



## Dear Friends...

I am pleased to introduce my new e-Newsletter to the residents of Ward 4. As your Ward Councillor, I believe it is important to keep the lines of communication open with all my residents. The **Racco's Community Forum** will be updated every other month with information that will be informative and beneficial to you, the residents – from issues around your neighbourhood to upcoming meetings and events. This serves as a vehicle for you to communicate with me via the internet, however I will always make myself available to speak or meet with you on any particular issues pertaining to our community.

Thornhill/Concord has seen many positive changes and growth over the past few years and it will continue to do so over this term. During the next four years, I anticipate seeing many new parks and sports facilities, including a new Community Centre, coming into the area. As well, I will continue to

work on eliminating traffic gridlock, designing improved waste management programs, ensuring we live in a safer and more secure environment and many more new initiatives.

I hope for the duration of this term, I will have an opportunity to meet you in some of the upcoming community meetings or City events and hear your points of view. In the meantime, I am hopeful that you will find this inaugural e-newsletter enlightening and that you will share it with your friends and neighbours. Please submit any comments and/or inquiries via the e-mail listed below or you may wish to contact my office directly.

Happy reading!

Your Councillor,

Sandra Yeung Racco

## Funding Confirmed for Spadina-York Subway Extension

With the recent funding announcement towards the Spadina Subway Extension by the Federal Government, it is not only welcome news here at the City of Vaughan, but also an asset for all residents living in the GTA and beyond. As Chair of the Spadina York Subway Extension Committee, I am extremely proud and satisfied to finally see this project coming to reality. This has been a long anticipated announcement that we have been waiting for and with this final piece of the puzzle in place, we will now see the realization of the Spadina line extending from Downsview Station across Finch Avenue to Keele Street, up to Steeles Avenue and across to Jane Street, ending at the City of Vaughan's Corporate Centre at Jane Street and Highway No. 7.

Federal support of the subway extension, along with the previous support from both the Province of Ontario and the Region of York, demonstrates a commitment from all three levels of government to invest in public transit as an environmentally sustainable alternative to automotive form. Furthermore, one of the key benefits to building this extension will be a significant factor in helping to ease gridlock and reducing pollution, thereby improving the quality of air that we breathe in. In the recent years, our society has become more conscientious about our natural environment and certainly, the subway will play a key role in helping people out of their cars and onto public transportation.

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The Spadina Subway Extension will be the first subway line that will serve residents from both the "416" to "905" area-code, linking both regions together. This cost sharing project between all three government bodies demonstrates the willingness of everybody working together to achieve a common goal. It is time that we end all artificial barriers and build to serve where the people work, live and play. A strong public infrastructure is vital to building a vibrant economy and a better quality of life. The Extension will not only provide a tremendous boost to the City of Vaughan and its surrounding communities, but will in fact, alleviate the costly maintenance of road infrastructure and prevent loss of revenues for both employers and employees.

## *Dufferin Clark Community Centre Expansion*

During the past year, the Dufferin Clark Community Centre has undergone some major renovations and expansion. These upgrades include a new ice skating rink/splash pad/rollerblading rink, an outdoor family changeroom, and an additional 4 meeting/event rooms for use by seniors, youth and community groups.

The outdoor ice skating rink was officially opened on February 25th by Mayor Jackson and yours truly, along with many staff and residents present. The temperature outside was extremely cold that day but thanks to Tim Hortons at Dufferin and Steeles and Kernels Popcorn at the Promenade, their generous donation of hot chocolate, coffee, Tim Bits and popcorn helped

## *Concord/Thornhill Skate Park*

During my first term in office, a group of youth from our community approached me with an impressive presentation in hopes of seeing a skateboard facility built in the City of Vaughan. Since then, City's recreational staff, along with Project Sk8, a non-profit community organization and myself have met and discussed ways to bring this dream to reality. We have identified the Concord/Thornhill Regional Park as the ideal location to bring forward this premier skateboard facility. Furthermore in 2006, Council committed to cost share this project on a 50/50 basis with Project SK8, in order to make this facility a **one-of-a-kind**.

