

## **CITY OF VAUGHAN**

### **EXTRACT FROM COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF MARCH 11, 2020**

Item 5, Report No. 11, of the Committee of the Whole, which was adopted without amendment by the Council of the City of Vaughan on March 11, 2020.

#### **5. CP BRIDGE ENHANCEMENT AND DIGITAL SIGN MODERNIZATION PROPOSAL**

**The Committee of the Whole recommends:**

- 1) That the recommendations contained in the following report of the Acting City Manager, dated March 9, 2020, be approved;**
- 2) That VANHORNE Outdoor work with appropriate City staff to develop a protocol for informing residents in the area of any railway signage enhancement sites, of such initiatives by way of community information sessions, with the purpose of gathering community comments for the proponents' review and consideration;**
- 3) That such protocol be followed in future when other such initiatives are advanced; and**
- 4) That the presentation by Chris Bentler, Executive Vice President, VANHORNE Outdoor, be received.**

#### **Recommendations**

- 1. That the presentation (Attachment 1) from Van Horne Outdoor be received;**
- 2. That the Mayor and the City Clerk be authorized to enter into an agreement with Van Horne Outdoor (a limited partnership between CP and AllVision Canada) on matters of mutual interest related to digital and static signs at two locations in Vaughan, being: (i) Highway 27 south of Royalpark, and (ii) Highway 7, west of Islington Avenue, subject to the content of this agreement being satisfactory to the Acting City Manager (or designate) and the form being satisfactory to the City Solicitor (or designate); and**
- 3. That staff of the Corporate and Strategic Communications department be authorized to manage content related to the City allocation on the subject digital and static signs.**

## Committee of the Whole (2) Report

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**DATE:** Monday, March 09, 2020

**WARD(S):** 2

**TITLE: CP BRIDGE ENHANCEMENT AND DIGITAL SIGN  
MODERNIZATION PROPOSAL**

**FROM:**

Mary Reali, Acting City Manager

**ACTION:** DECISION

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**Purpose**

To seek approval to enter into an agreement with Van Horne Outdoor (VHO) for the design, construction, installation, City/community usage, financing, maintenance, operations, municipal approvals and other matters associated with four digital/static sign faces at two CP rail bridge locations in the community of Woodbridge.

**Report Highlights**

- Owned by CP Rail, this project beautifies, modernizes and enhances two existing CP rail overpass bridges located at (i) Highway 27 south of Royalpark, and (ii) Highway 7, west of Islington Avenue in the community of Woodbridge (Ward 2).
- Digital outdoor signs increase the City's inventory of communication channels, thereby improving City and community communications with commuters, residents, community groups and businesses.
- The proposed agreement provides a positive opportunity to leverage exposure and profile on key corridors to address community needs for promotion, marketing awareness and communications of local events, happenings, safety alerts, etc. in a timely and cost-efficient manner.
- The City would receive 10% of guaranteed screen time throughout the year and up to an additional 5% of screen time for two four-week periods during the year for community use.
- Other than the staff time required to prepare City content, this project shall be delivered by CP and their agents at no cost to the City.



## **Recommendations**

1. That the presentation (Attachment 1) from Van Horne Outdoor be received;
2. That the Mayor and the City Clerk be authorized to enter into an agreement with Van Horne Outdoor (a limited partnership between CP and AllVision Canada) on matters of mutual interest related to digital and static signs at two locations in Vaughan, being: (i) Highway 27 south of Royalpark, and (ii) Highway 7, west of Islington Avenue, subject to the content of this agreement being satisfactory to the Acting City Manager (or designate) and the form being satisfactory to the City Solicitor (or designate); and
3. That staff of the Corporate and Strategic Communications department be authorized to manage content related to the City allocation on the subject digital and static signs.

## **Background**

Canadian Pacific (CP) Railway has initiated a national effort to enhance and modernize its rail overpasses along its federally regulated rail corridors. Van Horne Outdoor (VHO), a limited partnership between CP and AllVision Canada, a national digital billboard consulting firm, will facilitate this multi-year program.

CP will be replacing a bridge located on Highway 27 south of Royalpark Way in Woodbridge, with construction scheduled to commence in 2020. In January 2020, Van Horne Outdoor approached the City of Vaughan (see Attachment 2) to participate in the bridge enhancement program at two locations:

1. Highway 7, west of Islington Avenue
2. Highway 27, south of Royalpark Way

## **Previous Reports/Authority**

Not applicable

## **Analysis and Options**

***Increasing the inventory of communication channels to alert, inform, educate, and engage the public is a priority of the City***

Digital signs have existed in Vaughan in various formats (e.g. pylon signs, billboards) for many years. There are precedents with the City entering into agreements with the private sector and public agencies (e.g. Metrolinx, CN and RCC Media) for digital and vinyl signage displays throughout the City.

