusive, progressive, environmentally responsible and sustainable.

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Green Directions Vaughan embraces a Sustainability First principle. Goal four states that sustainability means we make decisions and take actions that focus on “How We Live.” Ensuring that actions by Council and Staff “create a vibrant community where citizens, business and visitors thrive”.

More specifically, the following objectives for goal four apply:

- 4.1.4 Through creative urban design, as described in the new Official Plan, enhance social cohesion by creating more:
  - common indoor and outdoor public spaces;
  - public art; parks and open space; and
  - central, accessible hubs for arts, culture, and recreation.
- 4.1.6 Provide more partnership opportunities for existing non-profit and volunteer groups to meet the community's social, cultural and recreational needs.
- 4.2. 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

### **Economic Impact**

There are no economic impacts resulting from this report. However, as previously reported to Council [Item 3, Report No. 10, of the Committee of the Whole (Working Session), on February 16, 2016] the agreement in principle between the City and the YMCA articulates that the City would be a contributing partner in funding the project. The total cost to build the proposed facilities is currently estimated at \$59.4 million which includes construction-related costs that have been estimated at a maximum of \$500 per square foot. The City's portion of this total project cost is estimated to be \$45.6 million and would consist 100 percent of the capital costs for the City library and City recreation facilities and 2/3 of the capital costs of the YMCA facility.

### **Communications Plan**

The VMC Project Management Team (PMT) and Strategic Advisory Team (SAT) continue to provide regular development activity updates to the VMC Sub-Committee of Council, with additional updates to Council and members of the Corporate Management Team (CMT) delivered through the regularly scheduled VMC *Moving Forward Newsletter*. Circulation of the newsletter has been broadened in 2016 to reach all City staff. Regular updates about VMC related projects continue to be posted to the City's dedicated website, [www.vaughan.ca/vmc](http://www.vaughan.ca/vmc).

### **Key Messages**

- The proposed YMCA Centre of Community including child care centre, library and recreation facility, are estimated to occupy a total of approximately 119,200 square feet, consisting of about 87,000 square feet for the YMCA, 22,000 square feet for the City recreation space and about 10,200 square feet for the City library.
- As a social anchor, this facility will draw a diverse mix of people to the new downtown who would not otherwise have a reason to come at this early stage of its development.
- The facility will activate the mobility hub as a destination by giving people a reason to spend time there (vs. just pass through).
- MacLennan Jaunkalns Miller Architects (MJMA) has developed a consistent 28 year legacy of design excellence in aquatic, sport, and wellness projects; designing hybrid public spaces that form the civic anchors of communities.

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- No firm has received more Athletic Business 'Facilities of Merit Awards' in the last 8 years than MJMA, 14 out of 80 since 2008. Athletic Business Awards are North America's premiere Aquatic and Recreation Design Excellence Awards;

**Purpose**

The purpose of this report and accompanying presentation is to introduce the Committee to MacLennan Jaunkalns Miller Architects (MJMA), the architectural firm selected by the YMCA through the YMCA's RFP process to undertake the detailed design of the YMCA, City Library and Community Centre Space.

**Background - Analysis and Options**

**The proposed YMCA Centre of Community, library and recreation space accomplish all of the goals set out in the ATMP for the Vaughan Metropolitan Centre.**

The City has been working with the YMCA to advance the development of a YMCA Centre of Community, library and recreation space in the VMC within a new SmartReit mixed-used development located at the corner of Apple Mill Road and Millway Avenue, adjacent to the YRT Bus Terminal. Council unanimously endorsed this project [Item 3, Report No. 10, of the Committee of the Whole (Working Session), on February 16, 2016].

The proposed facilities for the YMCA Centre of Community, including child care centre, City library and City recreation space are estimated to occupy a total of approximately 119,000 square feet, consisting of about 87,000 square feet for the YMCA, 22,000 square feet for the City recreation space and about 10,200 square feet for the City library.

