

# Council Report

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**DATE:** Monday, September 27, 2021

**WARD(S):** ALL

**TITLE:** SUPPORT VAUGHAN LOCAL – ONTARIO CHAMBER OF COMMERCE / VAUGHAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

**FROM:**

Nick Spensieri, City Manager

**ACTION:** DECISION

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**Purpose**

To gain Council approval to support the Ontario and Vaughan Chamber of Commerce's shop-local campaign, *Support Vaughan Local* with communications and digital infrastructure.

**Report Highlights**

- With the support of the Government of Canada, the Ontario Chamber of Commerce is investing more than \$100,000 in the Vaughan Chamber of Commerce to deliver a shop local campaign.
- The Support Vaughan Local campaign will deliver:
  - shop-local branding and digital content
  - seasonal campaigns intended to direct shoppers to local small merchants
  - promotions of online shopping, curbside pickup and delivery, as well as public health measures being implemented to make retail spaces safe and raise consumer confidence;
  - marketing materials such as videos, social media visuals, and radio and newspaper ads that encourage consumers to buy from local businesses and patronize local restaurants and attractions.
- Building consumer confidence and awareness of the local economy has been a priority of Economic and Cultural Development in response to the COVID-19 Pandemic
- Corporate and Strategic Communications continues to promote #ShopVaughanLocal.

## **Recommendations**

1. That Economic and Cultural Development, inclusive of the Tourism Vaughan Corporation, and Corporate and Strategic Communications be authorized to provide support to the Vaughan Chamber of Commerce in administering their Shop Local Ontario Chamber Network/Support Vaughan Local campaign with:
  - a. Communications support where appropriate within City policies; and,
  - b. Hosting a Business-to-Consumer business directory on the consumer facing [visitvaughan.ca](http://visitvaughan.ca)

## **Background**

***The Global COVID-19 Pandemic has had a disproportionate affect on traditional retail as consumers turned to online shopping.***

As the Retail Council of Canada noted this past [summer](#), buying habits have changed since the pandemic began. Now, 50% of Canadians report they are making online purchases for traditional in-store items. As the article demonstrates, “specific retail areas that have seen big shifts include online retail shopping, food ordering services, and online grocery services.”

***The Government of Canada invested nearly \$9 million through the Ontario Chamber of Commerce (OCC) to promote shopping local.***

The OCC has invested more than \$100,000 in the Vaughan Chamber of Commerce (VCC) to deliver a shop-local campaign to be launched as early as October 2021. This was confirmed to the VCC in September, 2021.

The Support Vaughan Local campaign will build awareness for participating businesses who have found the transition to online and the new COVID-19 environment extremely difficult in the following categories:

- Eat & Drink
- Shop
- Fun & Entertainment
- Event Hosting
- Spa & Wellness
- Accommodations

The campaign will:

- Promote 100+ local Vaughan businesses and destinations that have been negatively impacted due to the pandemic

- Showcase the stories, passions and pride of local Vaughan businesses to humanize “business-related troubles” to an individual-focused viewpoint
- Push for a “Vaughan local” first mentality for resident (and target market) needs to drive effective, revenue-generating traffic
- Drive traffic to supportvaughanlocal.ca and participating partner social media channels throughout the campaign duration
- Increase user-generated content (UGC) to facilitate the ongoing communication of this initiative across social media platforms
- Build rapport with local Vaughan businesses to introduce or reaffirm community support from the VCC, the City of Vaughan, ECD, and from TVC’s two channels: leisure and business & events
- Amplify and promote the ability and ease of shopping local, combined with the benefits of supporting local industry and business

***Shopping local and [consumer confidence](#) are key to the ongoing economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. Economic and Cultural Development has undertaken a number of shop local and consumer confidence initiatives as part of the City’s Vaughan Business Resilience Plan.***

ECD, inclusive of the Tourism Vaughan Corporation (TVC), has supported other shop and support local campaigns like the highly successful #ShopVaughanLocal, as well as the Post Promise and Safe Travels stamps. In addition, the Vaughan Business Resilience Plan identified supporting local businesses as a key to business resilience. Further, the health of our retail neighbourhoods is key to maintaining Vaughan as a destination.

### **Previous Reports/Authority**

[Vaughan Business Resilience Plan](#), Ready, Resilient, and Resourceful Committee Report, Tuesday June 23, 2020.

[POST Promise and Safe Travels](#): Communication – Committee of the Whole (1) May 4, 2021

[vaughanbusiness.ca/consumerconfidence](http://vaughanbusiness.ca/consumerconfidence)

[Shop Local – Ontario Chamber Network](#)

[Minister Ng announces Shop Local investment benefiting Canada’s small businesses](#), June 21, 2021

## **Analysis and Options**

***Supporting the VCC's shop local campaign is a natural progression from the successful #ShopVaughanLocal series of initiatives.***

Since the inception of the pandemic, Corporate and Strategic Communications (CSC) has led a successful series of shop local initiatives encouraging residents to buy local and support retailers with various suggestions like gift card purchases.

The VCC's Support Vaughan Local campaign was developed with the City's #ShopVaughanLocal success in mind. There are obvious synergies between the campaigns in nomenclature and purpose.

***By providing in-kind digital infrastructure through the visitvaughan.ca site, the City can help the VCC maximize its investment in the community, while also using Chamber support to build its Council approved microsite for visitors to Vaughan.***

ECD/TVC continues to build its digital infrastructure. By partnering with the VCC, the City can build its already planned page on its site. The opportunity will be open to all businesses with the VCC sharing a open and accessible criterion for local businesses to participate.

The VCC will, by leveraging this ECD/TVC initiative, can invest more funds in advertising and support. Without this, the VCC would spend funds to develop a temporary consumer-facing site and brand.

## **Financial Impact**

There is no financial impact to the City for the Support Vaughan Local campaign. Communications and web assets are part of existing operations for ECD/TVC and CSC.

## **Broader Regional Impacts/Considerations**

***The Support Vaughan Local campaign will be part of a series of shop local campaigns delivered across the Region and Province.***

The VCC has secured a large investment from the OCC to deliver Support Vaughan Local. Neighbouring municipalities have also secured funds from the OCC. It is important to ensure the Vaughan campaign is prominent.

## **Conclusion**

The Support Vaughan Local campaign is a premier opportunity, supported by the OCC and the Federal Government, to promote the local retail and consumer services sector Vaughan. By providing communications and web support, the City can ensure that the VCC's campaign will be prominent.

**For more information**, please contact: (insert Director/File Manager contact info associated with report)

## **Attachments**

1. NA

## **Prepared by**

Ashley Travassos, Manager, Tourism, Arts and Culture, extension 8472  
Don De Los Santos, Manager, Small Business and Entrepreneurship, extension 8874  
Raphael Costa, Director, Economic and Cultural Development, extension 8891

## **Approved by**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nick Spensieri', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Nick Spensieri, City Manager