

Committee of the Whole Working Session Report

DATE: Wednesday, October 06, 2021

WARD(S): ALL

TITLE: SERVICE VAUGHAN: ENHANCING THE CITIZEN EXPERIENCE

FROM: Nick Spensieri, City Manager

ACTION: DECISION

Purpose

To obtain Council endorsement of the Service Vaughan Strategy to enhance the citizen service experience. The Service Vaughan Strategy provides a comprehensive omni-channel approach to service delivery in the form of service standards, Access Vaughan call centre services, on-line services and integrated in-person counter services. The Service Vaughan Strategy ensures a citizen-centric approach which reflects the voice of the citizen.

Report Highlights

- The City, as expressed in its 2018-2022 Term of Council Service Excellence Strategic Plan, is committed to its mission of “Citizens First through Service Excellence”.
- The Service Vaughan Strategy is a citizen-centric approach to service which reflects the voice of the citizen in the City’s service delivery approaches.
- An omni-channel approach provides for various service delivery modes, including Access Vaughan services, in-person services, and on-line digital services.
- On-line services and the leveraging of digital initiatives have enabled significant changes in service delivery providing more efficient and effective approaches.
- Learnings from the COVID-19 pandemic response will be leveraged to enhance the approach to integrated counter services and the in-person citizen experience.
- The entry of City Hall will be renovated to reflect the enhanced integrated counter service model providing for a new main service counter, in-person self-serve digital area, and private / semi-private service stations.
- A comprehensive communications plan will be developed to inform the public and promote the omni-channel service approach.

Recommendations

1. That Council endorse the Service Vaughan Strategy.
2. That Council approve facility-related changes in City Hall to enhance the in-person citizen experience.

Background

The City of Vaughan continues in the delivery of its objectives and key initiatives under the 2018-2022 Term of Council Service Excellence Strategic Plan. Under the strategic priority areas of Citizen Experience and Operational Performance, the City continues in its business transformation initiatives to improve service delivery through enhanced community engagement, communications, digital services, and innovations in processes and procedures.

The Service Vaughan Strategy is based on a philosophy of a citizen-centric approach to designing service; an omni-channel approach to delivering service (multiple options for accessing services); an integrated Access Vaughan model to optimize Access Vaughan as the first and primary point of contact, where appropriate; and leverages innovation, tools and technologies to enhance the citizen service experience with the efficiency and convenience of on-line digital service access.

The response to the COVID-19 pandemic necessitated the closure of multiple service counters in City Hall and the Joint Operations Centre. However, services continued largely uninterrupted through modifications and innovations. In leveraging this experience and as the City works toward the gradual reopening of all its facilities to the public, on-line digital services will be promoted as a safe, accessible, efficient and convenient means to continue receiving high-quality services for Vaughan's citizens. For those citizens that will visit City Hall in the future upon reopening to the public, a new integrated service experience is being implemented.

For future in-person service in City Hall, a new integrated service counter will be constructed in the entrance of City Hall. The service counter will be administered by Access Vaughan staff and provide an enhanced level of services from multiple service functions offered from the majority of City departments. In addition, a self-serve digital service area will be constructed to allow for citizens to access services digitally while on site. Lastly, meeting room space will be reconfigured for in-person service inquiries that require more one-on-one service. This approach provides citizens with a more streamlined approach to services in a designated area by removing the need to travel between multiple floors and locations within City Hall. By closing multiple service counters

and redirecting services to one main area within City Hall, the City also provides a safe and contained environment for its residents as well as staff.

The following provides information regarding the Service Vaughan Strategy, its strategic alignment, the principles and objectives for an omni-channel service approach and key initiatives underway or to be implemented. In addition, staff will present Council with the new proposed facility changes for City Hall during the Committee of the Whole (Working Session).

Previous Reports/Authority

Not applicable

Analysis

Strategic Alignment

The 2018-2022 Term of Council Service Excellence Strategic Plan includes objectives and key initiatives in support of Service Excellence with a mission of *“Citizen’s First through Service Excellence”*. The strategic priority areas of Citizen Experience and Operational Performance include initiatives that support the City’s ongoing commitment to provide Service Excellence to its citizens and the business community.