The YMCA will be state-of-the-art; operating a swimming pool, large gymnasium, conditioning and weight room(s), stretching areas, program studios, and community spaces.

The YMCA is the largest provider of Not-for-Profit child care in Canada. The VMC location will provide approximately 5,000 square feet of child care space for infant to preschool age children. The YMCA Playing to Learn™ curriculum prepares children for primary school education by using play as a learning medium. Children are given opportunities to discover and explore in spaces that support and encourage social, emotional, cognitive and physical development.

**MJMA is recognized as one of Canada's leading specialist designers of projects of this type which allows MJMA to effectively listen to the YMCA and City to establish an optimal building space program.**

As a Toronto based firm, MJMA has been involved with projects across the country that play a pivotal role in community building — projects that merge overlapping programs and unique user combinations, to achieve new forms of integrated dynamic community hubs.

These projects, developed around sport, recreation, and wellness include a diverse range of programming, such as aquatics, gymnasias, fitness, libraries, health and therapy, community gathering and meeting spaces, sports fields and courts, child, teen, and seniors spaces – supporting both personal and civic wellness.

MJMA's experience with the YMCA on similar projects has been positive, fostering a strong client-architect relationship which allows for a unique understanding of the YMCA organization, its standards and goals, and the larger community it serves.

The multi-disciplinary practice includes trained and accredited designers in architecture, urban design, landscape architecture, interior design, and graphic design. MJMA has become Canada's premier specialists in community, recreation and aquatic architecture; known for designing uplifting, elegant

civic buildings that are aspirational yet functional, durable and on budget.

**Depth of experience in aquatics and community recreation, library integration and experience working with the YMCA and municipalities provides an unparalleled team.**

The MJMA team for this facility consists of the key members that have been involved with other YMCA projects:

- Andrew Filarski, Principal-in-Charge;
- Viktors Jaunkalns, Design Principal;
- Janouque LeRiche, Project Architect / Project Manager;
- Jason Wah, Job Captain / Contract Administrator; and
- Tarisha Dolyniuk, Interior Designer

#### **Relationship to Term of Council Service Excellence Strategy Map (2014-2018)**

The Term of Council Service Excellence Strategy Map identifies 16 Council priorities. The partnership with the YMCA directly impacts five of the priorities.

- Facilitate the development of the VMC
- Continue to ensure the safety and well-being of citizens
- Support and promote arts, culture, heritage and sports in the community
- Attract investment and create jobs
- Invest, renew and manage infrastructure and assets

#### **Regional Implications**

Building a downtown is an ambitious goal. Collaboration and partnerships with broader Regional stakeholders continues to be an important factor in ensuring the success of the VMC.

#### **Conclusion**

The YMCA Centre of Community, library and recreation space project is an important city-building initiative in the Vaughan Metropolitan Centre.

The approximately 119,200 square foot development will immediately help to create a liveable downtown and urban destination. The project integrates health and wellness with transit and mixed-use development, creating a truly transit-oriented development and people-first place, while simultaneously responding to the financial challenges of the City.

Since its inception, MJMA's core work has been the design of wellness and fitness facilities of various scales and sizes for a variety of clients. As a result, MJMA has developed an expertise in understanding program adjacencies and the efficient and clear planning of this facility type.

With this project, the Vaughan Metropolitan Centre becomes a leading example of successful planning and development for a mobility hub as a vibrant, mixed-use environment.

#### **Attachments**

N/A

#### **Report prepared by:**

Tim Simmonds, Chief Corporate Initiatives and Intergovernmental Relations, ext.8427





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sustainable VMC parks and open space network.

In order to assist with better understanding opportunities and constraints associated with developing and activating significant parkland in urban centres, including the exploration of alternative park management models with both public and private sector involvement, Parks Development staff have retained the services of Tim Marshall from ETM Associates (ETM). ETM specializes in public space management, project management and public space design and have assisted many municipalities in the United States with achieving successful park management structures involving public and private stakeholders.