### ***Supporting Community Groups and Their Events***

As a growing city, Vaughan has a roster of community organizations that actively support and deliver programming; as well as facilitate engagement with residents, businesses and constituents. These organizations perform much-needed services, often with limited financial and human resources.

The proposed agreement with VHO would provide a guaranteed 10% of screen time for City's use throughout the year, as well as up to additional 5% of screen time for community use for two four-week intervals during the year, at no cost to the City. VHO will provide overrides during emergencies, including amber alerts, natural disasters, etc.

### ***Proposed Signage Locations Shall Improve the Look and Aesthetics of CP Rail Bridges***

Under its modernization program, CP proposes to erect four digital and static signs, at two overpass locations in Vaughan (see Attachment 3). The overpass on Highway 27 south of Royalpark Way is due to be replaced in 2020. CP through its joint venture partnership with Van Horne Outdoor will be erecting two signs and has offered to provide digital and static signage opportunities to the City of Vaughan as well as third party advertisers on the north and south face of the bridge overpass. Similarly, VHO is also proposing signs on the CP overpass on Highway 7, west of Islington Avenue.

### ***Compliance with City By-laws and Permits: Construction and Materials***

VHO proposes to improve the appearance of the overpasses by adding modern galvanized metal cladding and static digital signs. The dimensions of each face are approximately 8'11" by 28'1".

Signs being developed in partnership with the City are exempt from the provisions of the Sign By-law 140-2018, however the proposed digital signs will be in compliance with key provisions of Section 19 - General Provisions for Digital Signs, such as with respect to levels of illumination, and furthermore, VHO will be required to obtain the necessary

approvals, such as from York Region and the City of Vaughan prior to commencement of work.

### ***Modern digital billboard displays offer versatility and control in illumination levels***

‘Digital Sign’ means a sign that displays information or images on a digital or electronic screen. Digital billboard technology produces images which are changed via computer, from remote locations, eliminating the need for manual application or removal of billboard copy. Electronic billboards offer advantages for greater versatility and flexibility in reaching residents and travelling public.

The proposed signage will be static digital displays that do not scroll, flash or feature motion pictures so as to promote road safety and reduce driver distractions. The modern digital billboards proposed, are equipped with photocells and will be compliant in illumination and brightness levels at different times of the day, adjusting for daylight hours and at sunset. They can be positioned so as to not cast light on adjoining residential areas. VHO intends to operate the signs at 200 nits (luminescence measure) approximately at a 33% lower level than the City’s guidelines for night-time brightness (i.e. 300 nits).

One half of each sign face will incorporate the City’s corporate logo and the remaining half will be available to third party advertisers. The corporate logo will be backlit during evening hours to provide visibility.

### ***Proposed Agreement with VHO***

Due to the jurisdictional nature of the signage on federally regulated rail corridors, VHO proposes to replicate a master agreement that they have implemented with the City of Mississauga. Subject to City of Vaughan Council approval of the recommendations in this report, the Mayor and City Clerk shall be authorized to enter into an agreement with VHO, subject to the satisfaction of the Acting City Manager and City Solicitor.

### **Financial Impact**

Other than the cost (primarily City staff time) to prepare City content/messages, there are no municipal financial or budget implications as the project will be funded entirely by VHO.

### **Broader Regional Impacts/Considerations**

As the proposed signs will span regional roadways, the City Clerk will circulate a copy of this report to York Region.

## **Conclusion**

This proposal from VHO aims to improve the appearance of rail/bridge infrastructure and provide branding and engagement opportunities for Vaughan in two busy travel corridors. The 2018-2022 Term of Council Service Excellence Strategic Plan supports initiatives that increase engagement with residents, businesses and the public. The provision of digital signage at no additional cost to the City provides opportunities for communicating city and emergency messaging, as well as support community-led events and initiatives.

**For more information**, please contact Dennis Cutajar, Director of Economic and Cultural Development, ext. 8274, or Mary Reali, Acting City Manager, ext. 8234.

## **Attachments**

1. Bridge Enhancement and Digital Sign Modernization Program Proposal.
2. Correspondence from Van Horne Outdoor dated January 7, 2020.
3. Proposed Signage Location Maps.

## **Prepared by**

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Dennis Cutajar, Director Economic and Cultural Development, ext. 8274

**Vaughan, ON**

**Bridge Enhancement  
and  
Digital Sign Modernization  
Program**

**VANHORNE**  
OUTDOOR

# Contents

1. Background
2. Benefits to City and Proposed Locations
3. Mock-Ups of Enhanced Bridges with Vaughan Branding
4. City of Mississauga Bridge Signs and Case Study



# Overview

## Background

Van Horne Outdoor (VHO) has entered into a multi-year venture to modernize and consolidate existing outdoor assets along Canadian Pacific's (CP) Federally Regulated rail corridors by removing and replacing outdated static billboards with modern static digital displays installed on CP bridges.

