

**Present:**

Councillor Bose, Vice-Chair  
D. Jack  
M. Lamont – joined at 5:19 p.m.  
K. Purton  
D. Smith

**Absent:**

Mayor Locke, Chairperson  
S. Sajda

**Staff Present:**

Y. Yohannes, Director Engineering Ops  
N. Aven, Director Parks Recreation & Culture  
J. Sung, Legislative Services Coordinator  
A. Yahav, Legislative Services Assistant  
V. Ng, Legislative Services Coordinator

**Guests:**

M. Dalton, White Rock and Surrey Naturalist Society  
J. McIntosh, White Rock and Surrey Naturalist Society

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Councillor Bose assumed the role of the Chair.

The Chair provided an announcement to the Environment and Climate Change Committee regarding the ongoing process for the proposed amendments to the streamside protection bylaws and policies. He stated that there was a public hearing held on September 9, 2024 and after consideration of the bylaw, the bylaw was defeated. Because there is a desire to have this matter reconsidered, it is necessary to respect the process. As such, Council members are not entitled to receive any new information on this matter and as such there will not be a discussion on this matter this evening.

**A. ADOPTIONS**

**1. Adoption of the Agenda**

It was Moved by K. Purton  
Seconded by D. Smith  
That the agenda of the Environment and  
Climate Change Committee meeting of September 11, 2024, be adopted.  
Carried

**2. Adoption of the Minutes – June 20, 2024**

It was Moved by K. Purton  
Seconded by D. Smith  
That the minutes of the Environment and  
Climate Change Committee meeting of June 20, 2024, be adopted.  
Carried

**B. DELEGATIONS****1. White Rock and Surrey Naturalist Society: Light Pollution from Surrey Homes**

Mark Dalton, President of the White Rock and Surrey Naturalist Society, and Janet McIntosh, Member of the White Rock and Surrey Naturalist Society, provided a presentation regarding light pollution from Surrey homes and its impacts on wildlife and residents. The following information was highlighted:

- Artificial light at night (ALAN) renders adverse consequences for ecosystems, wildlife, and humans. Homes and residential towers with increasingly bright, non-shielded lights largely contribute to this issue of light pollution.
- ALAN can be detrimental to the natural growth patterns of trees and other plants, the circadian rhythms of humans, the predator-prey relationships of animals like owls and rodent-like mammals, the sleep patterns of nocturnal creatures, and the migration of birds.
- Homes using an increased amount of outdoor lighting will result in increased electricity consumption and increased amounts of lightbulbs and related materials that are manufactured and disposed of every year.
- An achievable, preliminary step to combat excessive ALAN is to create regulations surrounding the use of outdoor lighting in Surrey homes and residential towers. This may include:
  - Studying best lighting practices, such as directing light to specific spots for safety purposes or installing motion sensor-activated lighting, to inform the creation of bylaws;
  - Adopting lighting-related bylaws and regulations from other Canadian municipalities, such as Bylaw No. 12521 section 7 from the City of Vancouver or EC5.2 from the City of Toronto;
  - Adopting recommendations from the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada into Surrey bylaws;
  - Expanding the scope of Surrey Bylaw No. 16393 section 3.18 (a) to comprehend outdoor lighting regulations; and
  - Amending Surrey building permit application to include a section on exterior lighting and instituting this change into the Advisory Design Panel review process.
- The City should consider educational, community-focused initiatives to combat light pollution and ALAN, such as sending mail-outs to residents or creating advertisements.

M. Lamont joined the meeting at 5:19 p.m.

In response to questions from the Committee, the delegation provided the following information:

- The White Rock and Surrey Naturalist Society are in early stages of their initiative to combat ALAN.
- There is one spot in Aldergrove that is dark enough to see stars at night. This is one of the only spots in the Lower Mainland that allows for star views.

The Committee provided the following comments:

- The Committee expressed concerns for the impact of ALAN on various bird species, especially during their migrations.
- The Committee expressed concerns for the impact that bright home lights may have on drivers with aging eyes.
- The Committee would like to review pre-existing City bylaws as they relate to light pollution in Surrey, and similar bylaws in cities such as Saanich, B.C.

It was

Moved by K. Purton

Seconded by D. Jack

That the Environment and Climate Change Committee request that staff provide the City of Surrey Light Pollution Guidelines and the District of Saanich Council policy regarding outdoor lighting to the committee for information.

