

**CITY OF VAUGHAN**

**EXTRACT FROM COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF APRIL 23, 2013**

Item 26, Report No. 14, of the Committee of the Whole, which was adopted without amendment by the Council of the City of Vaughan on April 23, 2013.

**26**

**SOCIAL MEDIA UPDATE**

**The Committee of the Whole recommends approval of the recommendation contained in the following report of the Director of Corporate Communications, dated April 9, 2013:**

**Recommendation**

The Director of Corporate Communications, in consultation with Executive Director, Office of the City Manager, recommends:

THAT the following report be received for information.

**Contribution to Sustainability**

Social media can drive change and supports the City's Community Sustainability and Environmental Master Plan in creating a vibrant community by supporting civic engagement. As a transparent, authentic and collaborative communications channel, social media helps deliver the sustainability message to the City's stakeholders.

**Economic Impact**

There is no economic impact to the budget. The initiatives within the Social Media Policy and the City's use of social media is delivered through existing staff resources.

**Communications Plan**

This update will be communicated to appropriate City staff to inform and educate City departments in their implementation of social media communications.

**Purpose**

The purpose of this report is to provide an update of the City's use of social media following the one year implementation of the Social Media Policy.

**Background – Analysis and Options**

On February 14, 2012, staff presented the Social Media Policy for approval to members of the Committee of the Whole Working Session. The Committee requested that after one year of implementation, staff provide an assessment of the City's use of social media and progress to-date in implementing the actions presented in the policy.

**Usage Growth**

As previously approved by Council, the City is following a phased-in approach to utilizing social media. Currently, there are three corporate social media sites administered by the Corporate Communications Department. The City's corporate Facebook page launched July 9, 2010; YouTube launched Sept. 20, 2010; and Twitter launched April 20, 2011.

The following illustrates the increase in users of the City's three corporate social media sites:

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	Facebook	Twitter	YouTube (views)
Current (approx.)	761	1,743	12,152
% increase 2012 to 2013	274%	286%	1,316%
January 2013	678	1,253	9,455
January 2012	247	438	718
January 2011	47	--	17

The City has taken a collaborative approach to social media, providing corporate support for all departments. Although departments and project leads can submit content to the Corporate Communications Department for review and broadcast on the City's corporate social media sites, the Social Media Policy facilitates the creation of specialized social media sites separate from the corporate sites.

A number of City departments have created their own social media sites to communicate specific programs and initiatives including Recreation & Culture, Emergency Preparedness, Enforcement (Animal Services), City Clerk's Office (Committee of Adjustment), and Vaughan Public Libraries.

The Social Media Policy supports the promotion of the City's social media sites. A directory of these sites can be found on the City's website, accessible from the homepage, and a number of departments have posted links to their social media sites on their department landing pages.

In addition, the use of social media logos and web addresses have been advertised in department-produced communications and advertising, and on promotional materials posted to television monitors throughout City Hall.

#### Administration

In order to implement best practices on a consistent basis across the Corporation, all social sites hosted by the City are monitored by the primary administrator during regular business hours to ensure postings are appropriate and respectful. Notifications of activity on the City's three corporate social media sites are forwarded to the email accounts of the primary administrator. Login passwords are protected, more complex in make-up, and are changed on a regular basis (every 30 days).

Although public comments directed to the City's corporate social media sites are not considered or processed as official correspondence, the Corporate Communications Department continues to pass on any public inquiries that may require action by other departments, which is then communicated to the resident.

#### Public Engagement

The City of Vaughan employs social media technologies to enhance two-way communications with residents, businesses, visitors and other key stakeholders. In support of the City's corporate marketing efforts, social media is used by the City to provide accurate, timely and clear information about City services, programs and events, and facilitate public interest and involvement in these activities. The primary goal is increase public engagement.

There is great value in the City continuing to encourage wider dissemination of the City's social media content through pass-along readership (re-tweeting, etc.).

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**Next Steps**

The primary objective is to increase two-way communications by better integrating social media into all City communications and grow the user base. The Corporate Communications Department will continue to promote all social media sites hosted by the City in future advertising and marketing efforts.

Corporate Communications also will be identifying ways to better utilize the staff social media committee and involve each department in growing social media, learning better and more useful ways on how to use social media, and collaborating on employing best practices on its use. A new social media strategy will also be included as part of the Corporate Communications Strategy to be presented to Council later this year (Q2/13).

**Relationship to Vaughan Vision 20/20 Strategic Plan**

The use of social media is aligned with the City's strategic plan in demonstrating effective leadership by strengthening the City's image and identity through communications with City stakeholders.

**Regional Implications**

N/A

**Conclusion**

In combination with traditional communications, social media sites employed by the City have been an effective communications tool to provide accurate and timely information about City services, programs and public safety to residents, businesses, visitors and other stakeholders. Social media continues to increase in importance, supporting the City's evolving communications efforts.

**Attachments**

City Social Media Policy (Policy No. 08.3.06)

**Report prepared by:**

Ted Hallas, Manager of Corporate Communications  
David Blumenfeld, Communications Specialist

(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.)