

## **CITY OF VAUGHAN**

### **EXTRACT FROM COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF MAY 14, 2013**

Item 13, Report No. 19, of the Committee of the Whole, which was adopted without amendment by the Council of the City of Vaughan on May 14, 2013.

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#### **PROCLAMATION - VAUGHAN YOUTH WEEK - MAY 1-7, 2013**

The Committee of the Whole recommends approval of the recommendation contained in the following report of the Commissioner of Community Services, dated April 30, 2013:

##### **Recommendation**

The Commissioner of Community Services, in consultation with the Director of Recreation and Culture, recommends:

1. That Council proclaim the week of May 1-7, 2013, as “Vaughan Youth Week” and “National Youth Arts Week” in the City of Vaughan; and,
2. That the information in the 2013 “Youth Pocket Guide - Green Edition”, be received; and,
3. That Council receive the Bronze award declaring Vaughan as a “Youth Friendly Community Builder” awarded as part of the Play Works Youth Friendly Recognition Program.

##### **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 4, and Objective 4.1:

- 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.

##### **Economic Impact**

The youth programs and initiatives indicated in this report will be funded through the approved 2013 Recreation and Culture Department Operating Budget and community sponsors.

##### **Communications Plan**

The proclamation of Vaughan Youth Week 2013, including a schedule of Youth Week activities and events, and Vaughan's Youth Friendly Community Builder award will be posted on the City's website and social media. A media advisory, including photo opportunity, and public service announcement will be distributed to local media.

The Vaughan Youth Pocket guide, including the Youth Week schedule will be distributed to Vaughan elementary and secondary schools, and will also be available at City libraries and community centres. Outreach to community groups, the department's client database, cultural organizations and businesses will take place via poster distribution and email. The Youth Friendly Community Builder award will be highlighted on relevant promotional material.

##### **Purpose**

The purpose of this report is to request that Council proclaim the week of May 1-7, 2013 as “Vaughan Youth Week” and “National Youth Arts Week” in the City of Vaughan, and to present an

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overview of the youth-based activities and events scheduled to be held at community centres across the City, as organized by the Recreation and Culture Department in partnership with the York Region School Boards of Education, community groups and local businesses and outlined in the second annual “Youth Pocket Guide - Green Edition”.

This report also provides information on the recent declaration of Vaughan as a “Youth Friendly Community Builder” as part of the Play Works Youth Friendly Recognition Program.

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

The Canadian Parks and Recreation Association has joined the international community to declare the first full week of May as National Youth Week and National Youth Arts Week in Canada.

#### **National Youth Week**

National Youth Week is an international initiative acknowledging, celebrating, and advocating youth empowerment, achievement and involvement. It is a week of fun, interaction and celebration intending to strengthen the connection between young people and their communities. The City of Vaughan is participating in this initiative to celebrate the importance of youth and their contribution towards making the City of Vaughan a great place to live.

In addition to Youth Week, the Recreation and Culture Department delivers a variety of youth programs through community centre based youth rooms, registered programs and other special events. These programs provide physical, creative and social opportunities for youth.

A variety of activities are scheduled at City Community Centres for “Youth Week” including:

- Basketball Competitions
- Zumba
- Dj Clinic
- Female Boot Camp
- Swimming Challenges
- Youth Fitness Days
- Cartooning Workshop

Each of these events is based on providing opportunities for youth engagement within their community. Vaughan Youth Week will highlight the City of Vaughan as a “Youth Friendly Community”, and will continue to provide opportunities to develop partnerships with businesses and community groups that support youth in Vaughan.

#### **National Youth Arts Week**

As part of Youth Week, the City of Vaughan proudly supports National Youth Arts Week, by showcasing simultaneous youth-led, community-based events and projects from youth across the City of Vaughan. This initiative provides an exceptional opportunity for great creative expression as well as a platform for youth to exchange ideas and showcase talents. The program includes:

- Atrium Gallery-City Hall will showcase an art exhibit entitled “Memento Mori” created by students from Westmount Collegiate, Regional Arts School for YRDSB;
- Rock n Roll Art at City Hall: Secondary students citywide will be interpreting images of iconic Canadian musicians using collage and contemporary painting techniques
- Vaughan Art Space: “Dreams” painting and photography from Holy Cross Academy;

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#### **Youth Pocket Guide**

The Youth Pocket Guide - Green Edition is a one-stop publication offering Vaughan's young adults an overview of all things related to the City's recreation and culture programs, services and events. The goal is to create awareness of opportunities for physical and social activities which encourage active, healthy and positive lifestyle choices among the vulnerable 10-17 year old target demographic.

Information featured includes general, aquatic and special needs programs; memberships to youth rooms and fitness centres; arts, cultural and special events; and employment and volunteer opportunities. Also incorporated is a map of recreation facilities and Active Living Coordinator contacts; a call-out welcoming the City's newcomers; and information on financial assistance available through RecAssist.

