

REGULAR COUNCIL

TO: Mayor & Council **DATE: February 28, 2024**

FROM: General Manager, Parks, Recreation & Culture **FILE: 0350-01**
General Manager, Engineering

SUBJECT: 2024 Our City Campaign

RECOMMENDATION

The Parks, Recreation & Culture Department and Engineering Department recommend that Council:

1. Receive this report for information; and
2. Endorse the 2024 Our City Campaign, as described in Appendix "I".

INTENT

The purpose of this report is to obtain Council approval to proceed with implementation of the 2024 Our City Campaign, set to be launched in April of 2024.

BACKGROUND

The Our City campaign was an initiative launched in 2023 to inspire and empower residents to take an active role in enhancing their neighbourhoods and engage in activities and projects that improve livability, cleanliness, foster pride and encourage community connections. The campaign focuses on engaging the community to take care of places important to them through placemaking projects, community clean-ups, community volunteerism and beautification projects.

This is a citywide campaign that aims to build broad civic pride in Surrey by encouraging and celebrating the actions of people at the neighbourhood and community level. Surrey is on track to be a city of one million people in less than 20 years. Our City aims to mobilize this rapid growth and resident's energy to create the community life and neighbourhoods they want to experience in Surrey.

DISCUSSION

The City of Surrey offers residents a great variety of tools and resources to get active in their community and make a positive difference. The Our City campaign will promote these resources to residents, provide inspiration, and share a call to action.

The Our City Campaign will be actively promoting resources, programming opportunities, and key messages between May and July. In the early part of the campaign the focus is to give residents the information they need to organize summer projects. Early campaign communication objectives include promoting resources such as grants and neighbourhood event kits, providing training and workshops, and signing up volunteers. In the latter part of the campaign, the focus will shift emphasis towards supporting the implementation of community projects and celebrating and sharing stories about the positive work of Surrey residents.

Some of the key highlights of the campaign include:

- A communications campaign utilizing online and printed material that will draw attention to key tools and resources and provide inspiration. The campaign will encourage residents, volunteers, businesses, schools, and community groups to show their civic pride and work together to enhance Surrey;
- In-person campaign outreach and engagement at events across the city;
- Information sessions to introduce residents to the Neighbourhood Enhancement Grants, provide advice and technical support, and reduce barriers to applications;
- Learning opportunities and placemaking meetups to provide hands-on opportunities and expert project advice to residents to build collective capacity;
- A volunteer program that includes opportunities for neighbourhood clean-up events and beautification projects throughout the city; and
- Focusing staff and operational resources on strategic beautification and clean-up projects throughout the city.

Appendix “I” provides a full overview of the components and activities of the 2024 Our City campaign.

CONCLUSION

The Our City Campaign aims to inspire and empower Surrey residents to take care of and improve their neighbourhoods. Surrey is a vibrant and growing city, and Our City aims to provide residents with the tools and resources to make Surrey more vibrant, clean, and exciting.

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Appendix “I”: 2024 Our City Campaign Summary

2024 Our City Campaign Summary

Our City is a beautification, placemaking and civic pride campaign. The campaign focuses on engaging the community to take care of places important to them through placemaking, community clean-ups, community volunteerism and beautification projects. Programs and activities included in the Our City campaign are outlined in this appendix, and include:

PLACEMAKING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

An Our City program guide listing out the full range of program and event opportunities for the 2024 campaign period will be released at the launch of the campaign.

Grant Information Sessions

Often people want to get involved, but don't know how or where to begin. Information sessions will be organized across Surrey to help people identify local projects and learn about how to apply for the Neighbourhood Enhancement Grants. These workshops will be facilitated throughout the campaign to encourage people to apply for support.

Learning Opportunities

Hands-on learning opportunities will be offered to build skills, knowledge, and increase the confidence and capacity of residents to actively improve their neighbourhoods and build community pride. Opportunities will create synergy between established City of Surrey initiatives and programs. The focus is on empowering residents to apply for grants and effectively plan and execute neighbourhood enhancement projects.