Van Horne Outdoor has just implemented a highly successful partnership with the City of Mississauga involving 16 CP bridge signs on Federally Regulated rail corridors running through that municipality (photos on final page).

A recognized North American traffic expert concluded that all of the installations in Mississauga were safe from a traffic perspective (see Appendix I for the City of Mississauga case study).

Similar programs have been implemented on CN rail corridors in Vaughan and Pickering.

# Overview

## Benefits

- Promote City of Vaughan branding
- Aesthetic improvements to bridges and rail corridor
- Emergency Override as needed on each digital display for emergencies such as natural disasters, Amber alerts, etc.
- City receives 10% of guaranteed screen time on the digital signs throughout each year
- City will receive an additional 5% (totalling 15%) of screen time for two 4-week periods during the year to promote City-sponsored special events and festivals
- Additional time on the screen may be utilized based upon availability



# Overview

## Proposed Locations

VHO proposes to modernize the following 2 CP bridges with 8'11" x 28'1" digital displays and City of Vaughan branding

- Hwy 7 west of Islington Ave (both sides)
- York 27 south of Royalpark Way (both sides)

Sample Mock-Ups of Proposed Locations on Following Pages

# Overview

## Proposed Process

Due to the jurisdictional nature of the sign locations in Vaughan on Federally Regulated rail corridors, and the benefits to the municipality, VHO would seek to replicate the Master Agreement that was entered into with the City of Mississauga in order to implement the program.

See Appendix I for City of Mississauga case study.



# Mock-Ups of Proposed Locations

York 27 south of Royalpark Way – Facing South



# Mock-Ups of Proposed Locations

York 27 south of Royalpark Way – Facing North





# Mock-Ups of Proposed Locations

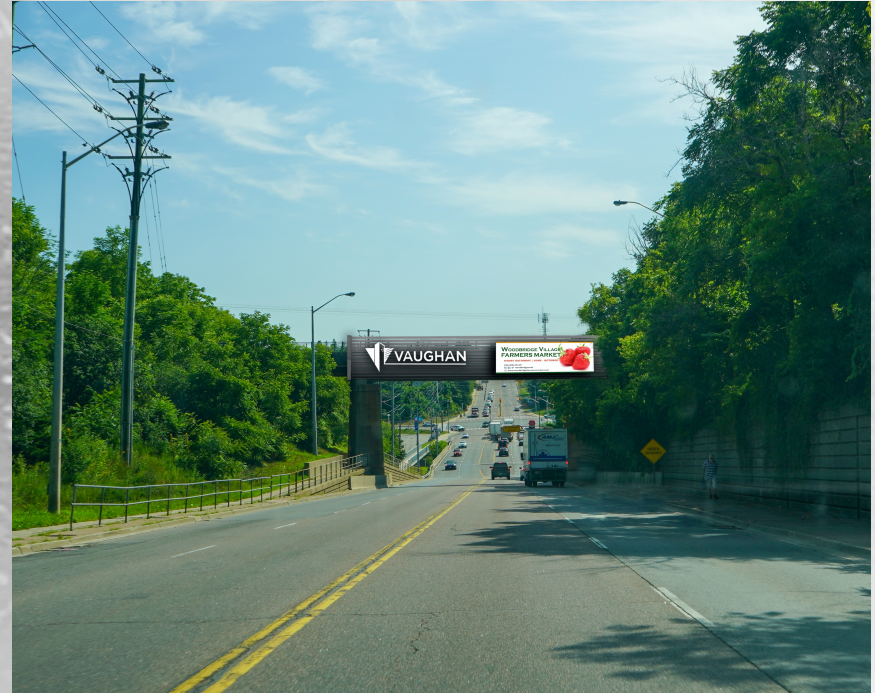
Hwy 7 west of Islington Ave – Facing East





# Mock-Ups of Proposed Locations

Hwy 7 west of Islington Ave – Facing West



# Mississauga Bridge Signs





A grayscale photograph of a long, straight railway track stretching into the distance. The tracks are flanked by gravel and vegetation, and the horizon is visible in the far distance under a cloudy sky.

# Appendix I



# VHO Digital Billboard Program

Van Horne Outdoor (VHO) entered into an agreement with City of Mississauga to place digital signs at eight CP railway overpass locations in Mississauga.

