



## NEWS RELEASE

### Overwhelming Community Support for New Vaughan Hospital

**Vaughan** . April 28, 2009 . Residents and representatives from local community groups packed Vaughan Council chambers last night to voice their support for a new Vaughan Hospital at a special meeting of the City's Budget Committee. Support was so overwhelming that members of both the audience and committee described the meeting as "historic".

"We're very grateful to the community and our elected representatives for such a strong show of support for this important initiative," said Michael DeGasperis, Chair of the Vaughan Health Campus of Care and the Vaughan Health Care Foundation. "Residents recognize that a hospital for Vaughan is an important investment in our future."

Vaughan is the largest City in Canada without a hospital. With Vaughan's aging and rapidly growing population, a local hospital is essential in ensuring residents have access to timely and quality health care. Currently, Vaughan residents have no choice but to drive to neighbouring city hospitals to receive the care they need. As the population grows and traffic congestion worsens, this situation is no longer sustainable.

The Vaughan Health Campus of Care has requested that the City of Vaughan approve a financial contribution of \$80 million to support the acquisition of land and other hospital development costs. This allocation represents 6.7% of the total estimated \$1.2 billion project cost. The City's Budget Committee voted unanimously to receive the report and directed staff to bring forward a complete report to a special Committee of the Whole meeting on May 21<sup>st</sup>, 2009 at 7:30pm.

In June 2008, Vaughan City Council approved in principle a provision to make a substantial contribution for site acquisition and development of a new Vaughan hospital.

"A new hospital will cost the average Vaughan household approximately \$60 a year, or about 16 cents a day," added DeGasperis. "It's a nominal amount to ensure that existing and future generations have access to hospital care close to home when they need it."

Rose Marciano, Vice-President of the Seniors Association of Vaughan Initiative or SAVI, was among many local community groups who voiced their support for the new hospital. "No one, especially seniors, should have to drive to another city for hospital care," said Marciano. "Our seniors are fully behind the project. We've made it a top priority because we understand how important it is."

After a lengthy and comprehensive site selection process, the Vaughan Health Campus of Care has entered into a conditional agreement to acquire a site for the future hospital on the north side of Major Mackenzie Drive, between Highway 400 and Jane Street.

In October 2008, the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care, the Honourable David Caplan, directed the Central Local Health Integration Network to proceed with the Master Program and Master Plan phase of development for the new hospital. Working in conjunction with the Vaughan Health Campus of Care, the Master Program will identify the service levels needed for the hospital. A site is required for the Master Plan, which identifies the potential layout for the facility and full cost of development. This will be followed by the next phase, Functional Programming, which will lead to detailed site engineering and architectural work, and subsequently tendering for construction and development.

In order to move forward we need a site for the hospital; not just any site, but the right site, said DeGasperis. This is the location that best meets the needs of our community, and the entire Region.

The Government of Ontario provides hospital capital funding support for 90% of construction costs. As is the case in all cities in Ontario, the local community is responsible for purchasing land and funding furniture, fixture and equipment costs.

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**About the Vaughan Health Campus of Care:**

The Vaughan Health Campus of Care is a not-for-profit organization established to ensure that new health services in the Vaughan community are co-ordinated, aimed at a common vision of integration, innovation and excellence in health services delivery and patient care. Responsible for the strategic establishment and coordination of health care services to serve the needs of the Vaughan community, the Vaughan Health Campus of Care is working with the Central LHIN and Provincial Government to secure approvals for additional health services, including a hospital, to support its vision.

**About the Vaughan Health Care Foundation:**

In January 2003, a task force of community and civic leaders was struck to assess how best to bring additional health care resources to the community of Vaughan. This Task Force then formed The Vaughan Health Care Foundation, a volunteer-driven charity, in early 2004. Since its inception, the Foundation has been working tirelessly towards its mission . to engage the community and to raise funds to support the establishment of health care facilities and services, including a hospital, for the City of Vaughan.