Carried

## 2. **Metro Vancouver: Reducing Emissions from Small Gas-Powered Equipment**

Esther Berube, Division Manager, Daphne Mazarura, Senior Policy Analyst; and Laura Taylor, Senior Engagement Specialist of the Metro Vancouver Air Quality Bylaw Development Division provided a PowerPoint presentation regarding a regional strategy to transition from small gas-powered equipment to emission-free alternatives. The following information was highlighted:

- Small gas-powered equipment like lawn mowers, weed eaters, and leaf blowers contribute substantially to air pollution in the Metro Vancouver region. At least 400,000 small gas-powered equipment units are owned in the Metro Vancouver region, including both personal and commercial owners. Currently, commercial owners account for only 20% of small gas-powered equipment units but contribute to more than half of the total emissions caused by small gas-powered equipment.
- Metro Vancouver is the delegated authority from BC, under the *Environmental Management Act*, for managing air quality and greenhouse gases. Metro Vancouver plans to reduce emissions from off-road equipment by supporting a transition from gas-powered to emission-free equipment.
- There is currently a wide variety of personal use electric lawn mowers, line trimmers, hedge trimmers, and leaf blowers available on the market, with more limited availability of commercial portable chainsaws, pressure washers, augers, log splitters, and ride-on utility vehicles. Electric equipment for professional use is generally still being developed and is not readily available on the market.

- Metro Vancouver is engaging in initiatives to support the transition to small electric equipment on provincial, municipal, and community levels. This includes advocating for provincial incentives, presenting to city groups to gain feedback on transition plans, and organizing demonstration and outreach events. Metro Vancouver is also in communication with the British Columbia Landscape and Nursery Association to expand the reach of their campaign. An official regional strategy outlining the phases of this transition will be published in late fall of 2024.

In response to questions from the Committee, the delegation provided the following information:

- Electric equipment is generally safer than gas-powered equipment because it eliminates the potential for users to inhale emission fumes while operating the machine. This is especially important to heart and lung health. Some electric equipment units are also ergonomically superior to gas-powered equipment due to their smaller size and lighter weight.
- Metro Vancouver is currently working with the Province to offer rebates for electric equipment.
- Transitioning to electric equipment will not burden the current electricity system in Metro Vancouver since batteries are often charged at night, during the lowest-consumption period of the day.
- Lending libraries for electric equipment are being considered as a strategy for supporting this transition.
- There are approximately 675 landscaping companies across the Metro Vancouver region.
- Metro Vancouver has not yet conducted a study on the emissions relating to manufacturing and disposing of electric-powered equipment.
- There is a program at the provincial level which oversees the disposal of batteries. Fines can be levied for individuals who dispose hazardous materials, like batteries, through curbside garbage pickup rather than at recycling depots.

The Committee provided the following comments:

- The Parks, Recreation, and Culture Department of Surrey is currently piloting a program to transition small-gas powered park equipment to battery power.
- Offering rebates on electric equipment could be a tactical strategy to impel consumers towards zero-emission machines, especially given the high-cost of batteries and charging materials.
- A study should be conducted on gender-based barriers for electric equipment, such as their useability and form.
- The Committee expressed concerns for the continual demand on electricity in similar campaigns to transition to clean-energy sources.
- The Committee expressed concerns for the robustness of electric equipment compared to gas-powered equipment.
- The Committee expressed that increased demonstration events could be a helpful tool in supporting this transition.

- The Committee expressed concerns for the dispersal of small plastics from line trimmers and asked that this issue is addressed in the design of electric equipment. As an example, multi-use blade options could be made available for consumers.
- The Committee expressed concerns for batteries being thrown in the garbage. An incentive to return such batteries could be a good measure to ensure they are recycled. This may parallel similar incentive models existing for electric vehicles, such as providing discounts on the purchase of a new battery after the old one is responsibly recycled.

It was Moved by K. Purton  
Seconded by D. Smith  
That the Environment and Climate Change Committee receive the Metro Vancouver presentation, "Reducing Emissions from Small Gas-Powered Equipment," for information.

Carried

It was Moved by K. Purton  
Seconded by M. Lamont  
That the Environment and Climate Change Committee request that staff report back outlining the barriers to transitioning from gas maintenance equipment to electric maintenance equipment for use by staff on municipal property.

Carried

## C. OTHER BUSINESS

### 1. Roundtable

A roundtable discussion ensued as follows:

- Attendance of City staff at the committee meeting is at the discretion of the General Manager, Engineering. Staff are invited to attend committee meetings by the General Manager, based on the subject-matter being discussed as staff time must be considered.
- It was requested that staff with expertise in environmental conservation attend the meeting when the topic is relevant.
- There was concern expressed that proposed bylaws regarding environmental issues are not presented to the committee for input.
- An update regarding Bear Creek Park will be provided during the October ECCC meeting.
- It was brought to the Committee's attention that in the past one member of the environment committee participated at the agricultural meeting and vice versa. There is a desire to explore this option.
- It was requested that there be an opportunity for the Committee to provide input regarding relevant items in the Official Community Plan prior to consideration by Council.

- There was concern for the current tree planting legislation which does not require construction companies to replace trees according to biomass quantity lost.

**D. NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Environment and Climate Change Committee is scheduled for Wednesday, October 9, 2024 at 5:00 p.m.

**E. ADJOURNMENT**

It was

Moved by D. Smith

Seconded by K. Purton

That the Environment and Climate Change

Committee meeting be adjourned.

Carried

The Environment and Climate Change Committee meeting adjourned at 7:12 p.m.

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Jennifer Ficocelli  
City Clerk and Director Legislative Services

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Councillor Mike Bose, Vice-Chair