

# Statement

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## Together, Delivering Results

### *Mayor Bevilacqua highlights city-building accomplishments during 2014-2018 term of council*

**VAUGHAN, ON (Sept. 27, 2018)** – The following keynote address was delivered by Vaughan Mayor Maurizio Bevilacqua during the final scheduled City of Vaughan Council meeting:

“Good afternoon, everyone. Let me first of all, on behalf of Council, thank the citizens of Vaughan for the privilege they give us to serve.

“Let me thank my Council colleagues for their dedication and commitment to public service and public life. I would also like to thank their families for sharing them with us during this journey.

“I am proud to work with a team of committed Councillors who always have the best interest of this city at heart.

“Let me of course recognize members of our administration - led by City Manager Daniel Kostopoulos – who are passionate, demonstrate commitment and are professional in everything they do.

“As I reflect on the achievements of the past term - and over the last eight years - I am equally proud of what has been accomplished because of the unwavering commitment, exceptional hard work and innovative thinking of Vaughan staff.

“City-building is a labour of love. And each day, I have worked alongside staff who put love, passion and professionalism into everything they do.

“I hope you know how vitally important you are to our future. In a very meaningful way, you touch the lives of people in the City of Vaughan every day in every way.

“Each morning you rise to undertake the responsibilities that come with a vocation - a calling to serve your neighbours.

“We see it here every day. In the people on the front lines taking calls from the public at Access Vaughan - in the recreation staff at our community centres - and in our parks and forestry workers who keep our green spaces beautiful.

“We see it in our planners and engineers who keep the City growing and infrastructure up-to-date - in our building inspectors who keep everyone safe - in our Clerks who we rely on for their in-depth knowledge of rules and procedures to ensure we do our jobs properly - and in our finance staff who ensure we respect taxpayers' hard-earned money, while at the same time invest in our long-term prosperity.

“We see it in our Public Works crews who make sure our household waste is collected and that roads and windrows are plowed - our Fleet workers who keep City vehicles on the road - in our Building and Facilities staff, who maintain all City buildings - and in our Information and Technology professionals, who make sure our computers and iPhones keep us connected and responsive.

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"We see it in our communications team who, help to tell the Vaughan story - our economic development team, who work to attract and sustain economic opportunity - and in our first-responders, who put their lives on the line every day for the safety and security of people of Vaughan.

"We see it in our enforcement staff, who uphold our by-laws - in our Legal team, who safeguard the integrity of our system - and in Human Resources, who work to recruit the best, the brightest and hardest working individuals to serve the residents of Vaughan.

Because of all of you, families can go about their busy lives and confidently and proudly call Vaughan home.

"Together, we are delivering record-setting results. Let me highlight our shared success.

"Since 2015, we have achieved approximately \$30 million in savings. For the last eight years, we have passed budgets that keep the property tax rate below three per cent. Vaughan has one of the lowest tax rates in the Greater Toronto Area.

"We use best practices to guarantee fiscal sustainability and credibility, while at the same time safeguarding investments for the quality public services residents, visitors and businesses rely on each day.

"These bedrock principles and convictions are guiding our efforts to engage the public and develop a new financial blueprint that will be our 2019 Budget plan.

"Maintaining faith in public institutions has been a hallmark of our efforts.

"Our civic duty is guided by the Vaughan Accord – a transformational document that commits all Members of Council to serving the City of Vaughan in a manner which reflects a positive image of the City and instills civic pride.

"The Accord outlines Council's commitment and dedication to the task of city-building, and states that "a vibrant and successful city depends on a Council that is prepared to work together, constructively, and always in the best interest of the City of Vaughan."

"The Vaughan Accord was endorsed at a special signing ceremony on January 20th, 2015.

"The first of twelve principles listed in the Accord speaks of accountability. You would be hard pressed to find any city in Canada more determined to make openness, transparency and accountability - a cornerstone of city-building - than what we have labored to undertake and implement here in Vaughan.

"From the Office of the Integrity Commissioner - to the Office of the Internal Auditor - to our Anonymous Reporting System - and now our Lobbyist Registry, Vaughan continues to deliver a governance framework unmatched anywhere in Canada.

"Vaughan is 1 of 19 municipalities to have an Internal Auditor. We are 1 of 6 municipalities to voluntarily implement a Lobbyist Registry in Ontario.

"Faith, trust and confidence in government is fundamental. Especially when it comes to attracting and retaining economic development opportunities.

"The City's prosperity over the past term of council - and going back to 2010 - has been remarkable.

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"Vaughan leads with an employment growth rate of 3.6 per cent - far outpacing Ontario and Canada. Since 2010, nearly 55,000 new jobs have been created in Vaughan. We have the highest employment in York Region. Vaughan is home to nearly 12,000 businesses that employ over 218,000 people.

"October marks the beginning of Small Business Month in Canada.

"Small business remains the backbone of our economy – representing over 80 per cent of all Vaughan job creators.

"Since 2010, the business advisory services provided by the Vaughan Business Enterprise Centre has helped entrepreneurs start or expand nearly 3,300 businesses in Vaughan.