The Service Vaughan Strategy integrates the objectives and key initiatives within the strategic priority areas of Citizen Experience and Operational Performance. This continues to align and be supported by the focus areas and goals of #VaughanDigital, the City's Digital Strategy, to ensure citizens are able to transact with the City anywhere, using the tools that work for them 24-7.



CITIZEN EXPERIENCE

Strategic Goal Statement: To ensure citizens receive the best experience in person, by telephone and electronically, the City will provide exceptional end-to-end citizen-centred services, enhance access and streamline services with the use of technology.

Objectives:

- Commitment to Citizen Service
- Transform Services through Technology



OPERATIONAL PERFORMANCE

Strategic Goal Statement: To continue to foster a culture of continuous improvement, the City will support competencies and practices in innovation and process efficiencies.

Objectives:

- Leverage Data-Driven Decision-Making
- Promote Innovation and Continuous Improvement

The Service Vaughan Strategy supports the City's vision, mission and values. By implementing the key initiatives under these strategic priority areas, the City is able to fulfill its commitment of Service Excellence and quality customer service.

Service Vaughan Strategy

The Service Vaughan Strategy is based on a philosophy of a citizen-centric approach to designing service; an omni-channel approach to delivering service (multiple options for accessing services); an integrated Access Vaughan model whereby Access Vaughan is the first and primary point of contact where appropriate; and leverages innovation, tools and technologies to enhance the citizen service experience with the efficiency and convenience of on-line digital services.

Integral to the City's strategic objectives is the ability to provide a safe, efficient, and citizen-centric approach to the "citizen service experience". Based on the 2018 Citizen Satisfaction Survey, 91% of residents indicated that they were satisfied or very satisfied with the delivery of services provided by the City. However, the City is always looking for opportunities to maintain or increase this satisfaction level, improve the efficiency of service delivery, measure performance, better leverage its service channels, and prepare for future service channel innovations.

Objectives:

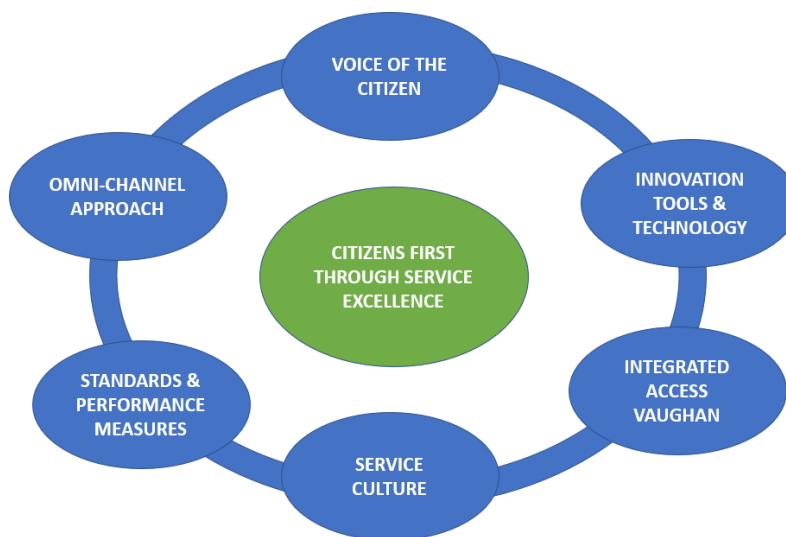
The 2018-2022 Term of Council Service Excellence Strategic Plan reflects the City's commitment to enhancing the citizen experience. The Service Vaughan Strategy centers around the City's mission of "***Citizens First Through Service Excellence***". All processes and interactions supporting service delivery must be designed from the view of the citizen's experience, where citizen needs are considered throughout the design of service delivery models. In addition, business processes are aligned with those needs to provide efficient and timely support and information.

