

NO: R053

COUNCIL DATE: March 8, 2021

REGULAR COUNCIL

TO: **Mayor & Council**

DATE: **February 26, 2021**

FROM: **General Manager, Parks, Recreation & Culture**
General Manager, Engineering

FILE: **0350-01**

SUBJECT: **Love Where You Live – Surrey Clean-up and Beautification Initiative**

RECOMMENDATION

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

1. Receive this report for information; and
2. Endorse the 2021 Love Where You Live Campaign, as described in Appendix “I”.

INTENT

The purpose of this report is to provide Council information on the third annual “Love Where You Live” (“LWYL”) campaign, set to be launched on April 22, 2021.

BACKGROUND

In April 2019, the City launched the first LWYL campaign which provided an enhanced focus towards litter clean-up, illegal dumping clean-up, graffiti removal and beautification throughout all neighbourhoods, public streets, parks and properties in Surrey.

The campaign challenged residents, businesses, schools, and community groups to show their civic pride, and work together to enhance the overall cleanliness of the City. By focusing on various clean-up and beautification projects throughout the City, the LWYL campaign has demonstrated the City’s commitment and encouraged the public to get involved in this important initiative to ensure a clean, safe and healthy community.

DISCUSSION

In 2019 and 2020, the LWYL campaign was well received and has delivered positive results. In 2019 over the course of the six-month campaign, approximately, 5,000 bags of litter were collected from city streets and parks, 4,400 illegally dumped items were collected throughout the City, over 1,000 tonnes of material was collected at Pop-Up Junk Events and 600 pounds of waste was diverted at Swap Events. In addition, staff focused on several beautification projects to create more welcoming spaces. These included planting 13,000 trees and over 1,000 flower bulbs, installing 1,700 street banners and over 2,000 feet of decorative lights and removing over 650 bags of invasive plants.

In 2020, due to the public health measures associated with the COVID-19 health emergency, the campaign was adjusted to support activities that adhere to physical distancing principles. There was less emphasis on large group clean up projects, and more emphasis on small projects and individual actions. This led to increased community participation over the six-month campaign period - resulting in 75 community clean-ups and over 134 residents committed to the 20-minute weekly clean-up challenge. City staff cleaned up over 208 kilometres of Surrey roads, collected illegal dumping from 7,459 sites and approximately, 2,000 bags of litter were collected from streets across the City. Additionally, more than 10,000 trees and bulbs were planted through the Bulbs for Beauty and Releaf Tree planting programs.

2021 Love Where You Live Campaign

Building on the success of the previous campaigns, the City will launch the third annual LWYL campaign on April 22, 2021. The Love Where You Live campaign will follow the same overall framework as in previous years and focus on litter reduction, illegal dumping clean-ups, graffiti removal, and beautification throughout all neighbourhoods, public streets, parks, and properties in Surrey.

Appendix “1” provides an overview of the various components and activities of the 2021 LWYL initiative. Communications will be shared to inform about the events and clean up initiatives planned for each month.

FUNDING

Funding for the LWYL initiative, as reflected in this report, is available in the 2021 Parks, Recreation & Culture and Engineering Operating Budgets.

SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS

This initiative supports the objectives of the City’s Sustainability Charter 2.0. In particular, the initiative relates to the Sustainability Charter 2.0 themes of Inclusion, Public Safety, and Ecosystems. Specifically, this initiative supports the following Desired Outcomes (“DO”):

- Community Pride & Engagement DO20: Surrey residents are proud of their community;
- Community Pride & Engagement DO21: All residents have opportunities to be meaningfully engaged in civic issues and to contribute to community life;
- Community Pride & Engagement DO23: Numerous active local clubs, groups and agencies contribute to the community’s well-being;
- Community Safety & Emergency Services DO1: Residents are safe and have a strong sense of security in all neighbourhoods and throughout the City; and
- Natural Areas, Biodiversity and Urban Forest DO2: Surrey actively protects, enhances and restores its natural environment and habitats.

CONCLUSION

In 2021, LWYL will heighten focus on litter clean-up, illegal dumping clean-up, graffiti removal and beautification throughout all neighbourhoods, public streets, parks, and properties in Surrey. The initiative challenges staff, residents, businesses, schools, community groups, business improvement associations, community associations, and volunteers to work together to enhance the City. Therefore, staff recommend that Council endorse the 2021 Love Where You Live campaign plans as described within this report.

Laurie Cavan
General Manager
Parks, Recreation & Culture

Scott Neuman, P. Eng.
General Manager
Engineering

Appendix "I" - 2021 Love where You Live Initiative

2021 Love Where You Live Initiative

Programs and activities included in the 2021 Love Where You Live Campaign are outlined in this appendix, and include:

1. Love Where You Live Communications Campaign
2. Public Program and Participation Opportunities
3. Intensifying Internal Clean-up and Beautification Initiatives

Love Where You Live Communication Campaign

A robust communications strategy that encourages and celebrates individual contributions to a cleaner and more beautiful Surrey is a key component of the LWYL campaign. The overall goal of the LWYL communication campaign is: To promote and generate civic pride to ensure a clean and beautiful community.