May 7, 2019



VHO Digital Billboard Program

## Background

Van Horne Outdoor (VHO), a limited partnership between Canadian Pacific Railway (CP) and All Vision LLC, entered into an agreement with City of Mississauga to place digital

signs at eight CP railway overpass locations in Mississauga. There will be one sign on each side of an overpass. City staff worked with various partners to ensure the signs meet by-law and road safety requirements and lighting standards.

## **Who owns the signs?**

Van Horne Outdoor (VHO), a limited partnership between Canadian Pacific Railway (CP) and All Vision LLC, is responsible for paying for all of the upfront and ongoing cost to install and maintain the signs. In addition, VHO made a financial contribution into improving lighting underneath the bridges to improve pedestrian safety.

## **How many signs will there be and where will they be located and when will they go up?**

VHO will place digital signs on 8 CP Rail overpasses throughout the City.

Sign locations:

- Cawthra Road (south of Dundas Street)
- Mavis Road (south of Central Parkway)
- Dixie Road (south of Dundas Street)
- Winston Churchill (south of Highway 401)
- Britannia Road West (west of Queen Street North)
- Eglinton Avenue West (west of Creditview Road)
- Burnhamthorpe Road (west of Central Parkway West)

- Hurontario Street (north of John Street)

The installation of the signs is to be fully completed by the end of 2019.

### **How will the City benefit and what do we get?**

The City benefits from bridge improvements, permanent branding, and the use of 10% of digital signage time to promote community messages and initiatives, including public service announcements, amber alerts, and information on City services and programs.

### **Are the signs safe?**

VHO hired a very well-respected Engineer who specializes in transportation matters and has worked extensively on digital signs, conducting traffic research examining the relationship between digital billboards and traffic safety. The Engineer analyzed similar installations existing on bridges in the GTA and the proposed locations in Mississauga and concluded that all of the installations were safe from a traffic perspective. VHO is also following the City's Guidelines and By-Laws pertaining to Billboard Signs and Traffic Safety. A complete Urban Design Impact Assessment was also completed for each location.

### **Are the signs monitored for brightness?**

The signs are equipped with a photocell which automatically adjusts the brightness due to ambient light. As the sun sets the screen automatically dims to adjust to darker conditions to ensure the higher brightness levels needed during the day are adjusted down in the evening time. In the evening VHO operates the signs at 200 nits (a unit of luminance measurement), an approximately 35% lower level than what the City's guideline suggests for night-time brightness.

**Is there a cost to the City for the signs?**

No.



January 7, 2020

Tim Simmonds  
City Manager  
City of Vaughan  
Vaughan City Hall, Level 400  
2141 Major Mackenzie Drive  
Vaughan, On L6A 1T1

Re: Bridge Enhancement and Modernization Program

Dear Mr. Simmonds,

Canadian Pacific (CP) Railway has initiated a national effort to enhance and modernize its rail overpasses along its Federally Regulated rail corridors. CP has developed a joint venture partnership company called Van Horne Outdoor to facilitate this program. Van Horne Outdoor includes AllVision Canada, a national digital billboard consulting firm. CP rail has granted rights to Van Horne Outdoor to represent the company's interests as it relates to the Bridge Enhancement and Modernization program.

This important project includes improving the overpasses by adding modern galvanized cladding and replacing adjacent existing outdated signs with modern static digital displays installed on our bridge faces. We are partnering with select municipalities to implement our Bridge Enhancement Program and invite the City of Vaughan to participate with us. We have just completed our first program with the City of Mississauga which provided a variety of benefits to the city and community.

There are two locations in the City of Vaughan that Van Horne has identified for its Bridge Enhancement program:

- Highway 7, east of Landsdowne Avenue
- Highway 27, south of Royalpark Way (just south of Rutherford Road)

Please refer to the attached presentation for more details of the locations.

As you may know, the bridge located on Highway 27, south of Royalpark Way is scheduled for replacement, with construction scheduled to commence this year. Van Horne intends to incorporate the digital sign, and necessary infrastructure into this bridge replacement project.

Van Horne Outdoor is engaging with municipalities to inform and attain support from various municipalities, including the City of Vaughan as it relates to this program. We look forward to working with the City of Vaughan on this Bridge Enhancement program and implementing this important project together. Please feel free to contact me throughout this process if you have any questions or comments.

Yours Truly,



Christopher Bentler  
Executive Vice President  
Van Horne Outdoor

Cc. Dennis Cutajar - Director, Economic and Cultural Development, Vaughan  
James Clements, Senior Vice President, Strategic Planning & Technology Transformation,  
CP Rail



RUTHERFORD ROAD

# Attachment 3: Proposed Signage Locations

HIGHWAY 27

HIGHWAY 27

ROYAL PARK WAY

ROYAL PARK WAY





# Attachment 3: Proposed Signage Locations