The Service Vaughan Strategy represents the voice of the citizen and is a driving force to achieve Service Excellence. The Service Vaughan Strategy establishes a citizen-centric approach to designing and delivering services to citizens and builds upon the City's standards for the citizen service experience. It continues to examine emerging best practices for the customer experience and service delivery, exploring how citizen expectations for City services are changing and how new technologies offer opportunities to enhance service experiences.

The Service Vaughan Strategy helps to define how the City of Vaughan provides customer service. The Service Vaughan Strategy is based on the following objectives:

1. Through community engagement, ensure a citizen centric service approach which reflects the voice of the citizen and a service excellence culture.
2. Provide an omni-channel approach to ensure all City services are available and accessible to all citizens.

3. Continue the Access Vaughan Integrated Service Model to streamline services through Access Vaughan as a first and primary point of contact, where appropriate.
4. Continue to innovate and leverage technologies to enable service delivery and find operational efficiencies.
5. Monitor and continue to enhance service standards and performance measures that demonstrate outcomes across service delivery processes for measuring against service level standards.
6. Enhance the In-Person Citizen Experience.



1. Citizen-Centric Service Design

The objective of a citizen-centric service delivery model is to design services around the needs and expectations of citizens to build closer relationships with them. An organization's processes, systems, and structure change to support customer behaviours and needs. As expressed in its strategic plan, the City has committed to a mission of putting the needs of the citizen at the centre of how it delivers services. This means shifting the focus to designing the delivery of services based on the needs of the people they are meant to serve and aligning processes and tools to support them. This citizen-centric design approach is fundamental to how we approach our service models and business processes.

Consistent Quality Customer Service Experience:

Regardless of what channel the citizen chooses to engage with the City, the quality of the experience should be consistent and should reflect the citizen-centric perspective. It is imperative that staff providing services have access to the same information and a history of the citizen's previous interactions and are trained to deliver a customer service experience that is consistent, optimized, seamless, integrated, and collaborative. The citizen-centric approach is enabled through consistent training, ongoing cross-team communication, and the adoption of tools for digital service delivery such as the citizen relationship management (CRM) system.

Voice of the Citizen:

Through a citizen-centric approach, the City will continue to engage with citizens to gain feedback and insights on their service experiences and expectations.

The Service Vaughan Strategy works to represent the voice of the citizen to implement citizen-centric design thinking for service delivery. To do this, the City has established a citizen engagement capability to encourage citizen involvement in focus groups, surveys, and interviews to gather insights and feedback about how they interact with the City to find information, make requests, and complete transactions.

Essential to this will be developing citizen journey maps for each service to identify what drives the need to engage with the City, illustrate the steps and tasks a citizen undertakes to address those needs, and map those to the various interaction touchpoints between the City and the citizen and to the City's business processes to assess how they align.

The City will continue to evolve its Service Culture:

There needs to be a common mindset, values, and expectations across all service delivery teams. To implement this, there needs to be regular communication and recurring training and development programs in place to support the adoption of a citizen-centric service delivery model and the Service Vaughan brand.

The City will develop a learning and professional development program for citizen service skills, knowledge, and competencies that will be part of every employees learning curriculum. It will be used to establish and reinforce the City's service culture and provide staff with the skills and knowledge needed to represent the City and interact with citizens. It will align with and leverage the many existing learning and development initiatives provided by the City.

Communications and Community Engagement:

Service delivery and the communications to the public regarding the City's services continues to be integral to the success of an optimized citizen experience. All departments across the organization work closely with Corporate and Strategic

Communications to profile citizen services, options for access and to provide essential information. A multi-channel tactical approach is taken to communicate to our citizens that includes, but is not limited to: social media, public service announcements, City website, news releases, promotional materials, targeted advertising, backgrounders, brochures, direct mail, email, factsheets, FAQs, information booths, and newsletter/mailers.

In addition, the City's Community Engagement Strategy lays the foundation for effective citizen engagement to promote citizen participation through various channels as well as through digital options. This strategy works to capture the voice of the citizen and is dedicated to having constructive dialogue with the community. Insight collected through the community engagement process helps to inform our service delivery decision-making.

