



**COMMUNITY SERVICES – ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**  
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October 1, 2015

**COMMUNITY SERVICES REPORT – ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
INFORMATION REPORT # 2015-29**

TO: Mayor Van Bynen and Members of Council

SUBJECT: Marketing Davis Drive Update

ORIGIN: Community Services

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**COMMENTS**

In accordance with the Procedure By-law, any Member of Council may make a request to the Town Clerk that this Information Report be placed on an upcoming Committee of the Whole agenda for discussion.

In response to direction from Committee of the Whole at its March 23, 2015 meeting, the purpose of this report is to provide an update on work done to date, introduce some background on a scheduled Council Workshop (October 26) and to provide an overview of what is presently the suggested go forward project scope.

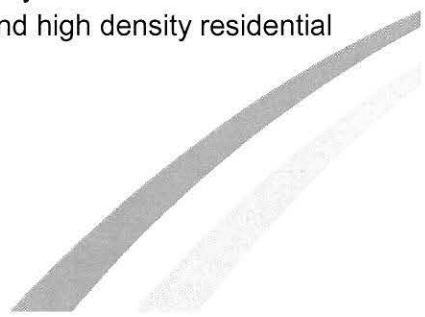
The March extract reads:

- a) *THAT staff provide a report within 90 days outlining the required resources, related costs and sources of funding available to implement a targeted marketing program to advance the redevelopment of Davis Drive properties for implementation by Q4, 2015;*
- b) *AND THAT the report includes how this can be accomplished without impacting the current and proposed economic development plans and initiatives.*

**Background**

This report provides a summary of an analysis undertaken to determine a preliminary plan that will ultimately result in a comprehensive Marketing and Communications Plan for Davis Drive. It also outlines immediate next steps for Council engagement in support of their identified strategic priority of *creating a strategy for vibrant and liveable corridors along Davis Drive and Yonge Street.*

With the VivaNext construction nearing completion, it is timely to consider ways the Town can encourage the ongoing transformation of this vital economic corridor. Extensive redevelopment is anticipated with the Town's secondary plan identifying the potential for 33,000 new jobs and 32,000 new residents within a longer term planning horizon. The overall goal is to transform Davis Drive into a key economic hub as one of the Region's identified Centres and Corridors through mixed use commercial and high density residential development.



## Analysis

A brainstorming session was conducted with representatives from all departments to assist in an initial project scoping. In attendance at this meeting were key staff from the following commissions/departments:

CAO's office - Corp. Communications, Human Resources  
Community Services - Economic Development, IT Innovation  
Corporate Services - Legislative Services  
Development & Infrastructure Services - Building, Engineering, Planning, Public Works

Following that session, a smaller working group was established to further assess/develop the ideas and suggestions identified. The working group have now completed a preliminary analysis of the existing processes, potential challenges and the goals for growth and have identified a series of recommendations intended to facilitate the development of this corridor.

The Marketing and Communication Plan project goals are to:

- Build excitement and support for the intensification of Davis Drive by increasing awareness of development opportunities;
- Increase public engagement in the new development;
- Demonstrate to developers that we are development ready;
- Engage with Town residents to identify additional perspectives on the future of Davis Drive and Newmarket;
- Transform the organization to embrace change;
- Work with Council to incorporate these changes into their strategic priorities.

The working group further recognized the presence of several different stakeholder groups in the community, each requiring slightly different marketing plans/approaches. A preliminary list of stakeholders is included in Attachment A. A marketing plan for the development industry for example, may focus on market opportunities and an "open for business" approach that improves approval processes.

Specifically, the plan should include opportunities to increase:

- Awareness of Newmarket as a desirable business location;
- Retention of existing businesses;
- Interest in Davis Drive as a business opportunity;
- Market confidence
- Belief that Newmarket will offer an ROI;
- Developer familiarity with Newmarket with an expectation of predictable approval processes.

Other opportunities were identified such as engaging the community and leveraging local expertise. The Chamber of Commerce, NEDAC and the Community Collaborative Ecosystem (CCE or Innovation Team) for example, will all provide valuable insight and partnerships for advancing a plan to encourage Davis Drive development.

It should be noted that York Region is also undertaking a Marketing and Communications Plan for the four main Regional Centres: Vaughan, Markham, Richmond Hill and Newmarket, in addition to the Regional corridors connecting these centres. This strategy is expected to be completed by year end 2015/Q1 2016, and will include a 12 month detailed plan of execution to increase awareness of office market potential. It will be necessary to dovetail Regional marketing efforts with the Town's to maximize impact and ensure consistency of messaging.

The Town of Newmarket's only Community Improvement Plan designated area encompasses parts of Davis Drive (Attachment B), although this CIP's primary focus, and majority of funding activity, is centred on the revitalization of existing buildings within the historic Lower Main Street area. A suite of nine financial incentive programs are available to eligible property owners and tenants, however five "big-ticket" programs more applicable to large-scale redevelopment projects have never been utilized. These include:

- Redevelopment and Rehabilitation Tax Incentive Program
- Development Charges Rebate/Credit Program
- Planning and Building Fees Rebate/Credit Program (some minor exceptions)
- Parking Requirement Program
- Parkland Dedication Exemption Program

These tools are presently available for Council's consideration in supporting Davis Drive development projects within the CIP area. Council can also look at potential expansion of the CIP area and/or establishment of other CIP areas to support strategic investments on the Davis Drive and/or Yonge Street corridors.