The concrete facility will be designed to benefit users from novice to professional levels, allowing

This final piece of the puzzle brings the total funding to \$2 Billion and will now enable the 8.7 km of subway line to be built. The Extension will include 6 stations at Sheppard West, Finch West, York University, Steeles Avenue West, Highway 407 and Vaughan Corporate Centre. A major terminal and commuter parking facility has also been planned by York Region at Steeles Avenue West to serve the commuters. It is my hope and the hope of all those that have worked so diligently on this project to have the Subway Extension completed by 2013. While this may be a bit of a stretch, it is still better to dream, than not to dream at all!

keep all those in attendance warm.

The uniqueness of this skating rink is that it has multi-functional usage. It has been designed to be used as a splash pad and a rollerblading rink during the summer months and an ice skating rink during the winter months, thus making this facility serviceable all year round. I am proud to say that this is a first of a kind in Ontario and the residents of Ward 4 have the benefit of this great facility.

Once the weather gets a little warmer, we will be holding an official opening for the Re-Opening of the Dufferin Clark Community Centre. Stay tuned to future newsletters for details.

every kind of skateboarder and BMX biker to exercise and practice their sport in a safe and suitable environment. As this sport has become more and more popular, the location of the proposed site is ideal as it is removed from any residential components and roadways, ensuring safety while maintaining calm and peacefulness within the community.

Currently Project Sk8 has been reaching out to the business and private sectors in our community in hope to raise the necessary funds to build this world-class facility. For more information or to get involved with this project, please feel free to contact my office.



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## 2007 Budget update

### THORNHILL WOODS PARKS

Currently, Council is still in the deliberation stage for the 2007 Budget. While we are still at the review stage, however the draft capital budget currently shows the design and construction of three parks and the design of a fourth park in the Thornhill Woods subdivision as being above the funding line. The three parks identified to be built once the 2007 Budget is ratified includes the Crossroads Park at Sassafra Circle, the park next to the Thornhill Woods Public School at Thornhill Woods Dr. and Autumn Hill Blvd. and the park located along Ohr Menachem Way and Autumn Hill Blvd.

This year, the City had planned three separate public information nights to present our budget to you, the residents, and to hear your comments. To date, we have had two meetings, with the final one to take place on Wednesday, April 11th at the Civic Centre. After this, the Budget will go forth to Council for ratification.

Shortly after this process, I will be working with staff from the Parks Development department to arrange for public consultation meetings to review designs for the parks. Be sure to watch for the meeting notices that will come your way as your input at this stage will be invaluable.

### PEDESTRIAN SIGNALS

In the past year, a number of requests came through from the local schools' Principals and PTA Councils requesting for installation of pedestrian signals in order to provide safer ways for the children to cross busy streets. These requests were brought to the attention of our Engineering staff and after the relevant studies were undertaken, it was found to be warranted and staff then made the necessary request for budget allowance for installation. I am hopeful that the locations identified for installation will move forward once budget has been finalized. The locations include Glen Shields Avenue,

in front of Our Lady of the Rosary Catholic Elementary School and Glen Shields Public School, as well as along Thornhill Woods Drive in front of Thornhill Woods Public School.

There was also an additional request for a pedestrian signal at New Westminster Dr. and Clark Ave., in front of St. Elizabeth Catholic High School. While I firmly believe that a pedestrian signal should also be warranted here, staff found, when conducting their studies, that the recorded number of pedestrians crossing and the proximity of the available signalized intersection at Clark Ave. and New Westminster Dr., did not warrant such a signal. However, I have subsequently asked my staff to review the criteria by which they base their decision as I feel that on a busy street like New Westminster Dr., it is even more crucial to have this safety mechanism in place. The report will be coming back to Council shortly and I hope to move this forward.