2. An Omni-Channel Approach to Service Delivery

Through the omni-channel approach, citizens receive services through multiple channels of equal quality. These channels include mail, fax, email, telephone calls, in-person walk-in and by appointment services and digital on-line services via the City's website, that leverage service portals and the citizen relationship management (CRM) system.

A 'No Wrong Door' Service Delivery Approach:

Core to the Service Vaughan Strategy is to create a 'No Wrong Door' approach through an omni-channel service experience where citizens can engage with the City through any service channel to receive information or conduct transactions. It is important to ensure that all service delivery channels are designed, aligned, and optimized, allowing citizens to access services from any channel.

Available and Accessible to all Citizens:

By adopting an omni-channel approach, the City can provide consistent delivery of information and services across all channels. The City will continue to leverage a variety of service channels to support citizens to make services available. It is recognized that there is no single channel that will address all needs of all citizens. Government services must be designed to support all citizens and provide multiple options to facilitate their needs. As such, a variety of service delivery channels must be made available to residents to allow them to request services and receive information the way that is most convenient to them. Essential to the success of an omni-channel citizen experience model is that each service channel provides consistency and is aligned with the corporate culture.

3. Integrated Service Approach – Access Vaughan

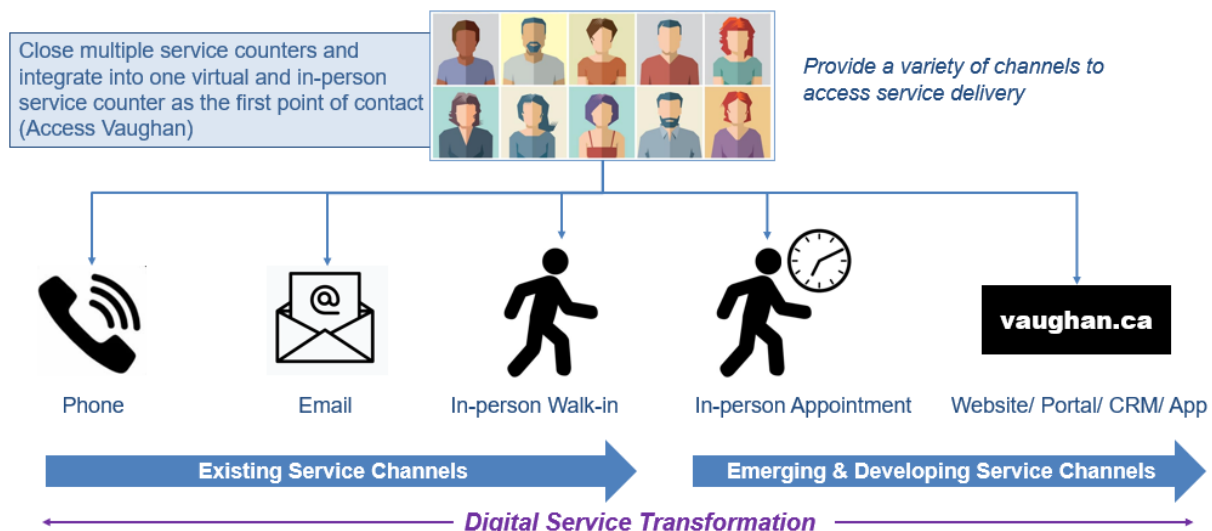
As part of the City's Service Excellence key initiatives, staff have been working to enhance the Access Vaughan service delivery model. The Access Vaughan call centre services

have been leveraged to provide integrated first point of contact for various services across the organization. To further leverage this approach, various service counters across City Hall and the Joint Operations Centre will be closed and services will be further integrated within the Access Vaughan service model while leveraging on-line digital service delivery.

This integration supports an omni-channel approach as well as ensuring a consistent service experience. It further capitalizes and builds on the momentum of the business integrations which were implemented after the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Integrated Service project works to enhance all points of contact including on-line, email, telephone calls and in-person contact.