Placemaking Meetups

Drop-in group meetups will be promoted through campaign channels to provide low-barrier access to activities that connect people to the places they live. Residents will be encouraged to participate in street banner crafts, fence beautification, audio walks, pop-up parties and more.

Resource and Tool Promotion

The City of Surrey provides several resources and opportunities that residents can take advantage of to make their neighbourhoods vibrant places. Various programs and initiatives will be promoted during the campaign.

Feature programs:

- Neighbourhood Enhancement Grants
- Grant Information Sessions
- Neighbourhood Cleanup Kit
- Neighbourhood Event Kit
- Our City Volunteer Program
- Placemaking Learning Opportunities
- Placemaking Meetups
- Business Beautification Tools

Additional programs:

- Block Parties
- Active PLAYces Kits
- Community Banners
- Block Watch
- Mural Projects

CLEANING UP AND LITTER

Neighbourhood Clean Up Kit

Community members can register their clean-up event on the campaign webpage. The City will support residents by providing equipment and support for picking up bulky items. The service will continue to provide support year-round.

Our City Volunteer Program

The Our City Volunteer Program recruits volunteers to take part in community beautification initiatives. This includes City organized neighbourhood clean-ups, a self-directed litter clean-up program, beautification projects, and event outreach opportunities.

Business Engagement

Businesses will be engaged in Our City through the Community Enhancement Partnership (CEP) Program that offers grants to businesses to beautify their façade and enhance streetscapes. The campaign will work with Business Improvement Associations to disseminate information and provide learning opportunities and placemaking meetups near prominent locations within Business Improvement Areas.

Block Watch Engagement

The campaign will work with the Block Watch Program to encourage Block Watch groups to get involved in making safe and vibrant neighbourhoods. Block Watch's will be provided a Grant Information Session and will be encouraged to participate in the regular community clean up contest.

City-wide Clean-Up Mobilization

City staff, along with contractors, will be mobilized to complete enhanced litter picking and clean-up of the city moving through each town centre.

School Engagement

Outreach will be performed to schools on the availability of support for neighbourhood cleanups, small projects, and celebrations. A resource outlining step by step actions to start easy small projects in neighbourhoods will be provided to schools in March, allowing ample time for classes to undertake a small project before the end of the school year.

A partnership has been formed with the Inter-A alternative learning program at Queen Elizabeth Secondary School to deliver a grant information session. University aged students will also be provided opportunities to get involved by providing information to SFU, KPU, and Douglas College student unions.

Additionally, the partnership established with LA Matheson Secondary School in 2023 will continue to showcase that small-scale actions can lead to bigger, cumulative improvements.

Disposal Day Event

Residents and businesses will be encouraged to participate at Disposal Day event to help keep neighborhoods clean and free of dumped items. The event will provide free drop-off to dispose of unwanted material at both Central Surrey and North Surrey recycling and waste centres.

Large Item Pickup Program

Residents will be engaged and encouraged to make use of the large item pickup program (LIPU). The LIPU service is a convenient and free disposal option for residents to get rid of their unwanted items, such as furniture, appliances and mattresses throughout the year which will keep these items off city streets, parks, and other property.

SHARING STORIES AND INSPIRATION

Communications Campaign

A robust communications strategy will both encourage and celebrate individual and group contributions to create a more vibrant and cleaner Surrey.

The Our City landing page on surrey.ca will provide details for how to get involved with all the neighbourhood enhancement initiatives. A dedicated *small project for neighbourhoods* pamphlet and webpage will be added to provide additional support for those looking to undertake small projects in neighbourhoods.

The communications campaign will also draw attention to the resources available through telling stories about how residents have used them to improve their community. The campaign will utilize existing digital channels like social media (organic and paid) and ENews to elevate storytelling opportunities and key messaging that will resonate to channel-specific audiences. A detailed approach to tactics will be included in the communications plan.

Project Map

Surrey is full of amazing things that residents have created that make communities unique and special. From block parties and community festivals to small beautification projects. A GIS story map will be created on the City's website to highlight and showcase neighbourhood enhancement projects to help celebrate and inspire others.