Tim Marshall is the principal and owner of ETM and has been involved with public space management for over 30 years. Prior to establishing his firm, Tim served as the Deputy Administrator and Vice President for New York City's Central Park Conservancy. During his tenure with the Conservancy, he was involved in the development of the Central Park Restoration and Management Plan, and was directly responsible for its on-going implementation as well as of the day-to-day management of this iconic public space.

Since forming ETM, Tim has served as the driving force behind an impressive list of significant national and international public space projects. His extensive hands-on experience in the field has given him an intimate knowledge of park operations and management, and a robust approach to problem-solving, funding and public/private involvement.

Tim's philosophy is rooted in a belief that successful public spaces are achieved through deliberate and careful planning. His work is guided by the notion that parks and other public spaces that flourish are those that are not simply aesthetically pleasing, but those that rise above the commonplace in the quality of design, programming, facilities and maintenance.

Tim will provide a presentation to the VMC Sub-Committee regarding his experiences with various forms of public-private partnerships in order to help educate, inform and inspire the City of Vaughan as we begin to implement the vision established for our VMC parks and open space system.

**Relationship to Term of Council Service Excellence Strategy Map (2014-2018)**

The matters referred to in this report support Council's priority of facilitating the development of the VMC.

**Regional Implications**

Building a downtown is an ambitious goal. Collaboration with broader Regional stakeholders continues to be an important factor in ensuring the success of the VMC.

**Conclusion**

The VMC Secondary Plan has set a remarkable goal for parkland within Vaughan's new downtown and consideration is required on how to effectively and sustainably approach the development, operations and maintenance of the VMC parks and open space system.

**Attachments**

None.

**Report prepared by:**

Gerardo Paez Alonso, VMC Project Manager (Parks Development), ext.8195

**4 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT MARKETING UPDATE FOR THE VAUGHAN METROPOLITAN CENTRE**

The Vaughan Metropolitan Centre Sub-Committee advises Council:

- 1) That the recommendation contained in the following report of the Deputy City Manager, Planning and Growth Management and the Senior Manager of Economic Development, dated September 22, 2016, was approved; and
- 2) That the presentation by the Project/Marketing Coordinator and the Economic Development Officer, and C3, presentation material titled: “*VMC Economic Development and Marketing Update*”, was received.

**Recommendation**

The Deputy City Manager, Planning and Growth Management and the Senior Manager of Economic Development, in consultation with the Chief Corporate Initiatives and Intergovernmental Relations and VMC Project Management Team recommend:

1. That this report be received.

**Contribution to Sustainability**

Green Directions Vaughan embraces a Sustainability First principle and states that sustainability means we make decisions and take actions that ensure a healthy environment, vibrant communities and economic vitality for current and future generations. Under this definition, activities related to economic development and business attraction for the Vaughan Metropolitan Centre (VMC) contribute to the sustainability of the City.

**Economic Impact**

There are no economic impacts associated with the receipt of this report. The marketing initiatives discussed in this report are part of the \$101K allocated to VMC Marketing and are funded from Economic Development and Culture Services' 2016 operating budget.

**Communications Plan**

Copies of this presentation will be available on the City's website. Staff will also undertake to provide information on the public engagement events for inclusion in Council newsletters, City e-newsletters, *VMC Moving Forward* newsletter, and other communication vehicles.

**Purpose**

In May of 2016, staff provided a report to VMC Sub-Committee outlining the tactics that would be implemented during the calendar year through the VMC Community Engagement and Marketing Plan. This report serves as an update to VMC Sub-Committee on the year-to-date results of the community engagement and marketing plan, as well as a briefing on VMC marketing efforts that have taken place and will continue to year end 2016. While feedback and the suggestions from committee and stakeholders is welcome, this report and the accompanying presentation is for information purposes only.