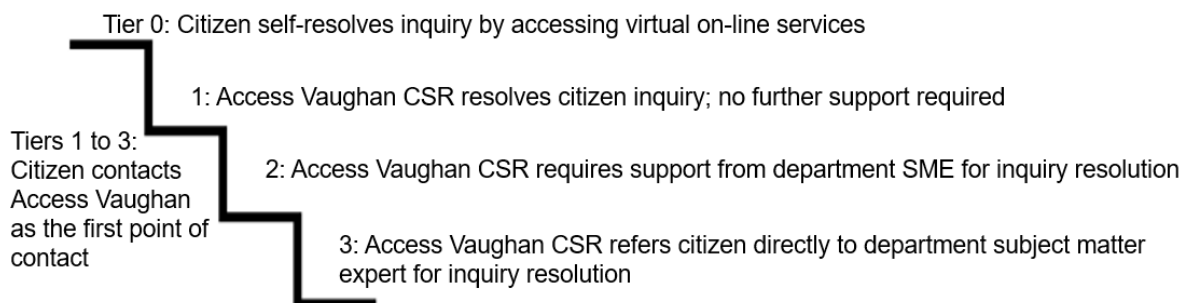
The intended benefits of this project are to:

- Improve and enhance service delivery by creating a positive citizen-centric experience through the adoption of a one-stop-shop omni-channel approach.
- Create efficiencies through process improvements and innovations by leveraging the operational alignment and integration of services and resources.
- Ensure the safety and security of all staff and citizens visiting City Hall by comprehensively serving the citizen at one counter, whether by phone, email, or in-person.



The success of this approach is dependent on the implementation of the new design and layout for the entry area of City Hall (discussed below). In addition, the continued adoption and implementation of CRM software is necessary to move the organization in the direction of consistent data and a uniform interface from which to provide service to the citizen. Closely related to this dependency is the overall digital transformation of the City's services which enables citizens to access a greater number of services through digital channels.

Citizens' interactions with the City are grouped into four tiers.



Work on this project continues to assess processes, resourcing allocations and service standards. It is envisioned, where optimal to do so, Access Vaughan will become the first and primary point of contact for a majority of services as the Tier 1 and Tier 2 contact types. For Tier 3 requirements, service would continue to be provided directly by the specific service department.

4. Innovation and Process Improvements

The City has made enhancing service delivery and delivering Service Excellence priorities in its strategic plan. To achieve this, the City has developed and implemented a digital services strategy, providing citizens and staff with greater information, access to services, and overall awareness of services. Communications are coordinated across channels to deliver information accurately and consistently to citizens, leveraging citizen relationship management tools to capture, track, and report on requests for information and services, and providing an extensive catalogue of on-line services through the website and future mobile applications.

The City continues to seek innovative ways to deliver services to citizens and uses a continuous improvement mindset when reviewing operational requirements and designing service models. The City will continue to explore emerging best practices and trends in service delivery and find innovative ways to provide services and communicate with citizens.

The digital transformation focus areas and goals of #VaughanDigital are closely tied to the citizen-centric and omni-channel approach and seek to optimize service delivery through the adoption of on-line delivery practices for how citizens interact and transact with the City.

Alignment to Service Delivery Modernization & Digital Transformation

In 2020/2021, City staff implemented over 160 innovations and process improvements in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, as reported through the Ready, Resilient and Resourceful Committee of Council. Many of these innovations included on-line and virtual services and the ability to use alternative payment methods as the public have not been able to access City facilities in person.

In addition, various Service Excellence initiatives such as the Finance Modernization Program, the Citizen Relationship Management (CRM) System, Vaughan Digital Strategy, the vaughan.ca website project and new service portals for services such as building permits, continue to move forward and achieve the intended benefits of increasing efficiencies and streamlining processes and automation to ultimately provide reliable and timely information to our citizens.

The City has been implementing a CRM solution to support citizen requests, tracking, and reporting across the City. The CRM is used to collect information on interactions and to initiate service requests. A CRM provides a holistic view of the status of requests and the history of a citizen's interactions with the City across many information or service requests.

