

CITY OF VAUGHAN

EXTRACT FROM COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF MAY 14, 2013

Item 26, 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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PRODUCTION OF A CITY-WIDE PUBLICATION

The Committee of the Whole recommends that consideration of this matter be deferred to a Committee of the Whole (Working Session) meeting dedicated to discuss a communications strategy.

Recommendation

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

1. That the following report outlining a plan to deliver a city-wide print communications to the residents of the City of Vaughan be received.

Contribution to Sustainability

A city-wide publication that provides ongoing communications with City stakeholders is a key component of the Community Sustainability and Environmental Master Plan to create a vibrant community by supporting civic engagement.

Economic Impact

The funding required to produce this publication will be taken from existing budgets within the Corporate Communications Department and the Economic Development Department. To produce a regular communications piece four times per year with distribution to all Vaughan households (100,000) will cost approximately \$110,000 annually.

Cost breakdown:

- To produce one stand-alone 12-page publication that is distributed to each household (100,000 homes) will cost \$30,000.
- To have an 8-page insert in Whatever Magazine that is distributed to each household (100,000 homes) will cost \$25,000.

Communications Plan

This new publication will be promoted through various City channels, including the website, Vaughan TV, Recreation Guide advertising, news release, and social media channels.

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the plan to produce a regular city-wide publication to better communicate with residents. With the amount of news and initiatives happening in Vaughan, the current annual “successes” report does not meet the information needs of our residents.

Background - Analysis and Options

The City of Vaughan 2012 Citizen Survey – Communications

Based on the results of the Ipsos Ried survey of residents in March of 2012, mailed newsletters and brochures continue to be the most preferred communications vehicle among residents in Vaughan. Recognizing this, there is a need to provide this communications vehicle in a way that resonates with the diverse community of Vaughan, while providing a regular means of keeping residents up-to-date on City news.

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The Goal

The goal of producing a regularly published communications piece for all residents is aligned to the overall Strategic Communications goal of positioning Vaughan as a two-way communications organization.

This communications vehicle will help establish an effective, accessible system of two-way communications between City officials, stakeholders and residents; driving readers to access City channels such as: our new website, social media, e-mail, public open houses and information sessions.

This goal reflects Vaughan's commitment to engaging citizens and measuring our effectiveness in communications to ensure a broader awareness and understanding of City programs and services.

The Approach

The approach to producing this regular publication involves the production of a stand-alone publication and integrating a *Vaughan Section* into an already established community publication.

Stand-alone Publication: A 12-page "brochure" (8 ½ x 11 page size) that would be printed and distributed (bundled) with SNAP Magazine, The Vaughan Citizen and the Thornhill Liberal, and Corriere Canadese.

Vaughan Section: An 8-page editorial spread in Whatever Magazine (a local magazine). An 8-page spread would allow enough editorial space to highlight several Vaughan stories and features.

Frequency of Distribution: 4-times per year
– May and December ~ Whatever Magazine 8-page spread
-- March and September ~ Stand-alone 12-page publication.

Q1: Whatever Magazine 8-page spread
Q2: Stand-alone 12-page publication
Q3: Whatever Magazine 8-page spread
Q4: Stand-alone 12-page publication

Editorial Schedule: An editorial schedule would be created two issues in advance and all content would be compiled by Corporate Communications. Proposed content for the first editions would include, but not limited to:

- The VMC
- Vaughan – an economic engine – a highlight of the economic vitality of the city
- City Developments – a snap shot of Vaughan's major developments
- Hospital update

Editorial Content: Content would focus on major projects and developments (as noted as an "information need" in the Ipsos Ried survey of residents in March of 2012) as well as Council news, large events and happenings in the City, budget related information (another "information need" identified in the survey) and stories that reflect the changing culture of our organization and community.

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Content will be written in a “plain language” format to enable readers to easily digest the information and will be accompanied by multiple visuals and graphics.

Rationale to the Approach

With the objective of delivering timely news to our residents and businesses, the quarterly frequency will more effectively promote the City brand. This new concept will replace the *Report to Citizens* annual report, the high gloss magazine delivered to every household in past years. Key editorial components of the Report to Citizens, such as the financial highlights section, will be incorporated into the new format. In addition, all publications will be presented on the City's website using page-turning e-magazine software.