**Background - Analysis and Options**

The VMC Development Facilitator, LiveWorkLearnPlay (LWLP) having completed its VMC Implementation Plan in May 2016, recommended four key projects that should be prioritized with the goal of seeing development implementation of the VMC happen at an expedited pace. Community

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Engagement is one of those key projects. In order for the VMC to truly become the Downtown for the residents of Vaughan, it needs to be known, understood and accepted as their civic and cultural gathering place. LWLP residents of Vaughan, new and old, identifying with and accepting the VMC as their downtown to successfully achieve the City's ultimate vision. Restated, community engagement is necessary to generate community and private sector buy-in as a precursor to investment interest and broader office development attraction that is a key part of the vision for the VMC.

**Awareness and Community Outreach and Metrics, 2016**

Staff has begun the implementation of the *2016-2017 VMC Community Engagement Plan*, focusing on building awareness and community support, credibility, and understanding for the VMC. Staff presented an *Update on the VMC Community Engagement and Marketing Plan* at the VMC Sub-Committee on May 18, 2016 (Item 2, Report No. 2).

For 2016, the Economic Development and Culture Services Department, in collaboration with other City Departments, have scheduled more than 40 outreach events and activities to deliver critical messaging to residents and businesses about the vision and progress being made to develop the Vaughan Metropolitan Centre. Outreach activities involved the following marketing tactics: VMC-branded exhibit and media booth, video demo, branded promotional giveaways, and the distribution of VMC marketing collateral materials.

Summarized below are the participation metrics for the 2016 outreach schedule, inclusive of the eight month period from January to September:

- Community outreach conducted by City staff totalled 21 activities
- Direct marketing outreach of 19,340 participants (Concerts in the Park 10,000 visitors, Concerts in the Park 9,000 visitors, and Canada Day 8,000 visitors)
- Online content reach and print media impressions estimated at more than 250,000
- Social media:
  - Facebook: 105 followers with 2,900 post engagements and 5,000+ page engagements
  - Twitter: 164 followers; 381 'likes' and 787+ 'retweets' or 'mentions'
  - Instagram: 199 followers and 529 'likes'
- Promotional giveaways of more than 3,000 units

Through these activities, staff has been able to speak directly with residents and businesses to communicate the City's downtown plans for the VMC, as well as to update them on major development projects currently underway.

Impressions garnered from these activities include:

- Fair amount of excitement about the development of the downtown.
- Questions and interest around parking plans related to transit use.
- Good awareness level about the subway arrival although this varies with the geography of residents, i.e. those living in Thornhill have more association and interest in the possibility of a Yonge subway.
- Awareness of exact location of transit facilities is low, although overall awareness of the transit services is high.
- Positive reception to concept of an integrated public transit network which includes subway, vivaNext and the regional bus terminal.
- Keen interest in time horizons for the completion of construction projects along Highway 7, as well as the build-out of the VMC. Less skepticism in the date of the subway arrival experienced than experienced in previous years. Many people sought reassurance that the subway project would be delivered on time.
- Condo development in the VMC is well received by adult groups. Interest for future downsizing.

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- Business community interest in the VMC is primarily from the standpoint of the potential increase in level of economic activity that it could bring, more so than it as potential business location for themselves.

### **Investment Attraction and Marketing**

The Community Engagement work program will continue in the latter part of 2016, and also 2017. However in 2017, there will be more emphasis placed on investment attraction and marketing. Differing from community awareness, it is about raising more targeted investor interest. With the development activity taking place in the VMC, staff has embraced the notion that it is important to ensure marketing, investment attraction and placemaking campaigns are introduced and implemented with the correct messaging at the right time.

It is also important the City's efforts are aligned and leveraging those of York Region's Economic Strategy Office, who have also initiated a marketing strategy for the broader Centres and Corridors under its "York Link – Where Talent and Opportunity Intersect" branding. Both the City and Region's marketing and branding efforts are premised on concept of attracting talent to our downtowns will draw office tenancies, particularly in the knowledge-based and innovation-intensive sectors.