Key features of the communication strategy will include:

- Storytelling and profiling positive activities that residents are doing
- Promotion of clean-up programs and participation opportunities open to the public
- Educating on positive behaviour and available resources to keep Surrey clean and beautiful
- Showcasing the work of the City of Surrey in making Surrey clean and beautiful

LWYL Public Program and Participation Opportunities

20 Minute Challenge and City of Surrey Volunteer Integration

An exciting development for this year’s Love Where You Live campaign is integration between the 20 Minute Challenge initiative and registered City of Surrey Volunteers. The 20 Minute Challenge is a call to action to Surrey residents to clean up for at least 20 minutes every week in their neighbourhoods.

Currently the City of Surrey’s Parks, Recreation and Culture department has over 2,900 volunteers of which 1,156 are youth. Many of these youth are seeking safe volunteer opportunities for their portfolios, job, and school applications.

The 20 Minute Challenge will be offered to registered volunteers as a volunteer opportunity, with the ability to report their work and track their hours. There will also be a low barrier method for those who are not interested in having a record of volunteer hours but are still interested in being involved.

Equipment (litter pickers and bags) will be provided to volunteers at designated pick-up locations and times during the campaign period. These pick-up locations will be will ensure physical distancing.

Through the online volunteer portal, all volunteers will take part in an online training module that teaches litter-picking safety, how to avoid damaging natural areas, and what to do when encountering issues such as illegal dumping.

A pilot program will be run during Spring Break (March 15-26, 2021) for a select number of youth volunteers to test the logistics of sign up, training, administration time and equipment pick up. This will enable the project team to test systems before scaling up to wider volunteers.

Love Where You Live - Kickoff Video

The Love Where You Live campaign will launch with a video celebrating the achievements of last year and introducing this year's campaign. This promotional video will premier during the virtual Party for the Planet celebration and will be further shared on social media. The City Centre area will be the first focus area for the Love Where You Live campaign.

Neighbourhood Clean-up Registration

If community groups want to organize a clean up event, they can receive support from the City for equipment and picking up large items and trash bags. To facilitate this community members can register their Clean-up on the LWYL webpage. 75 such clean ups were organized in 2020, and the opportunity proved to be very popular with the community.

Repair Events

Staff will review hosting virtual Repair Cafes. The cafes will provide an opportunity for residents to work with repair specialists to learn and help fix their items back to working condition. Items may include small appliances, computers, electronics, and bikes. The cafes provide options to sustainability manage unwanted items instead of tossing them as garbage. This approach aligns with the principals of circular economy.

Large Item Pick-up

The City provides the Large Item Pickup ("LIPU") services to single-family households and apartment buildings. The LIPU service is a convenient and free disposal option for residents to get rid of their unwanted items throughout the year. Items include mattresses, furniture, large appliances, electronics, tires and other small household items. In 2020, the City collected over 68,800 items from households keeping these items off of city streets, parks and other property. Accordingly, this service is integral to maintaining a clean City and as part of the LWYL campaign, staff will be heavily promoting, raising awareness, and educating residents of the LIPU service. This will increase participation ensuring that large items are being properly disposed.

Beautification and Enhancement Grants

The Community Enhancement Partnership ("CEP") Program provides Neighbourhood Enhancement Grants of up to \$3,000 for a neighbourhood beautification project, or up to \$1,000 for an event that helps connect people. The Neighbourhood Enhancement Grant guidelines will be updated to require a plan for Social Distancing as part of the application. This grant will be promoted throughout the LWYL campaign, with examples of beautification projects and activities that are safe and fun.

Storefront Enhancement Grant

The CEP Program offers grants to businesses to beautify their façade and enhance streetscapes. This grant opportunity will be dovetailed with the Love Where You Live campaign – encouraging businesses to take advantage of the grant and commit to cleaning their local area.

Park Clean Ups

“Pop-up” cleanups will be organized in popular parks after busy use days, to give people visiting those parks the opportunity to help clean litter. Key parks include Bear Creek Park and other highly used spaces. This program helps residents take care of their favourite parks.

Intensifying Internal Clean-up and Beautification Initiatives

City-wide Clean-up Blitz

City staff, along with contractors, will be mobilized to complete a two-week clean-up blitz to enhance clean-up coverage of the City. The following will take place in each town centre area:

- Street sweeping, litter pick-up, dumped item removal, and graffiti removal;
- Clean-up of unsightly properties; and
- Clean-up and maintenance of park assets.

The Clean-Up Blitz will start in City Centre and move to different town centres through the course of the campaign.

All-Season Placemaking Lighting

All-season decorative lighting will be installed in areas of high pedestrian activity. Enhanced lighting in tree canopies will beautify areas and provide an increased feeling of safety.

Surrey Street Banner Launch

Starting in April the City will begin rolling out its 2021 street banners. Each Town Centre will host a banner design that evokes unique features/imagery from each community and are developed based on resident input. The rollout of all street banners will take place from April 2021 through May 2021. The purpose of street banners will be to enhance beautification, build a stronger sense of community, and boost civic pride.

Storefront Beautification Project

The Storefront Beautification project works with Surrey artists to install attractive artwork onto dormant storefronts. The partnership established with the Downtown Business Improvement Association (“DTSBIA”) will be continued as a tool to use for beautification in the City Centre area.

Natural Areas Clean-Up

The Surrey Natural Areas Partnership (“SNAP”) will be active throughout the summer removing invasive plant species and cleaning up natural areas throughout Surrey.