"We set a new construction record by issuing nearly \$2 billion-dollars in building permits. This represents more than \$5 million-dollars of construction work invested in the City every day. Since 2010, we have issued nearly \$10 billion in building permits.

"These robust job creation figures - and outstanding construction values - represent a strong economy, a destination of choice and a prosperous place to call home.

"Job creators can confidently invest in Vaughan because we have created the right environment for economic prosperity.

"Staff continue to prove themselves to be sought after, respected and trusted city-building partners.

"We continue to make long-term investments to ensure we have reliable infrastructure and public transit that breaks gridlock and moves goods, services and people to where they need to be.

"We have nearly 150 kilometers of new roads. Highway 427 is being expanded, while Highway 400 is being widened. We remain the first, and only, municipality outside of Toronto to be connected by the TTC Subway service.

"Our value proposition speaks for itself. Vaughan is the place to be.

"Vaughan continues to cement its reputation as a top place to attract international firms to work.

"Over 90 per cent of the foreign-owned companies, operating in York Region, are based in Vaughan and our southern York Region neighbouring communities.

"Vaughan's reach into global communities knows no boundaries. Multiculturalism allows us to further strengthen global connections both culturally and economically.

"Nearly half of our population was born abroad. Our citizens speak 105 different languages.

"Celebrations like the Christmas Tree Lighting, Chinese New Year and Menorah Lighting Ceremony, have become annual traditions, as have celebrations of Black History Month, along with many of our cultural and community organization flag raisings.

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"Another important milestone was Vaughan's silver anniversary - which we commemorated in 2016 with the launch of the Order of Vaughan. We bestowed our city's most prestigious honour to 25 exceptional recipients.

"Every day I am inspired by the people in Vaughan – their passion for the community, commitment to building our city and spirit of generosity. We are blessed to have citizens who dedicate their time giving back, representing Vaughan at home and abroad, and doing great things to make us proud to call them our neighbours.

"We officially introduced the Key to the City distinction to recognize remarkable individuals from Canada - and abroad - for their enduring contributions to civic life.

"Our annual Culture Days foster a greater sense of community, awareness and appreciation for the diversity of cultures, creeds and faiths that thrive throughout our city.

"Our community centres and recreation programs provide countless opportunities for all people to come together, develop their skillsets and make new and cherished friendships.

"We also opened the Pierre Berton Heritage Centre – a local community facility where budding ideas can blossom into city-wide initiatives that make a lasting difference.

"Vaughan's Public Library branches – including the recent opening of our tenth branch location at Vellore Village – house countless opportunities for neighbours to celebrate and learn more about diversity and the trailblazers of history whose sacrifices have been enshrined in pages for future generations to understand and appreciate.

"We also opened the Civic Centre Resource Library – the crown jewel of our public library system.

"We co-exist in harmony, mutual respect and admiration. This helps explain why Vaughan is one of the safest communities in Canada. We owe much of this success to our first responders and our year-round emergency management planning efforts.

"As one of his final initiatives, then Fire Chief, Larry Bentley, broke ground on Vaughan's new 10,250 square foot station in Kleinburg. This will be Vaughan's tenth station. We all turn to our new Fire Chief, Deryn Rizzi, to lead Vaughan Fire and Rescue Service and ensure the safety of all citizens.

"For all staff, Chief Rizzi's steady and unprecedented climb through the ranks of Vaughan Fire is a reminder of the art of the possible. In Vaughan, you can truly realize and pursue your aspirations.

"We also know that beyond emergencies, Vaughan Fire and Rescue Service has an important place in our community.

"Just ask five-year-old Matteo Papa, who was given the gift of a lifetime, when he was greeted at home on his birthday, by members of the service. There's a reason Vaughan Fire received a 99 per cent satisfaction rating from residents.

"Safe and welcoming communities are essential to attracting the best, the brightest and the most promising opportunities from around the world.

"During the 2018 Mayor's Gala, I was proud to announce that Cirque du Soleil Entertainment Group and Ivanhoe Cambridge, owner of Vaughan Mills, have chosen Vaughan to be home to the world's first-ever indoor CREAIVE family entertainment centre – scheduled to open in September 2019.

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"The Annual Mayor's Gala, the Mayor's Golf Tournament and the Spirit of Generosity commitment are the manifestation of our shared sense of mission to make a difference in our City and beyond.

"The Events Team went above and beyond to ensure our June Gala was a memorable experience for everyone involved.

"As co-chair of the \$250 million Mackenzie Health Foundation's Exceptional Care Belongs Here Campaign, I am in awe of the generosity of this community.

"That evening, I was proud to announce that the De Gasperis and Kohn families committed to donate a historic and record-setting \$20-million donation to the Mackenzie Vaughan Hospital. I am proud to announce that we have surpassed the \$100 million mark with precisely \$113 million in contributions.

