

CITY OF VAUGHAN

EXTRACT FROM COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF DECEMBER 13, 2016

Item 29, Report No. 43, of the Committee of the Whole, which was adopted without amendment by the Council of the City of Vaughan on December 13, 2016.

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ACCESSIBILITY INITIATIVES UPDATE

The Committee of the Whole recommends:

- 1) That the recommendation contained in the following report of the Deputy City Manager, Legal and Human Resources and the Chief Human Resources Officer, dated December 6, 2016, be approved;**
- 2) That the presentation by the Accessibility & Diversity Coordinator, be received; and**
- 3) That the deputation by Mr. Peter Pallotta, Maria Antonia Road, Woodbridge, be received.**

Recommendation

The Deputy City Manager, Legal and Human Resources and the Chief Human Resources Officer recommend:

1. That this report be received.

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.

Economic Impact

The cost of implementing accessibility upgrades will be addressed by utilizing existing capital and operating budgets.

Communications Plan

None.

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on various accessibility initiatives for the City of Vaughan.

Background - Analysis and Options

The barriers and obstacles people with disabilities face are more prevalent as a result of the environment in which they live in, rather than their impairment. Obstacles to participation stem more from the environment than from within the individual's perception of their abilities. These barriers can be prevented, reduced or eliminated.

The inclusivity of citizens with disabilities is a corporate-wide vision shared by Vaughan Council and staff as identified in Vaughan's corporate strategic plan. The City plays an important role in ensuring access for residents with disabilities and through the Vaughan Accessibility Advisory Committee (VAAC). The role of the VAAC is to advise Council to support the City's work in identifying and removing barriers to lay the foundation for a barrier-free, inclusive community.

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The City of Vaughan provides a number of programs and services for people with disabilities and regularly identifies and creates new opportunities to reflect the diverse and growing program needs of the community. Opportunities for persons with disabilities are vast and include the creative arts, health and wellness, life and social skills, performing arts, sports and leadership programs. In addition, Vaughan's multi-year Accessibility Plan outlines corporate and departmental objectives related to addressing accessibility issues and services at a corporate level.

The following is an update on three key initiatives:

Facilities Audit

The City of Vaughan procured the services of Adaptability Canada to conduct an accessibility audit of the City's most frequently used facilities. These facilities are City Hall, the Joint Operations Centre, the ten community centres and all libraries.

The purpose of the accessibility audit was to determine accessibility upgrades that could be implemented in the aforementioned buildings.

The goal of the audit is to make Vaughan facilities more accessible. The more accessible Vaughan facilities are, the more residents and visitors will be able to access and participate in the programs and services offered.

Based on the audit results, immediate accessibility upgrades that will be implemented include automatic door openers, tactile surface indicators and universal washrooms. Universal washrooms will be installed at Dufferin Clark Community Centre, Vellore Village Community Centre and Bathurst Clark Library. Universal washroom locations were identified based on structural feasibility and opportunity.

These initial upgrades were chosen based on frequency of use and community needs and will be funded through the 2016 capital accessibility budget of \$618,000.

Additional accessibility upgrades will be implemented over time based on priority setting and Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act requirements.

Innovative Path System

In June 2015, the City of Vaughan launched the Innovative Path System (IPS) at Vaughan City Hall. The IPS is a technology that notifies people with visual challenges where they are in a building through a Bluetooth device, specialized flooring and an electronic cane.

On December 5, 2016, the IPS will be showcased at the Promoting a Culture of Accessibility and Inclusion Conference at the Chelsea Hotel in Toronto. This is a testament to Vaughan's leadership in accessible innovation.

International Day of People with Disabilities

December 3, 2016 marked the City's annual celebration of the International Day of People with Disabilities (IDPD). IDPD is a United Nations sanctioned day that aims to promote an understanding of persons with disabilities and encourages support for their dignity, rights and well-being. The day seeks to increase awareness of the benefits of the integration of persons with disabilities in every aspect of political, social, economic and cultural life.

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In keeping with the spirit of IDPD, the facilities audit and IPS are a reflection of the City's commitment to improving the integration of people with disabilities in City of Vaughan facilities, programs and services.

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

This report supports the Vaughan Vision 2020 initiatives of Service Excellence, specifically to support and promote arts, culture, heritage and sports in the community and continue to ensure the safety and well being of citizens.

Regional Implications

There are no regional implications.

Conclusion

The accessibility initiatives outlined demonstrate Vaughan's ongoing commitment to being a City where people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities can thrive.

Attachments

None.

Report prepared by:

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