

NO: R046

COUNCIL DATE: March 22, 2010

REGULAR COUNCIL

TO: Mayor & Council **DATE: March 17, 2010**

FROM: Sustainability Manager **FILE: 0512-02**
Deputy City Manager

SUBJECT City of Surrey Sustainability Achievements in 2009 and Work Plan for 2010

RECOMMENDATIONS

The City Manager's Department recommends that Council:

1. Receive this report as information; and
2. Approve the City's application to become a Solar Community under the Solar BC Program.

INTENT

The purpose of this report is to advise Council of the accomplishments of the Sustainability Office in 2009 and the activities that will be undertaken by that Office in 2010.

BACKGROUND

On September 29, 2008, Council received Corporate Report No. R175, titled "Surrey Sustainability Charter", which introduced for Council's approval the Sustainability Charter as the overarching policy document for the City. The Charter defines sustainability as "*meeting the needs of the present generation in terms of the socio-cultural systems, the economy and the environment, while promoting a high quality of life but without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs*".

On July 27, 2009, Council received Corporate Report No. R146 which advised Council of the status of actions related to the recommendations in the Sustainability Charter, including the activities that were to be undertaken before the end of 2009. A copy of that report is attached as Appendix 1.

DISCUSSION

2009 Achievements

The key accomplishments of the Sustainability Office in 2009 include completion of a baseline inventory of the City's energy use and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and establishment of a community-based Task Force on indicators and targets:

Corporate Energy and Emissions Inventory

With the City's participation in the Climate Action Charter comes the commitment to be carbon neutral in City operations by 2012. To meet this requirement and better understand the City's current baseline condition, staff worked with the Pembina Institute to compile an inventory of the City's energy use and GHG emissions for the years 2005 through 2008. Energy use focuses on the City's fossil fuel consumption, particularly natural gas, electricity, propane, diesel fuel and gasoline. The facilitated workshop process used to prepare the inventory helped build internal capacity around emissions tracking, so that staff can track this information on an annual basis without the need for further consulting assistance. These commitments under the Climate Action Charter are also connected with the Climate Action Revenue Incentive Program (CARIP), which currently provides grants to offset the carbon tax paid by the City.

Sustainability Indicators and Targets Task Force

In 2009, a Sustainability Indicators and Targets Task Force was established with representation from the community and City Advisory Committees. The role of the Task Force is to define indicators and targets that will measure progress towards the City's sustainability vision. Meetings began in September 2009 and will continue in 2010 (see below). Task Force members provide input and expertise across all three sustainability pillars. A membership list is attached.

Other initiatives implemented in 2009 through the newly established Sustainability Office include:

- Establishment of an interdepartmental Sustainability Team to share information and coordinate activities across the City.
- The establishment of a Sustainability website to provide better community access to information and updates on the City's sustainability efforts (www.surrey.ca/sustainability).
- The establishment of a Corporate Sustainability Intranet site to help raise awareness among staff of the City's Sustainability Charter and sustainability more broadly.
- Development of a Sustainable Building and Design resource centre at City Hall to provide pertinent information to the development community on green building technology and energy efficiency.
- Assistance with planning and subsequent execution of the Surrey 2010 Celebration Site that featured a social sustainability "Community Centre" tent hosting local community groups on issues such as housing, food, seniors and early childhood development. The City also joined the VANOC Carbon Partners program, working with Offsetters to make the Celebration Site carbon neutral.
- Implementing a Sustainability Considerations Section in Corporate Reports to Council and assisting Departmental representatives in preparing content for this Section of such reports.

Recognizing that sustainability is an effort delivered throughout the City and the Sustainability Office plays a facilitative role, examples of other departmental initiatives in 2009 include:

- Applying to the E3 Fleet Program, which focuses on increasing fuel efficiency, reducing emissions and reducing costs to the City's fleet of vehicles;
- Piloting a program to make the work of bylaw officers more mobile, which has the added benefit of reducing fuel costs and lowering GHGs;
- Reducing energy use, cost and GHG emissions at City facilities, including through pool dehumidification and boiler and chiller replacements;
- Producing City print materials on specialized environmentally-friendly paper stocks with the highest standard of eco-audit classifications including Forest Stewardship Council ratings for sustainability and recycled content;
- Continuing programs like Project H2O and SHaRP that advance environmental sustainability goals;
- Making City meetings and receptions more sustainable by using reusable plates, utensils and cups where possible, using recycled and recyclable or compostable paper products and having drinking water available in pitchers rather than plastic single-use bottles;
- Integrating sustainability awareness and practices into City of Surrey events, such as Fusion Festival, Canada Day and most recently, the 2010 Celebration Site, with the inclusion of "sustainability zones" and providing compostable and recyclable utensils, plates and napkins to concession providers, providing water stations with large water jugs on site and having recycling and composting stations;
- Participating in Waste Reduction Week, with a School, Employee and Public Challenge to reduce waste;
- Launching a Community Enhancement Partnership Grant Program through the City's Beautification program, with matching grants for community and volunteer projects;
- Continuing to build sustainability content within Surrey Public Library's book, media and electronic collections;
- Continuing implementation of the Learning for Life Strategy including enhancements to the Community-Schools Partnership and providing life skills training;
- Increasing access to facilities and services through the Leisure Access Pass Program (LAP), which in 2009 was provided to over 15,000 clients in a low income situation;
- Reflecting sustainability in the arts, including through the Surrey Art Gallery's exhibition program, Main Stage productions (such as Earth = Home presented in March 2009) and permanent collection, many of which reflect on issues related to the human impact on the environment;
- Undertaking a study of refugee housing needs and actively advocating for the elimination of the federal government's transportation loan program which serves to further impoverish these vulnerable refugee families; and
- Continuing implementation of the recommendations in the City's Crime Reduction Strategy.