### **Next steps**

The working group recommends the Town undertakes several initiatives to better understand the market conditions and stakeholder requirements:

- Conduct a Council Workshop that informs Council discussion following insights from industry leaders;
- Identify strategies for promoting commercial development along Davis Drive including messaging, tactics, budget for execution and delivery mechanisms;
- Address market concerns that may exist within the business community;
- Develop unique initiatives that address different stakeholder perspectives and requirements such as holding stakeholder workshops;
- Consider methods to incorporate other initiatives into this study, such as the ultra-high speed broadband (Gigabit) corridor project, CreateITNow at Southlake, and the Regional Office Attraction Strategy;

- Review existing internal operational procedures to determine where innovative changes can be made that will encourage developers to choose Newmarket;
- Identify different policies and policy tools that may provide incentives to support the desired development, for example, Community Improvement Plans (CIPs), parkland dedication fees and building fee rebates;
- Identify potential funding/grant opportunities;
- Identify a slogan/tagline/logo – i.e. a unique brand for the target area.

The working group identified key stakeholders that need to be considered throughout this process (Attachment A).

### **Council Workshop**

In order to develop a more fulsome plan to address these requirements with defined tasks, outcomes and measures, a Council Workshop is scheduled for October 26<sup>th</sup> that will include presentations and discussion with N. Barry Lyon Consultants. N. Barry Lyon Consultants has grown over the last thirty-five years from a small firm, specializing in downtown development and redevelopment, to a multi-disciplinary real estate consulting firm, involved in virtually all aspects of land development. They specialize in tracking emerging economic, demographic and market trends, changes in government policy, the pulse of the land development industry, land use planning and development trends. The firm has provided market analysis and project feasibility services on behalf of the development industry within numerous GTA communities, including northern York Region.

Following presentation and discussion with N. Barry Lyon Consultants, Council and staff can also discuss next steps with respect to project timing/potential phases and explore what has currently been identified as the potential scope of work and how best to achieve the outcomes.

### **Staff Working Team Identified Project Scope (Current):**

1. An analysis of the Davis Drive corridor and the impacts of the construction on the local market;
2. A feasibility study of the potential market opportunities for growth;
3. The identification of strategies, policies and processes, both internally and externally, to promote development on Davis Drive;

4. The identification of potential changes to internal policies to promote growth and development along Davis Drive;
5. An implementation plan and related budget identifying activities and delivery timelines;
6. The development of key performance indicators and methods to measure success outcomes of the marketing plan;
7. The identification of partnership opportunities with external agencies such as the Region of York, VIVA, Metrolinx, etc to jointly promote the growth objectives with similar key messages.

## **BUSINESS PLAN AND STRATEGIC PLAN LINKAGES**

This report links with several of Newmarket's Council strategic priorities including:

*Economic Development* – creating a strategy for vibrant and livable corridors along Davis Drive and Yonge Street

*Community Engagement* – aligning ourselves with communications best practices.

The recommendations in this report also support the links to the Town's Strategic Plan:

*Well-Equipped and Managed* by implementation processes that reflect innovative and accountable governance in achieving service excellence.

*Well-Planned and Connected* goal of ensuring the revitalization of neighbourhoods and improved interaction with the community.

## **CONSULTATION**

Consultation has to date only occurred internally. Following circulation of this report to Members of Council it will be circulated for information to NEDAC members. NEDAC members have also been invited to attend as observers at the October 26 Council Workshop. Over the longer term, a key component of the scope is to conduct extensive consultation with the various stakeholder groups within the community.

## **HUMAN RESOURCE CONSIDERATIONS**

Staffing levels are not impacted as a result of the recommendations in this report although immediate work plans may be adjusted to accommodate this program.

## **BUDGET IMPACT**

The March extract included, "AND THAT the report includes how this can be accomplished without impacting the current and proposed economic development plans and initiatives". Achieving this work plan will be funded through the existing Economic Development reserve and will not financially limit the Town's ability to deliver on other economic development initiatives. Determining the final scope of work will determine the project budget requirements.

**CONTACT**

For more information on this report, contact:

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Ian McDougall, Commissioner of Community Services, (905) 953-5131, ext. 1, [imcdougall@newmarket.ca](mailto:imcdougall@newmarket.ca)



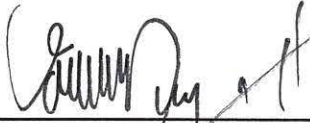
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Director, IT Innovation



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Economic Development Officer



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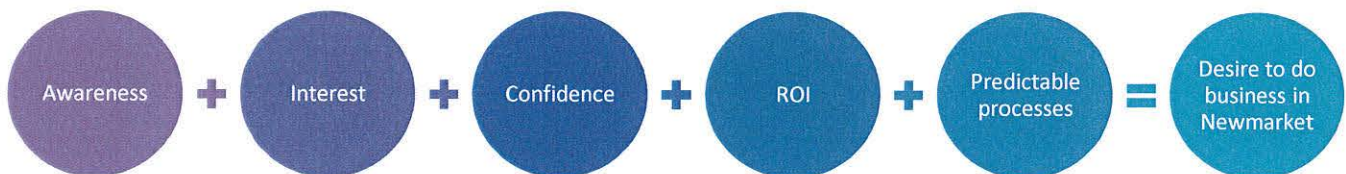
Commissioner of Community Services

Attachments (A, B)



## Attachment A

### Preliminary List of Stakeholders





# Attachment B

## Community Improvement Plan area