The contemporary design of the Guide incorporates colourful illustration and photography with engaging, youth-friendly copy. Over 150 youth had a hand in molding the Guide during city-wide focus groups where youth provided feedback on everything from the title, design/layout, organization of information and communications channels they prefer (print and digital) for outreach. Also in response to youth feedback, QR linking to event schedules on the City website were incorporated on pages promoting community and special events, specifically Youth Week and National Arts Week, Culture Days and June is Recreation & Parks Month. The QR codes allow the large market of youth smartphone users to immediately download and view the most recent events information and schedules.

The Vaughan Youth Pocket Guide - Green Edition 2013, a 36 page guide, including the Youth Week and Youth Arts Week schedule will be distributed to Vaughan elementary and secondary schools, and will also be available at City libraries and community centres. Outreach to community groups, the department's client database, cultural organizations and businesses will take place via poster distribution and email. The 2013 version of the Youth Pocket Guide uses an integrated and interactive mobile app making it a progressive and sustainable direction for communication, reducing printed copies for distribution by 90%. Also, post-consumer waste paper products were used for printing the guide. The cover is shown on Attachment 1.

#### **Play Works Youth Friendly Recognition Program**

Play Works Youth Friendly Recognition Program is a group of organizations concerned about the future of our youth. They represent the areas of sport, physical activity, civic engagement, arts and culture, rural youth, and recreation. They are dedicated to the mission of bringing back the power of play to Ontario youth and are dedicated to advancing play for 13-19 year olds on local and provincial public and political agendas.

What is the Youth Friendly Community Recognition Program?

The Youth Friendly Community Recognition Program recognizes communities across Ontario that meet the ever growing needs of adolescent youth ages 13-19. The Play Works definition of a Youth Friendly Community is "a community that actively supports and provides opportunities for the growth and development of youth through play." "Play" is defined as any non-school activity that has elements of choice, leads to satisfaction, and encourages progressive learning.

Why is it important to be youth friendly?

A community where youth have the space, support and freedom is proven to be one with less crime, more post-secondary graduates and increase youth engagement throughout the community. A youth friendly community provides opportunities for recreation, arts, culture and civic responsibility. All of these programs and services build community capacity and contribute to a healthy, competitive and artistic community.

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What benefits are there in being recognized as a Youth Friendly Community?

- Being recognized as youth friendly community provides an expression of support and Commitment to the youth in your community.
- Being youth friendly helps to avoid the migration of young people to other communities by encouraging local youth to help guide the future of their own community.
- Families are attracted to communities that provide programs and services that support the arts, culture, sport and civic responsibility.

What criteria must be met for the application?

There are 16 criteria for Youth Friendly Community Recognition. Each criterion covers a different facet of proper youth engagement and development. In order to meet a certain criterion, evidence in the form of documentation, posters, videos, brochures, etc., must be provided to show that your community does satisfy the criterion.

- Criterion 1 – Youth have options for play in their community
- Criterion 2 – Youth are formally connected to the community
- Criterion 3 – Facilities are dedicated to youth play
- Criterion 4 – It is easy for youth to find information about play activities in the community
- Criterion 5 – The community supports public youth events
- Criterion 6 – The community recognizes and celebrates its youth
- Criterion 7 – The community commits funding for youth play
- Criterion 8 – The community supports positive youth development
- Criterion 9 – The community supports youth volunteerism and leadership development
- Criterion 10 – The community has effective partnerships that specifically support youth play
- Criterion 11 – Youth activism and advocacy for play is nurtured
- Criterion 12 – Youth feel comfortable in their own community
- Criterion 13 – Youth can get to the play programs that are offered
- Criterion 14 – Schools support the youth friendly approach
- Criterion 15 – Adults champion the need for youth play
- Criterion 16 – Play is inclusive

On March 22, Vaughan was notified that the City has been designated a Bronze award declaring Vaughan as a “Youth Friendly Community Builder”. Vaughan is one of three Ontario communities to be recognized in 2012.

#### **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**

The two regional school boards are active partners in many youth related initiatives.

#### **Conclusion**

The City of Vaughan is taking a proactive approach to improve the social, health and active

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lifestyles of youth by achieving “Youth Friendly” designation and by proclaiming the week of May 1–7, 2013 as “Vaughan Youth Week” and “National Youth Arts Week”. Youth Week will help achieve the objective of improving community health and wellness through youth empowerment, recognition and engagement. The concurrent celebration of National Youth Arts Week provides an opportunity for creative expression as well as a platform for youth to exchange ideas and showcase talents. The “Youth Pocket Guide - Green Edition” provides a one-stop publication offering Vaughan’s young adults an overview of all things related to the City’s recreation and culture programs, services and events.

**Attachments**

1. Youth Pocket Guide Cover

**Report Prepared By**

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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.)