2010 Work Plan

The 2010 Sustainability Office Work Plan includes the following key tasks:

Corporate Energy and Emissions Action Plan

Building on the emissions inventory completed in 2009, a Corporate Energy and Emissions Action Plan will be developed that will contain targets, strategies and actions to assist the City in reducing the carbon footprint of its operations. The Action Plan will include consideration of carbon offset opportunities as part of its commitment to be carbon neutral by 2012.

Sustainability performance indicators and targets

With staff assistance, the Sustainability Indicators and Targets Task Force will complete development of sustainability indicators and targets for Council consideration. Examples of indicators being considered include domestic water consumption, labour force numbers by sector, modal share for how Surrey residents get to work, and public participation in City events. A separate Corporate Report with draft indicators will be forwarded to Council for consideration in the near future. Broader public input will be recommended on proposed indicators and targets, with Open Houses planned for June 2010.

Community energy and emissions program

A number of initiatives will take place related to community energy and emissions. A Community Energy Manager role will be hired with co-funding from BC Hydro for a two-year period, to focus on district energy opportunities for the City and integrating energy policies into the updated Official Community Plan (OCP). A related 2010 task is the integration of GHG emission reduction targets into the OCP to meet provincial requirements laid out in Bill 27, the *Local Government (Green Communities) Statutes Amendment Act*.

It is also recommended that the City apply to become a Solar Community under the SolarBC Program. This program will provide a grant of \$5,000 to six communities selected through the application process, with applications due March 31, 2010. The Solar Communities project is part of the SolarBC Program, which has a goal of transforming the market for solar hot water systems in BC. Each selected solar community will:

- Act as a flagship community and provide leadership to community members;
- Help to develop means to remove barriers to solar hot water installations;
- Help to promote and raise awareness of SolarBC to community members; and
- Provide visible solar demonstration projects.

The current invitation to become a solar community would add six communities to the nine that are already in place, which include Dawson Creek, Vancouver, Kelowna and Whistler, among others. The City's application to become a Solar Community under the SolarBC Program requires a resolution from Council supporting the City's application.

Partnering with Surrey Businesses and Schools

Further, the City will partner with the Surrey Board of Trade and Climate Smart to deliver a workshop series to local businesses to help identify and lower their carbon footprint and save costs. These workshops take organizations through the process of creating a GHG emissions inventory and developing reduction strategies with a focus on cost savings, operational efficiency, and brand lift. As well, with City support a total of 28 “Climate Change Showdown” workshops will be delivered in Surrey elementary schools by the BC Sustainable Energy Association. These actions and partnerships support the Sustainability Charter goals related to climate change, sustainability awareness, and energy security.

Other Initiatives

Through other departments, a variety of programs and projects will further the City’s sustainability goals as described below:

- Refining a Sustainable Development Checklist for application to major developments;
- Developing a Child and Youth-Friendly City Strategy to reinforce the commitment to making Surrey a place where all children and youth thrive;
- Developing a Housing Action Plan that will articulate a plan for municipal actions to work toward achieving an adequate supply of housing to meet the full range of households and needs in Surrey;
- Increasing the visibility of sustainability programs at events and reducing the carbon footprint in relation to onsite operations, by reducing or eliminating the use of generators, minimizing transportation, and utilizing green technology and sustainable practices;
- Developing an Enterprise Content Management system that will help to reduce paper consumption by the City;
- Planting fruit trees in partnership with the Hazelnut Meadows Community Garden to improve access to fresh produce in the community;
- Completing the Chuck Bailey Covered Youth Park as Surrey’s first ‘green’ youth park, incorporating rain gardens and public art features and providing a place for youth to socialize;
- Developing the City Centre Green Network Plan with a view to establishing green streets, optimizing stormwater management, establishing greenways, and protecting and enhancing habitat within the City Centre;
- Streamlining how trees are managed through the development/building permit process, and undertaking a pilot project to reduce bonding costs to developer while better protecting the trees;
- Through the Surrey Arts Centre, presenting an exhibition *Ian Johnston: Transnational Absolute* that considers the effects of globalization on the environment, and *Eagle Transforming: The Prints of Robert Davidson* which looks at the role of the animal world in helping us better understand nature and creation;
- Holding the Flavours of Surrey event, which provides local food items and highlights education around the importance of local agriculture and food systems;
- Developing new Cycling and Walking Plans, producing a new bike map, and working on a Safe and Active Schools program with both an engineering and educational component; and

- Completing work on the Ecosystem Management Study, building on the draft Phase 1 mapping completed in 2009.

CONCLUSION

A Sustainability Charter was endorsed by Council that sets out a vision for sustainability in Surrey and acts as an overarching policy document for the City. Other City policy documents, such as the Official Community Plan, will be informed by the Charter and, in the absence of other specific policies, general policy direction will be taken from the Charter. Key Charter implementation deliverables in 2010 include a corporate energy and emissions action plan and the creation of sustainability indicators and targets to monitor progress. This report also recommends that Council endorse the City of Surrey applying to become a Solar Community under the Solar BC Program.

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Appendices

Appendix 1 Corporate Report R146 – Sustainability Charter Implementation Update
Appendix 2 Sustainability Indicators & Targets Task Force membership