### **Marketing Plan Update and Metrics**

A phased marketing campaign was implemented starting in 2015 to the target horizon of 2017. Summarized below is the three-year marketing campaign milestones for 2015, 2016 and 2017:

- Momentum and Awareness Focus Campaign Plan, 2015
- Implementation of Community and Business Outreach Activities, 2016
- Benchmark Outreach Results, 2016
- Building a Competitive Differentiator Plan, 2016
- Implementation of Investment Attraction Strategy, 2017
- Monitoring Investment Attraction Successes, 2017

With City staff actively implementing the above economic development and marketing activities, metrics are recorded for VMC Community Engagement and Business Development benchmark analysis and to identify resource requirements to fulfill the in 2017 marketing program.

Initiatives have been focused on creating awareness amongst the real estate brokerage community, as well as businesses within Vaughan and across the GTA. During 2016, staff actively implemented outreach activities at business events with the VMC exhibit booth as well as marketing collateral distribution at the following signature events and by-invitation-only business gatherings: Vaughan Business Expo, Mayor's Annual Luncheon hosted by Vaughan Chamber of Commerce, LandPro Conference, Vaughan Chamber of Commerce Business Achievement Awards, the Economic Club of Canada: *Investing in the 905*, the real estate broker event for Liberty Development's Cosmos launch, and the Mayor's Charity Golf Classic.

These events provided an opportunity to directly engage business leaders and update them on current VMC projects as well as to educate them about the value proposition for office/employment users. In addition to the various business outreach events, staff have continued to promote the VMC to local businesses through the Corporate Calling Program and business presentations, to create awareness of the opportunities that exist within their community. Summarized below are the results of the business development metrics for 2016 Year-to-Date.

- Business outreach conducted by City staff totalled 11 events
- Direct business outreach of more than 5,000 participants
- Corporate calls and business presentations totalled 88 businesses
- Online content reach and print media impressions estimated at more than 250,000
- Promotional giveaways of more than 2,000 units

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- Newsletter circulation to more than 9,000 business readers
- Cosmos Brokers Launch attended by more than 700 residential brokers

In addition to the business development activities underway, staff has actively engaged with VMC landowners and stakeholders to support their marketing efforts for various commercial and residential projects. These include sharing resources such as cross-marketing activities, promotional collateral materials, online content, onsite branding, temporary art installations and community activations.

The marketing for the VMC includes both paid, earned, shared or owned media channels. The media coverage received includes local, provincial and national media – print, radio, television and website - and story content range from subway progress reports, to condo developments and broader downtown master-planning. Most notable amongst the coverage were the Globe and Mail article: *Vaughan Rising – Master-Planning a Downtown from Scratch* (print reach: 1 million, and website reach: 6 million), and the Mayor's interview on Bloomberg's *The Daily Brief* (website reach: 1.3 million). According to the metrics collected by the Office of Corporate Communications, 46 stories appeared in 2016, having an audience reach of 22.5 million. Overall the Media Rating Points (MRP) Quality Score was 75.65 percent – an indication of media reach based on extent of company/brand mentions, key messages, target audience reach, photo/logo inclusion, spokesperson quotation and receptivity (tone).

#### ***Uptake on the Community Improvement Plan***

In the office market sector, Vaughan is still a relatively new player. The establishment of a competitive differentiator was identified as a necessary element in setting the VMC apart from other GTA office nodes. In November 2015, the City implemented a Community Improvement Plan (CIP) to promote office development in VMC and Weston Road & Highway 7 Primary Centre to both landowners and potential office users. Print marketing collateral that highlights the CIP financial incentives has been included in all information packages provided to business and real estate professionals, resulting in total distribution to over 500 stakeholders. Details of the CIP program have also been utilized by VMC landowners in their own marketing collateral aimed at attracting office users. SmartCentres, in particular, has leveraged the CIP to market the financial benefits that will be passed on directly to tenants in the KPMG building.

