

Committee of the Whole (1) Report

DATE: Tuesday, April 1, 2025

WARD(S): ALL

TITLE: PROCLAMATION – 2025 NATIONAL PUBLIC WORKS WEEK

FROM:

Emilie Alderman, Deputy City Manager, Public Works

ACTION: DECISION

Purpose

To request that Council annually proclaim the third week of May as “National Public Works Week” in the City of Vaughan and to provide an overview of the events planned in recognition of this week during 2025.

Report Highlights

- The City’s proclamation of the third week of May as “National Public Works Week” aligns with celebrations across North America to acknowledge the dedication and achievements of Public Works professionals.
- This year, an Opening Ceremony and Flag-Raising event will be held at the Joint Operations Centre and City Hall on May 20, 2025; City Hall and Council Chambers will be illuminated orange on May 20, 2025; a Staff Appreciation Barbeque will be held at the Joint Operations Centre on May 23, 2025; an Open House will be held for the public at the Joint Operations Centre on May 24, 2025; and multiple free mulch giveaways will be held at the Joint Operations Centre.
- The National Public Works Week Organizing Committee will host a series of virtual outreach and education events which will be promoted through the City’s social media channels.

Recommendations

1. That Council annually proclaim the third week of May as “National Public Works Week” in the City of Vaughan;
2. That an Opening Ceremony be held annually at the Joint Operations Centre followed by a Flag-Raising ceremony at Vaughan City Hall and the Joint Operations Centre in May to commemorate National Public Works Week;

3. That Council Chambers be illuminated orange on an identified date in May to commemorate National Public Works Week annually; and
4. That the proclamation be posted on the City's website and the Communications, Marketing and Engagement department be directed to promote the above-noted proclamation through the various corporate channels.

National Public Works Week is recognized across North America to energize and educate the public on the impacts that Public Works professionals have on their daily lives

The first week-long campaign to make the public more aware of the services that Public Works departments provide in North America took place in 1960. Since its inception, agencies, municipalities, and regions have used this week to educate, engage and inform the public about the essential role that Public Works plays in the quality of life across their communities. National Public Works Week is an opportunity to promote Public Works as a career choice and recognize those who currently serve in these public roles.

Public Works staff work diligently throughout the year to deliver service excellence to the City's residents and businesses

The City's Public Works portfolio is structured around five key objectives that drive operational excellence and align with Vaughan's 2022–2026 Term of Council Service Excellence Strategic Plan. These objectives reinforce staff engagement, enhance the citizen experience, promote good governance, and support continuous operational improvement. The five key objectives are:

1. Make our people a priority through health, safety, and wellness
2. Improve employee engagement and culture
3. Foster a culture of innovation by being business effective
4. Create WOW moments by keeping our citizens safe and our city clean and beautiful; and
5. Be a Public Works Ambassador

The Public Works team consistently advances these objectives through the development of comprehensive plans, programs, and initiatives while also supporting the 2022–2026 Term of Council Strategic Priorities. The City's Public Works professionals provide a broad range of essential services including, but not limited to:

- operation and maintenance of the City's water, wastewater and stormwater systems;
- maintenance of roadways, sidewalks and traffic management;
- collection of solid waste, including organics, recycling, yard waste and garbage collection;
- beautification of parks, open spaces, entry features and urban tree canopy; and

- maintenance of fleet and equipment to ensure operations continue to run smoothly.

Previous Reports/Authority

Proclamation – 2024 National Public Works Week Request

Proclamation – 2024 National Public Works Week (escribemeetings.com)

Proclamation – 2023 National Public Works Week Request

Proclamation – 2023 National Public Works Week (escribemeetings.com)

Proclamation – 2022 National Public Works Week Request

Proclamation of National Public Works Week 2022.pdf (escribemeetings.com)

Analysis and Options

The theme for this year’s National Public Works Week is “People, Purpose, Presence”

Every year, a special theme is announced for National Public Works Week to highlight the essential role of Public Works professionals in our communities. The theme for 2025 reflects the three fundamental principles that inspire Public Works professionals to serve with dedication each day.

Public Works professionals are often unseen, as their work ensures that essential services are delivered safely and reliably. When infrastructure and municipal operations run smoothly, their presence may go unnoticed – yet their contributions are vital to the community’s quality of life. This year’s theme underscores the importance of recognizing the individuals behind these services, the purpose that drives their commitment, and the ever-present impact of their work on the community.

Public Works professionals are responsible for the infrastructure, facilities, and services that sustain daily life. Their efforts support the operation, maintenance and enhancement of transportation networks, the drinking water system, solid waste management, public buildings, parks, forests, and other essential community assets and/or services. Whether enhancing the beauty of Vaughan’s parks and open spaces, ensuring road safety, or managing waste collection, the work of Public Works professionals is evident throughout the city.

A range of in-person and virtual events will take place this year to celebrate National Public Works Week

Planning for this year’s events began in February 2025, led by an organizing committee composed of the Public Works leadership team and select staff. The following activities will take place this year:

- in-person opening ceremony and flag raising event: Tuesday, May 20, 2025

- free mulch giveaway: Friday, May 23, 2025
- in-person staff appreciation barbeque: Friday, May 23, 2025
- in-person Open House with free mulch giveaway: Saturday, May 24, 2025
- virtual education and outreach events throughout the week: May 18 – 24, 2025

Beyond National Public Works Week, the Public Works portfolio remains dedicated to celebrating and empowering staff through the annual Golden Pylon Awards and Recognition Program, publication of the Public Works Yearbook, and the City's first women's networking group

In 2024, the Public Works portfolio commemorated the fifth year of the Golden Pylon Awards and Recognition Program, which allows staff to nominate and vote for peers and teams who exemplify excellence in alignment with the portfolio's key objectives. Award categories included the WOW Award, Health and Safety Award, Emerging Leader Award, Positive Impact Award, Leannovation Award, Women in Public Works Award, and Leadership Award. Most recently, a total of 28 Public Works professionals were recognized through this program.

The Public Works portfolio also published the 2024 Public Works Yearbook, which highlights departmental accomplishments, key initiatives, and individual contributions throughout the year. This publication serves as an ongoing record of the portfolio's commitment to service excellence and innovation.

Public Works also continued its Women Igniting Support and Empowerment (WISE) network, the City's first women's networking group. Established by Public Works, WISE provides a platform for female leaders to connect, mentor, and support one another. The network empowers women in traditionally male dominated environments and encourages career ownership, professional growth, and leadership development.

These initiatives reflect the Public Works portfolio's ongoing commitment to recognizing excellence, fostering inclusivity, and empowering staff to ensure that Public Works remains a workplace where talent is celebrated, leadership is nurtured, and professional growth is supported.

Financial Impact

There are no costs associated with this report.

Operational Impact

There are no operational impacts as a result of receiving this report for decision.

Broader Regional Impacts/Considerations

There are no broader regional impacts or considerations associated with this report.

Conclusion

National Public Works Week (NPWW) serves as an opportunity for municipalities across North America to inform, educate, and promote the critical role of Public Works in maintaining safe, clean, and vibrant communities. Through the annual proclamation of NPWW and active participation in the scheduled events this year, the City reaffirms its commitment to recognizing the essential contributions of Public Works professionals and celebrating their impact on the community.

For more information, please contact:

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Attachments

N/A

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