



# Corporate Report

2005

NO: R232

COUNCIL DATE: October 3,

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## REGULAR COUNCIL

TO: Mayor & Council      DATE: September 30, 2005

FROM: General Manager,  
Engineering  
General Manager,  
Parks,  
Recreation & Culture  
General Manager,  
Finance,  
Technology & HR

SUBJECT: New Environmental Stewardship Program – a Successor to SHaRP

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## RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Authorize staff to establish a new Environment Stewardship Program with year round activities and a much broader scope of environmental enhancement than the current **SHaRP** Program.
2. Create a sustainable Environmental Stewardship Reserve of \$3.0 million from the sale of City Surplus Land, with the interest from the Reserve to be utilized to fund the Environmental Stewardship Program.
3. Authorize that 1% of building permit revenues (approximately \$100,000) be allocated to fund this annual Program.
4. Authorize staff to continue with existing **SHaRP** funding levels from the drainage utility program and to seek funding from other potential public and private sector partners for this Program.

## INTENT

To seek Council's approval to build and expand on the existing Salmon Habitat and Restoration Program (**SHaRP**) to create a new successor Environment Stewardship Program to enhance Surrey's environmentally significant areas.

## BACKGROUND

The SHaRP program has just celebrated its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary. This program has been very successful both in terms of enhancing aquatic habitat as well as providing environmental awareness, education and work experience to high school and post-secondary students. However, it is now appropriate to consider an ongoing and much needed expanded program to address a broader range of environmental issues and to ensure that stewardship initiatives can be undertaken in an effective way.

## DISCUSSION

### Expanded Environmental Stewardship Program

The City has the opportunity to enhance its natural habitat areas and to increase youth involvement in environmental stewardship program activities over and above the very successful present program. Building on the successes of **SHaRP**, it is proposed to launch an enhanced program with broader scope to address larger environmental issues within Surrey. This broader scope will provide greater opportunities for consideration for Federal and Provincial funding. Additional funding will allow the City to enlarge the scope of this program in the following key areas:

#### Habitat Enhancement

- The Program can assist in restoring and enhancing natural areas by carrying out planting of native trees and shrubs. The focus will be on riparian (stream-side) areas and in degraded natural areas.
- The Program will work to clean yard waste from natural areas, close off unwanted trails that are damaging habitat, and to remove unwanted materials from streams and forests.
- Additional aquatic habitat will be created by the Stewardship Program. Staff will explore the use of this new habitat to receive credits against habitat needs required by DFO in other locations.
- Many of our natural areas are threatened by invasive species that have become established. These non-native invasive species are taking over, displacing native plants and threatening natural habitat for our local fauna. The removal of invasive species will help to restore habitat and to protect species at risk.
- Integration of the program into the School District's curriculum at key phases and targets such as conducting planting with school groups, education to classes, plant salvage and restoration.

## Promotion of Environmental Stewardship

- Work with businesses to outline pollution prevention initiatives and ways to operate while not damaging the environment.
- Additional outreach programming will be provided, including outdoor learning experiences to children and families, distribution of printed materials, and working directly with community and neighbourhood groups. This will assist in educating the public about the benefits of natural areas and streams, thereby helping them to gain a better understanding and appreciation of the intrinsic values of the City's natural assets.
- Coordinating environmental initiatives related to the farming community, such as promoting environmental farm programs and best practices.
- The Program will be involved with setting up and running community special events that will be aimed at educating the public. These will include additional community tree planting initiatives, and Adopt-a-Natural Area days.
- Involvement in web-site enhancements aimed at heightening community awareness and understanding of the natural environment.

# Private Property Initiatives

- The Program can provide educational outreach to private property owners, with the aim to provide individuals and corporations with information to provide an enhanced level of environmental stewardship of their land.
- Initiatives such as environmental awards and Council recognition of private property Environmental Stewardship will assist in making Surrey a better place for residents.

## Fostering Volunteerism

- The Program can assist in fostering volunteerism for environmental initiatives, with the benefits not only accruing to the environment, but also helping to build stronger neighbourhoods and citizens.

The types of initiatives described above can be carried out under a broader scope of a new Environmental Stewardship program, thereby meeting Council's goals of providing enhanced environmental stewardship, while at the same time providing meaningful opportunities for increased youth involvement and building a stronger community in our City.

In addition, it should be noted that the Parks, Recreation & Culture Department operates community programs dealing with terrestrial natural area restoration and education in the City's parks and urban forests. These programs, such as *Surrey Stewardship of Natural Areas Partnership* (SSNAP), other companion programs including the *Eco Rangers*, the *Environmental Extravaganza*, *ReLeaf Days*, *Arbor Day*, and the *Salmon Homecoming* celebration, will continue to be delivered. The new program will enhance existing initiatives and continue to work supportively and cohesively with them to bring the broader environmental scope to the City.

## Funding Levels for Program

Sources and funding levels for the Program are estimated as follows:

	Range	
	From	To
Existing level of SHaRP funding from drainage utility	\$200,000	\$200,000
Interest on \$3.0 million Environmental Stewardship Reserve	\$130,000	\$150,000
1% of Building Permit revenues	\$ 90,000	\$100,000
Other partnering agencies	<u>\$ 80,000</u>	<u>\$150,000</u>
Anticipated Funding Level	<u>\$500,000</u>	<u>\$600,000</u>

This anticipated funding approximately doubles the current levels for environmental stewardship programs.

## CONCLUSION

The establishment of a new, broader scope Environmental Stewardship Program with sustainable funding would demonstrate Council's commitment to Surrey's environment and programs that will provide youth employment and leadership opportunities. The new Environmental Stewardship Program would build on and serve as a successor to the successful *Salmon Habitat and Restoration Program* (**SHaRP**).

Establishing an Environmental Stewardship Reserve will provide sustainable funding to take the City's community environmental programs to the next level, to broaden the scope of the program to year round opportunities, and to increase the education and outreach component of Surrey's Environmental Programs, as well as maximize the opportunity for youth employment in the design and delivery of an enhanced

# Environmental Stewardship Program.



Paul Ham, P.Eng.  
General Manager, Engineering

Laurie Cavan  
General Manager, Parks, Recreation & Culture  
The enclosed Service Plan is an outline of Surrey Parks, Recreation and Culture's Mission, Vision, Values, 2005 Key Result Areas and core areas of responsibility. The Key Result Areas have been developed in consideration of Council's direction provided during the 2005 budget process. CCLAs, Strategic corporate priorities.

General Manager,  
Surrey Parks, Recreation and Culture is known throughout British Columbia and Canada for its innovation, high quality programs and facilities, and high level of efficiency; this Service Plan positions the Department to continue to be a leader in the delivery of services to the residents of Surrey.

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The 2005 Key Result Areas are categorized as: A Great Place to Live; Active City; Green City; Tourism and Economic Development; Public Safety and Safe Environments; and Parks and Facility Development. With the commitment, skills and teamwork of our staff we will work towards achieving the objectives of the Service Plan.

2005 and beyond promises to be a very exciting time in Surrey as we respond to the diverse leisure needs and emerging trends in community participation. With the staff team's desire to make a difference, together we will strive to create a community where individuals, culture and the environment thrive!

Laurie A. Cavan  
General Manager  
Parks, Recreation and

Culture