"The ongoing construction of the Mackenzie Vaughan Hospital is an example of what we can achieve when we work together. Cranes tower over the 1.2 million square foot site, which can house up to 550 hospital beds. The new hospital is a \$1.6 billion initiative. It will employ over 1,800 full-time hospital staff. Ours will be the first hospital in Canada to feature fully integrated smart technology systems and medical devices that can speak directly to one another to maximize patient care.

"Building this hospital is about investing in the health and well-being of our citizens and ensuring we all have access to the best possible frontline healthcare for generations to come.

"It was here in City Hall, back in July, surrounded by many of you, that I helped announce the Cortellucci family as Hospice Vaughan's naming donor for the new 10-bed residential hospice facility. The Cortellucci family has generously stepped forward with a \$3-million donation towards the building of the new Hospice Vaughan - Mario & Nick Cortellucci Hospice Palliative Care Centre of Excellence - which is currently under construction and expected to open in 2019.

"With this announcement - since 2011 - the efforts and events of our Spirit of Generosity commitment have raised more than \$30 million. Proceeds have gone to help more than 150 not-for-profit and community organizations that play a vital role in shaping the City of Vaughan. This includes funding toward the Corporation's annual United Way efforts.

"The spirit of generosity is a defining trait of our City and you've all shown that by donating toys for our annual toy drive in support of the CP24 CHUM Christmas Wish. I know you will once again donate your time to this year's effort.

"With your help, we are doing more, by coming to the aid of our fellow citizens and giving them hope for a better, more promising tomorrow.

"This idea has been central to our shared city-building efforts.

"We are building with a mindset that goes beyond mere structures. Vaughan's future planning efforts embody a higher purpose of public service. It reflects planning decisions rooted in convictions that seek to protect and elevate the quality of life for our neighbours.

"Urban planning must be a force for good. It can be used to help people reach their full potential. This is sensory-based planning.

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"People dream of calling Vaughan home.

"It was during this Term of Council that a new policy allowing secondary suites was approved. This is part of our commitment to create, manage and provide for safe and affordable housing options.

"In June, I joined leaders from The Building Industry and Land Development Association to renew our commitment to investment-ready planning best practices.

"A city that uses investment-ready planning is one that thinks strategically about how we can best attract job-creating investments, create new and welcoming neighbourhoods, and ensure we have the public transit and infrastructure in place to move people, goods, services and our economy forward.

"These ideals and principles have long been the foundation of our efforts to build a stronger, more inclusive Vaughan.

"Because of the work staff undertakes, Vaughan continues to be a city of choice.

"It was the City that first approached the YMCA of Greater Toronto to address our need for community facilities and healthy infrastructure that would support the nearly 12,000 residential units and 25,000 people who will one-day make the Vaughan Metropolitan Centre their home.

"The VMC is being built and planned as an inclusive and welcoming downtown – a place where no one is left behind - where residents are welcomed, invited and encouraged to share and celebrate their culture for everyone to experience, appreciate and enjoy.

"We have an incredible team of staff working from throughout multiple different departments who are helping our emerging downtown reach new and unprecedented heights.

"All of you know that our downtown will be like no other. Expo City, Transit City, The MET and the KPMG Tower are shaping Vaughan's emerging downtown skyline.

"The VMC is the largest and most ambitious project in the City's history and will include: 1.5 million square feet of office space; 750,000 square feet of retail space; 12,000 residential units to be home to 25,000 people; and employment targets of 11,500 jobs, of which 5,000 will be new office jobs.

Edgeley Pond and Park is the largest open space, City-owned piece of land in the VMC. It's the heart of the community and a signature amenity for the new downtown.

"Our record on environmental stewardship is second to none. Vaughan is a green city.

"More than 21,000 trees have been planted as part of the City's tree replacement plan. Vaughan has more than 230 kilometers of signed cycling and pedestrian routes, including 60 kilometers of multi-use recreational pathways. Our operations efforts have reduced greenhouse gas emissions by 22 per cent. We completed a business case for LED street light replacement that will save the City an estimated 9,000-megawatt hour annually and approximately \$1.5 million in electricity costs each year once completed. In 2018, over 17,000 people participated the Earth Hour in the event across the City.



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“Just last week - we formally opened Phase One of the new 900-acre North Maple Regional Park – surrounded by community partners championing a brighter future for Vaughan. Once fully complete, Vaughan’s North Maple Park will be larger than New York City’s very own Central Park.

“We have done exceptionally well as a city and as a team. And we need to build on our success.

“The biggest compliment we can all receive, is the support of our residents. According to our most recent Citizen Survey, 97 per cent of our residents say life is good in Vaughan and give high satisfaction rates for everything from libraries and recreation to fire services and waste collection.

“We humbly accept that. But there is much more for us to do. For our City, the best is yet to come!”

*\*Check Against Delivery*

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**ABOUT VAUGHAN:** The City of Vaughan is one of Canada’s fastest growing cities with a population of more than 335,000. Incorporated in 1991, Vaughan includes the communities of Concord, Kleinburg, Maple, Thornhill and Woodbridge. This culturally diverse municipality is located in the heart of York Region and the Greater Toronto Area.

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