

**REPORT TO ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES COMMITTEE
MEETING OF WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 27, 2013**

SUBJECT CLIMATE ACTION PROGRAM – QUARTERLY UPDATE

ISSUE

To provide the Environmental Services Committee with a quarterly update on the Capital Regional District's (CRD) Climate Action Program.

BACKGROUND

The CRD and its municipal partners recognize that climate change is a critical issue to address from both a greenhouse gas mitigation and a climate adaptation perspective. There are significant economic, social and environmental benefits from investing in policy, technology, programs, infrastructure and education to reduce energy use and emissions and prepare for climate change impacts in the capital region.

The CRD established a regional Climate Action Program in 2009 under Bylaw No. 3510. The program is supported by a program coordinator and a part-time assistant and focuses on five distinct areas:

1. providing support to local governments in developing and implementing corporate and community climate action goals (emissions reductions and climate adaptation) as part of Official Community Plans and voluntary commitments under the BC Climate Action Charter;
2. liaising with senior levels of government on climate change-related programs, policies and legislation that impact the Capital Region;
3. providing scientific information, data and indicators related to local and regional greenhouse gas emissions and projected climactic impacts;
4. supporting the CRD in fulfilling its own corporate mitigation and adaptation objectives; and
5. building capacity and catalyzing action through educational partnerships with public and private sectors, non-governmental organizations and community organizations.

CRD staff implement research projects, develop community partnerships and execute measurable initiatives that directly align with local and regional goals to reduce energy use, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and prepare for climate change impacts.

The program focuses on disseminating relevant information for elected officials and municipal staff, building capacity in the public, private and non-profit sectors, and supporting various CRD departments in accelerating climate action through service delivery. Most recently, the CRD helped celebrate the accomplishment of achieving carbon neutral operations as a part of its

commitment under the BC Climate Action Charter. Further, climate change is playing a central role in each of the 12 strategic areas under the Regional Sustainability Strategy.

An overview of activities is provided in Appendix A, including recent accomplishments, funding partnerships and projects. The program also shares this information with politicians, municipal staff and community stakeholders through regular e-newsletters.

CONCLUSION

The Climate Action Program continues to provide corporate and municipal support with a focus on innovative, diverse and measureable programs.

Information and partnership requests, both internally at the CRD and externally with community stakeholders, continue to grow as the service demonstrates its credibility as a regional hub for climate change issues.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Environmental Services Committee receive the Climate Action Program quarterly update for information.

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Concurrence

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Attachment: 1

CLIMATE ACTION PROGRAM
2013 PROJECTS AND INITIATIVES
(update November 2013)

The following provides a summary of key projects and activities undertaken by the Climate Action Program from July to November 2013. For more information on these and other initiatives, visit www.crd.bc.ca/climatechange. Elected officials can also subscribe to the monthly e-newsletter distributed by the Climate Action Program specifically for local governments.

- The **Climate Action Inter-Municipal Working Group (IMWG)** quarterly meetings are an opportunity for the Climate Action Service to provide resources and support to municipal staff working on climate issues, and also offer a forum for information sharing, networking and identifying common opportunities and challenges related to climate change within the region. During this quarter, staff hosted one IMWG meeting at which the Province of BC gave a presentation on the “Guidelines of Management of Coastal Flood Hazard Land Use.” Municipal staff also participated in a workshop funded by the Province of BC focused on climate adaptation planning.
- The Climate Action Program has launched the **Coastal Sea-Level Rise Mapping and Risk Assessment Project** to help CRD and municipal partners respond to the “Guidelines for Management of Coastal Flood Hazard Land Use,” discussed above. The project will identify risks and provide critical information on vulnerable areas within the region. The project will also develop a model bylaw that directly aligns with objectives related to regional cooperation and regional infrastructure identified in the 2013-2015 CRD Strategic Plan. Project financing has been provided by Natural Resources Canada and Tides Canada, with in-kind and cash support from the CRD, and in-kind support from the Province of BC, the District of Saanich and the City of Victoria.
- The **Solar CRD** program, formerly named Solar Without Borders, offers a new solar hot water financial incentive for single family, multi-unit residential dwellings and businesses. The program is an extension of the successful Solar Colwood program and will provide federally-funded incentives to help accelerate deployment of solar hot water systems in the other 12 municipalities and the three electoral areas. Pending final approval from Natural Resources Canada, Solar CRD will begin offering incentives in early 2014.
- **The Climate Action To-Go Kit** initiative provides a convenient and practical way to engage residents on household energy use. With sponsorship from BC Hydro, the Climate Action Program developed 24 kits that contain tools, resources and activities to better understand energy, climate and community sustainability issues. These kits are free to borrow from all locations of the Greater Victoria Public Library, the Sooke, Sidney and Port Renfrew branches of the Vancouver Island Regional Library and the Salt Spring Island Public Library. Interest in the kits was renewed through recent media attention. The initiative has been extended through to January 2014, and a further extension of the initiative is being explored. Since launching in October 2012, 100% of participating libraries have lent out kits.

- The **Tap by Tap Program for Multi-Unit Residential Buildings** provides free energy and water saving fixtures to eligible apartments, condominiums, row houses and townhouse complexes in order to save potable water and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Through an innovative partnership with BC Hydro and Fortis BC, this program targets retrofits in 3,000 multi-unit residential building units by December 2013. As of October 2013, more than 5,000 energy saving fixtures have been distributed in more than 2,000 units. When the program concludes in December 2013, Tap by Tap is expected to save 72,000,000 litres of potable water, 1,792,860 kWh of electricity, 8,734 gigajoules of natural gas and nearly 500 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions annually.
- The **LiveSmart Small Business and Farm Assessment Program** offers free walk-through energy assessments to target electricity, natural gas and fuel use reductions. The program is administered by the CRD and funded through a grant from the LiveSmart BC: Small Business Program. A total of 53 assessments were delivered to eligible businesses between April 1 and September 30, 2013. The program aims to complete 140 assessments by March 31, 2014.
- The quarterly **Resilient Region Exchange** events, hosted by the CRD Climate Action Program, continue to attract hundreds of community leaders from business, academia, government, non-profit and industry. The August event was held at the Victoria General Hospital and, in September, the event was hosted at Ingredients Café in Victoria. More than 80 participants attended each event.
- The CRD Climate Action Program provides **financial and in-kind sponsorship** to community groups working to advance Climate Action within the region. The program also participates in **outreach activities** designed to communicate information about the climate action program and its initiatives to CRD residents. Climate Action staff attended 14 community events between September and November 2013, and the program provided financial or in-kind sponsorship for PowerShift BC, Community Green Map, The BC Institute of Agrologists AGM, My Green Plan, Lifecycles Agriculture Hub Website and the Climate Change Showdown.
- **The Regional Sustainability Strategy (RSS)** includes the integration of climate change mitigation and adaptation policies within each of the 12 strategic areas. To support the implementation of these policies, the CRD is developing a Climate Action Blueprint document, which identifies a 10-year framework to implement the climate change-related goals and objectives within the RSS.