The City's on-line service reporting tool continues to expand to provide quality service to citizens to easily submit service requests, report non-emergencies and track submissions 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The City is working to make reporting concerns and submitting a work request easier and as streamlined as possible for citizens. Through the ease and convenience of digital services the following can now be completed on-line through the Service Vaughan tool:

- Reporting maintenance needed on existing pavement markings
- Requesting new pavement markings
- Reporting maintenance needed on existing signs, traffic or pedestrian signals
- Requesting new signs, traffic or pedestrian signals
- Reporting an issue or requesting a service regarding neighbourhood traffic calming measures
- Reporting maintenance needed for existing streetlights
- Reporting a damaged or vandalized utility box

The Service Vaughan tool also receives requests for:

- animal services, including getting a pet licence.
- bids and tenders, including application submissions.
- by-law, including parking permits and paying for tickets on-line.
- debris, vandalism and graffiti, including reporting instances across the city.
- employment, including available job postings and application submissions.
- garbage and recycling, including tag purchases, bin exchanges and purchases, missed garbage and recycling collections and more.
- parks, trees and grass, including maintenance requests and complaints.

- recreation, including activity registration.
- roads and sidewalks, including maintenance requests and complaints.
- sidewalks, including reporting an issue.
- hydrant meter rentals.
- water meter applications.
- municipal water checks.
- water shut off/turn ons.
- fire hydrant flow tests.
- dewatering discharge approvals.
- residential appliance and metal pickups.
- sewer backup service payments.

This Service Vaughan citizen reporting tool includes a tracking feature to check the status of the submitted inquiry on-line, the option to receive auto-updates either via email or through the on-line tool, and the ability to provide feedback upon completion of the request.

5. Service Standards and Performance Measurement

The City has developed service standards for various service response channels. Citizen Service Standards align to the City's 2018-2022 Term of Council Service Excellence Strategic Plan priority of Citizen Experience. Its objective is to ensure citizens receive the best experience in person, by telephone and electronically by providing exceptional end-to-end citizen-centred services, enhancing access and streamlining services with the use of technology. The standards are designed to ensure a consistent, multi-channel, end-to-end citizen service experience. These standards will be reviewed and developed into policies to ensure accountability and monitoring of these standards.

In-person standards ensure:

- Citizens and visitors are treated with courtesy and respect.
- Citizens and visitors are served on a first-come, first-served basis.
- Citizens with different ages, abilities and special needs are provided with appropriate accommodations.
- City staff identify themselves with appropriate identification.

Telephone standards ensure:

- Voice mail messages are returned or acknowledged within two (2) business days and, if required, a response is provided within five (5) business days.
- Personal voice mail greetings are courteous, give the caller as much information as possible and request callers to leave a detailed message.
- Callers are assisted and if needed, are directed to the appropriate area. Callers will not be transferred to another voice mailbox without being made aware.

- Citizens calling the appropriate area will have their issue resolved by involving as few City staff as possible.
- City staff provide their name, department, telephone number and extension they can be reached at when returning a telephone call.

Email standards ensure:

- Emails that require a response are acknowledged within two (2) business days and a response is provided within five (5) business days.
- Vacation and absence “out-of-office” messages are activated providing up-to-date staff availability, and a co-worker’s name and contact information as back-up while out of the office.

To measure the results of these standards, the City will develop a service performance measurement and reporting program. Performance measurement will evolve as various business functions are integrated within Access Vaughan (where appropriate) as well as the data captured in the CRM system, website and related systems supporting service delivery data collection.

The objective of these performance measures will include assessing the channel effectiveness in the delivery of services based on the channel and service strategy, identifying resource workload issues, and identifying opportunities to improve channel usage, communications and citizen understanding.

6. In-Person Citizen Experience - Changes to City Hall

The response to the COVID-19 pandemic necessitated the closure of multiple service counters in City Hall and the Joint Operations Centre. However, services continued largely uninterrupted through modifications and innovations. In leveraging this experience and as the City works toward the gradual reopening of all its facilities to the public, on-line digital services will be promoted as a safe, accessible, efficient and convenient means to continue to receive high quality services.

Although leveraging and promoting digital services, there will continue to be a number of citizens that will prefer or will need to interact with the City in person. For those citizens that will visit City Hall in the future upon reopening to the public, a new integrated service experience is being implemented with a newly constructed service counter, self-serve area and meeting space. This new approach is based on improving the in-person citizen experience. In the past, visitors have been confused by which service counter they need to visit or the need to visit multiple service counters on various floors or locations within City Hall.