### BLOCK 10 COMMUNITY CENTRE

The planning of the Block 10 Community Centre at Dufferin St. and Autumn Hill Blvd. has been an ongoing project for the past 4 years. In 2005, Council had approved the design of this facility and through a number of public consultation meetings, the final design was completed at the end of 2005. In addition, in 2006, staff finalized the purchasing of the land deal for the Community Centre. Now we need to secure the last stage of the funding in order to go out to tender and start the construction of the facility.

While the land for the Block 10 Community Centre had been purchased early last year, however an additional \$25 Million in funds is required to construct the Community Centre. As always, funding for these types of facilities comes from development charges (approx. \$23M) and property taxes (approx. \$2M).

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## UPCOMING MEETINGS

Budget Public Information Meeting  
April 11, 2007  
Vaughan Civic Centre  
2141 Major Mackenzie Drive



# RACCO's Community Forum

MARCH '07 EDITION



However under City's policy, it restricts Council to have all funds on hand prior to approving a capital project and for the project to proceed forward. To date, sufficient development charge funds have not been collected.

At this point in time, I have been successful in getting Council to consider committing approximately \$15 Million to all of the indoor recreation development for the Block 10 Community Centre, leaving a balance of \$10 Million to be collected during the balance of 2007, and enabling construction to begin early 2008.

## UPCOMING TOPICS

Look for the following topics in the next **RACCO's Community Forum**:

- *Helmet Safety Taskforce*
- *Pedestrian/Bicycle Master Plan*
- *Vaughan Corporate Section*
- *Peace Tree Day*

## Ontario Budget 2007 – Summary Of Municipal Implications

The 2007 Provincial Budget was released on March 22, 2007, and it contained several proposals that will benefit Vaughan residents:

- Elimination of GTA Pooling Measure over the next seven years, with a rollback in 2007 of GTA pooling contributions to 2004 levels, and with a subsequent reduction of 1/6 per year until its elimination in 2013
- A mandatory phase-in of assessment increases spread equally over four years for residential property, with a continual four-year cycle beginning in 2009
- Changes to the procedures with respect to Assessment Appeals to the Assessment Review Board and Requests

for Reconsiderations to the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation, with details to be finalized

## QUICK NOTES

Crossing guards are needed for the remainder of the school year for the following locations:

- *Ventura Park Public School*
- *Wilshire Public School*
- *Thornhill Wood Public School*

Interested persons should contact our Human Resources Department at 905-832-8585, ext. 8025 for more information.

## Contact the City of Vaughan

Main Switchboard	(905) 832-2281
By-Law Dept.	(905) 832-8505
Building Standards	(905) 832-8510
Clerks Dept.	(905) 832-8504
Engineering Dept.	(905) 832-8525
Fire Inquiries	(905) 832-8506
Licensing Dept.	(905) 832-8504
Meeting Information	(905) 832-8600
Parks Development	(905) 303-2069
Planning Dept.	(905) 832-8565
Public Works Dept.	(905) 832-8562
Recreation Dept.	(905) 832-8500
Snow Hotline	(905) 879-SNOW
Tax Dept.	(905) 832-8502
Waste Collection	(905) 832-8562
Public Libraries	(905) 653-7323

## Useful Telephone Numbers

Emergency	911
Animal Control	(416) 213-7176
Canada Post	(800) 267-1177
Ministry of Environment	(800) 376-4547
Ontario New Home	
Warranty Program	(800) 263-1299
Police (Non-emergency)	(905) 881-1221
York Central Hospital	(905) 883-1212
York Region Transit	(905) 762-2100
York Region Main Line	(877) 464-YORK
York Region Health	(800) 361-5653
Social Assistance	(905) 850-3490
York Catholic District	(800) 363-2711
School Board	
York Region District	(416) 969-8131
School Board	
PowerStream Inc.	(905) 417-6900

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