

Magna coming to King with its corporate office

By Mark Pavilons

King Township is rolling out the welcome mat for its newest corporate partner ? Magna International.

Magna will be building its new flagship corporate office at its 105-acre parcel at the corner of King and Jane. They hope to have the project completed by December of 2017.

Magna is proposing to build an amalgamated corporate office of some 200,000 square feet, including research and development facilities, various amenities and underground parking. It will initially house more than 625 employees.

It's good news all around, not only for King Township, but York Region and in fact, the province. King Mayor Steve Pellegrini said unlike other large corporations who often pack up and leave, Magna has chosen to stay in York.

?It's fabulous news,??he said. ?I'm so ecstatic. The plans are fantastic.?

Magna's application is to formally rezone the lands from agricultural to commercial. The lands, in King City's Community Plan, have always been designated as ?Prestige Employment? and King couldn't have secured a better corporate partner.

?Talk about prestige,??Pellegrini added. ?We couldn't do any better. We are proud to welcome a highly regarded and globally significant corporation such as Magna to the King community.?

His sentiments were echoed by King CAO?Susan Plamondon.

?Township staff are prepared to assist and support Magna's efforts to move through the municipal approval process in a timely and effective manner,? she said. ?We look forwards to working with their team through the process and welcoming them as our newest and biggest corporate citizen.?

Jamie Smyth, King's economic development officer, noted King's location and proximity to Highway 400 and Pearson airport make it attractive to investors.

These things have ?... definitely factored in to Magna's decision to consolidate their global headquarters in King,??he said.

Presently leasing office and research and development space in Aurora, Newmarket, and into Peel Region and beyond, these deals expire at the end of 2017 and the company has been exploring moving all their corporate and group office operations under one roof. The company filed a formal rezoning application with King Township on Tuesday afternoon.

?We are delighted to see that our thoughtful land use planning efforts and movement towards investment readiness is proving fruitful,? the mayor added.

Mayor Pellegrini is hoping to have concept drawings and more information available at his June 4 business lunch. It will be held from noon to 2 p.m. at the Cardinal Golf Club on Highway 9. To register, contact the King Chamber of Commerce at www.kingchamber.ca.

Councillor Cleve Mortelliti said he's ?super excited??that Magna chose to locate in King. ?We're so incredibly lucky.?

King's gain is, of course, Aurora's loss.

Calling Magna's departure disappointing is ?the understatement of the year,? according to Aurora Mayor Geoff Dawe.

?It is hard to say (what the impact will be at this point),? he said. ?It is 400 jobs (in Aurora) and we don't want to lose 400 jobs, but my understanding is this doesn't actually happen until the end of 2017, so there are certainly lots of opportunities for us to be out beating the bushes and find out whatever potential clients we may have for that.

?I think we need to stress Magna has been an extremely good corporate citizen and (we) certainly thank them for the involvement they have had in the Town,? added Mayor Dawe. ?Obviously we would like to see them stay, but they need to do what is right for their business as well. We understand that. We don't necessarily like that, but we certainly understand that.?