In order to create an impact and to ensure the publications reach a maximum number of Vaughan residents and stakeholders, the distribution mechanisms are being diversified between four different media outlets: Whatever Magazine, Vaughan Citizen/Thornhill Liberal, SNAP Vaughan East and SNAP Woodbridge, and Corriere Canadese.

Whatever Magazine, a local magazine, reaches 100,000 households and businesses across the City. The City's stand-alone publication will be bundled with three different publications that also reach 100,000 households and have a diverse readership group. Copies of the City's stand-alone publication will also be distributed at City facilities.

Selection of Publications

The criteria for the selection of print media (established in 2008 for City Page advertisements) includes:

City-wide Circulation – Publications with the widest distribution in the City of Vaughan best fulfill the City's communications requirements.

Editorial Content – Publications focused on local information of interest to the residents and businesses of Vaughan.

Community Engagement – Publications reaching specific communities or groups that may not be served by other publications.

To maximize the reach of the City communications, publications have been selected that have different formats and appeal to various readership groups.

The following chart summarizes the selected publications:

Publication	Distribution	Notes
Vaughan Citizen <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Community newspaper• Weekly (Wed & Thurs)	53,000 (Maple, Concord, Woodbridge, Kleinburg) Home delivery	Major source of local news. Vaughan's most established newspapers.
Thornhill Liberal <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Community newspaper• Weekly (Thurs)	21,000 (Thornhill) Home delivery	
SNAP Vaughan East <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Community events-based newspaper• Monthly	20,000 (Maple, Concord, Thornhill) Free at retail outlets	Popular photo-based format

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SNAP Woodbridge <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Community events-based newspaper• Monthly	20,000 (Woodbridge, Kleinburg) Free at retail outlets	
Corriere Canadese <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Italian-Canadian community newspaper• Daily (Monday - Saturday)	12,000 (Vaughan) By subscription	Largest ethnic distribution in Vaughan.
Whatever Magazine <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Community and lifestyle magazine• Four times/year	101,151 (all Vaughan communities) Home delivery, businesses and retail outlets	Modern, magazine format. Widely distributed. Local focus.

ROI

The funding and effort to produce these publications has a significant return on investment, as it will aim to increase participation in City-run programs, create awareness and support for City initiatives, provide a mechanism for residents to give feedback and become engaged, and connect the diverse communities in Vaughan.

Measurement

There are three key areas where this initiative will be measured for success. Each area will be measured in 6-month increments using a combination of surveys and focus groups. The measurements are:

- Engagement: engage at least 60 per cent of readers; meaning that 60 per cent of the people that receive this publication read a good portion of the content.
- Education: ensure that 70 per cent of readers understand the content.
- Two-way Communications: have 30 per cent of our readers access other two-way communication channels available from the City.

Why Do This?

Communications is a two-way process. It provides both the City and residents a mechanism to convey their ideas, opinions, facts, etc. to the other party.

These publications will be a key driver in the overall communications strategy and will support the goal of becoming a two-way communications organization. This will also help us to get the "Vaughan story" out and provide residents with another option for receiving City information.

Why Now?

There is a need to build Vaughan into a strong two-way communication organization to support the increased demand for information from residents and stakeholders. Creating a regular communications piece now will help enhance the communication channels available to the community and provide a great starting point for increased community engagement, interaction, and understanding of City initiatives.

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Relationship to Vaughan Vision 2020/Strategic Plan

The production of a city-wide publication 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, a regular city-wide publication is an effective communications tool to provide accurate and timely information about City services, programs and initiatives to residents, businesses, visitors and other stakeholders.

As recently published in MoneySense Magazine, Vaughan has positioned itself in the top "Best Places to Live" in Canada. The City needs to increase the channels in which we communicate the "Vaughan Story" in order to continue the momentum our community has in engaging our residents and stakeholders.

Once this report is approved by Council, the first publication will be produced for September 2013.

Attachments

None

Report prepared by:

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