

**To: David Creery, Chief Administrative Officer**

**From: Brad Hammond, Development Officer**

**Re: Proposal for Vuteq to Purchase a Portion of Keyes Drive Between Longworth Lane and 920 Keyes Drive**

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**AIM**

To present Council with a proposal for Vuteq to purchase a portion of Keyes Drive between Longworth Lane and the main driveway to 920 Keyes Drive (Vuteq head office).

**BACKGROUND**

At the May 4, 2023 meeting, City Council approved the sale of a half-acre of land containing a municipal storm water management pond to Vuteq Canada. The sale of the land supported a Vuteq expansion of 7,803 m<sup>2</sup> (84,000 sqft.) for new manufacturing space. This addition is now nearly complete and was recently the recipient of a Southwestern Ontario Development Fund loan/grant announced by Minister Vic Fedeli on June 10<sup>th</sup>.

The City of Woodstock has had a strong practice of working with growing businesses and entertaining reasonable requests that will help a business expand in Woodstock. In the past, roads have been realigned and services relocated on more than one occasion to help companies acquire new business or expand their Woodstock manufacturing facilities.

Vuteq has a long history in Woodstock since it established in 1988 in a 3,716 m<sup>2</sup> (40,000 sqft.) manufacturing building. Since that time Vuteq has become one of Woodstock's most stable employers and undergone more than 17 expansions over the past 36 years. Vuteq now occupies more than 42,500 m<sup>2</sup> (458,000 sqft.) and supplies assembly plants in Canada and the US.

In recent months Development Department staff have worked with Vuteq to explore a potential purchase of a portion of Keyes Drive which is flanked by Vuteq on both sides of the road (see Schedule 1). The company has studied the question and consulted with the City Engineering Department and determined that owning the subject site would offer a benefit to company growth.

**COMMENTS**

Vuteq has considered the benefit of acquiring the portion of road between their two buildings and feels it offers the company several advantages including additional parking, an unhindered flow of traffic internal to their site(s) and better pedestrian

movement between factories. In addition, it would allow the company the ability to add an additional 40,000 sqft. to the 920 Keyes Drive property.

On April 30, 2024, Keyes Drive was closed from the intersection at Longworth Lane to approximately 180 metres to the east. The section of road was closed to vehicle traffic from 4:00am until 6:00pm in order to conduct a Traffic Impact Study (TIS) to assess the potential impact of a permanent closure of this section of road.

The results of the traffic study determined that the intersection is currently functioning well and that a closure of the subject portion of Keyes Drive would have a nominal impact on future traffic growth. In fact, due to the proposed reconfiguration of the Vuteq parking areas, the function of the Juliana/Keyes intersection could improve as a result of a decrease in Keyes Drive traffic volumes.

In addition to Vuteq, eight other businesses also front Keyes Drive east of the proposed area. In the spirit of fairness and transparency staff notified all affected properties on Keyes Drive and invited feedback prior to the October 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting.

Staff have received several comments raising concerns over the short time frame of the April traffic impact study and the lack of suggested improvement for the Keyes-Springbank intersection which experiences delays at certain times of the day.

The comments received from other property owners are fair and suggests a more fulsome traffic study may be necessary before considering the question of a street closure. As such, staff would like to use funding to conduct a traffic impact study over a longer time frame for the intersection of Keyes Drive and Sprinbank Avenue.

The estimated cost of the traffic impact study is \$20,000 which will be funded by the Economic Development budget for costs related to land sales.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

That Woodstock City Council receive the report regarding Proposal for Vuteq to Purchase a Portion of Keyes Drive Between Longworth Lane and 920 Keyes Drive as information.

*Authored by: Brad Hammond, Development Officer*

*Approved by: Len Magyar, Development Commissioner*

*Approved by: David Creery, Chief Administrative Officer*

**SCHEDULE 1**