New Integrated Service Counter:

The entrance of City Hall will feature a new service counter. The current positioning of the Information Desk is being changed to facilitate entry, greeting and better triaging of service needs. The service counter will be repositioned for better visibility and access in the entrance of City Hall.

As part of the ongoing service integration where Access Vaughan continues to evolve as first point of contact, the majority of first and second tier services will be administered by Access Vaughan staff and provide an enhanced level of services from multiple service functions across the majority of City services.

This will result in physically closing a number service counters currently within various locations of City Hall and being able to contain visitors in the new main service counter area.

New In-Person Self Service Area:

In addition to the new Integrated Service Counter, a self-serve digital service area will be constructed to allow for citizens to access services digitally while on site. This area will help to promote digital on-line service delivery and allow citizens to become more accustomed with this service delivery channel while also having the support of near-by staff to complete their inquiries and transactions. This is an opportunity to provide citizens with access to technology and assists a segment of the population that may not have the technology to complete digital transactions.

Private / Semi-Private Meeting Space:

Meeting room space will be reconfigured for in-person service inquiries that require more one-on-one service. These meeting spaces will provide citizens with a more streamlined approach to services in a designated area by removing the need to travel between multiple floors and locations within City Hall. By closing the multiple service counters and redirecting services to one main area within City Hall, the City can provide a safe and contained environment for its residents as well as staff.

Elimination of Cash Transactions:

After the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, City facilities were closed to the public. As such, the City was not able to accept cash and has not accepted cash as a form of payment since March 2020. Alternative forms of payment, such as on-line payments, credit card, debit, and cheque or cash at financial institutions are now being used as effective and efficient payment methods. All products and services available at City facilities can be paid for through alternative payment methods.

Council's September 2021 decision for the ongoing elimination of cash transactions allows for reconfiguration of the current cashier's office on the first floor of City Hall and provides a further opportunity to optimize the space for in-person service delivery.

The above changes to City Hall will work to enhance the in-person citizen experience, ensuring a safe, accessible, and designated environment for visitors to receive services. It further provides for a safe and secure environment for City staff when providing services to the public.

Staff will present design details during the Committee of the Whole (Working Session) to obtain Council input and approval of the new design for the entry area of City Hall.

Financial Impact

Minimal additional costs associated with changes to Access Vaughan and the integrated service delivery model is proceeding through the 2022 Budget process accordingly. Additional detailed resourcing analysis is currently underway and workload challenges are being reviewed to optimize existing resources and the allocation of Citizen Services Representatives.

Costs associated with physical changes within City Hall and associated technology will be covered within existing capital allocations for building facilities and the 2022 budget.

Broader Regional Impacts/Considerations

Not Applicable

Conclusion

In conclusion, the Service Vaughan Strategy supports the objectives and key initiatives under the 2018-2022 Term of Council Service Excellence Strategic Plan and the mission of “Citizens First Through Service Excellence”. The Service Vaughan Strategy establishes a major transformational program for enhancing and modernizing the City’s service delivery model.

The Service Vaughan Strategy is based on a philosophy of a citizen-centric approach to designing service; an omni-channel approach to delivering service; an integrated Access Vaughan model to optimize Access Vaughan as the first and primary point of contact where appropriate; and leverages tools and technologies to enhance the citizen service experience with the efficiency and convenience of on-line digital service access.

For more information, please contact:

- Gus Michaels, Acting Deputy City Manager, Community Services
- Vince Musacchio, Acting Deputy City Manager, Infrastructure Development
- Michael Genova, Director, Corporate and Strategic Communications
- Kathy Kestides, Director, Office of Transformation and Strategy

Attachments

N/A

Prepared by

Stephanie Brienza, Manager, Access Vaughan
David Di Benedetto, Manager, Marketing and Creative Services
Kathy Kestides, Director, Office of Transformation and Strategy
Dave Merriman, Director Facilities Management

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