Currently, staff is reviewing two CIP applications that have been received to date. The two applications currently in staff's workflow account for over 465,000 square feet of new office space in the VMC. It is anticipated that a third application will be submitted for the recently announced PriceWaterhouseCoopers offices within the YMCA mixed-use project.

#### ***Creating a Street-Level Experience through Interactive Mapping***

Following the completion of the updated VMC Secondary Plan in November 2015, staff began working on creating an animation of the street-level experience at three key locations in the VMC. Working with an external consultant, the developer of the current VMC 3D video animation, walk-through animations are being created through the Mobility Hub (along Millway Avenue); Edgeley Pond and Black Creek Channel; and along Highway 7. The interactive mapping and animations are being built utilizing the digital 3D modelling tools employed by the Development Planning/Urban Design Department. These models are being further enhanced with streetscaping to portray a pedestrian-friendly, transit supportive and lively public realm building on information related to the development projects that are coming to fruition. This work once completed will be featured on the planned VMC micro-site.

#### ***Development of a VMC Micro-site***

A key marketing initiative in Q4 2016 will be the development of a new micro-site for the VMC, which upon completion; will act as the hub for all VMC digital marketing activity. Work on the project has already begun, with staff and the consultant currently engaged in the content analysis phase. Between August and November 2016, the micro-site project team will focus on content, design and

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development with a targeted soft launch by end of December, 2016. Staff will report back to VMC Sub-Committee in the late fall of 2016 with an update on the progress of the micro-site, along with visual concepts of the new site design. In advance of the launch of the new VMC micro-site, staff have secured social media accounts to support and drive traffic to the website upon its completion. Twitter, Facebook and Instagram will be leveraged with a focus on building awareness among residents and businesses about development activity occurring in the VMC.

**Next Steps**

As we move into Q4 2016, staff will continue implementing of the VMC Community Engagement and Marketing Plan with a focus on engaging commercial real estate brokerages throughout the GTA to raise awareness of the VMC's growing office market. Staff will be presenting VMC marketing material directly to key stakeholders by delivering presentations at brokerage offices and engaging sales representatives that provide strategic site selection advice directly to their office user clients. This initiative, branded as the *Realtor Roadshow*, is an opportunity to target larger, multinational commercial real estate brokerages to educate them on the value proposition that the VMC can deliver to businesses.

**Relationship to Term of Council Service Excellence Strategy Map (2014-2018)**

This report is consistent with the priorities set on the Term of Council Service Excellence Strategy Map: facilitate the development of the VMC; and attract investment and create jobs.

**Regional Implications**

The City of Vaughan will continue to work in collaboration with the Region of York to align our efforts with the Region's Office Market Investment Attraction Marketing and Communications Campaign Plan.

**Conclusion**

This report provides an update on achievements by City staff in executing the VMC Community Engagement and Marketing Plan, as well as efforts to engage the business community to increase awareness about the opportunities in the Vaughan Metropolitan Centre. The results of the community engagement and marketing plan observed by staff in 2016 will be carefully considered when developing activities and tactics for 2017. The baseline data collected in 2016 will act as the benchmark year for measuring the success of VMC economic development marketing initiatives.

Recognizing the importance of economic growth and job creation, the development and implementation of a strategic economic development marketing campaign plan enable the City to facilitate the vision of a dynamic downtown Vaughan Metropolitan Centre for residents, businesses and visitors. Staff will continue to implement the Plan to achieve Council's objectives for the VMC.

**Attachments**

None

**Report prepared by:**

Sally Chau, Project/Marketing Coordinator, ext. 8367  
Michael Launslager, Economic Development Officer, ext. 8472  
Shirley Kam, Senior Manager of Economic Development, ext. 8874

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The meeting adjourned at 4:51 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Hon. Maurizio Bevilacqua, Mayor, Chair