



# Corporate Report

NO: R148

COUNCIL DATE: July 28, 2008

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## REGULAR COUNCIL

TO: **Mayor & Council**

DATE: **July 21, 2008**

FROM: **Beautification Steering Committee**

FILE: **0350-01**

SUBJECT: **Beautification Update**

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## RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Council receive this report as information.

## INTENT

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with an update of Beautification Initiatives that were carried out from September 2007 to July 2008, and provide a brief overview of initiatives anticipated for the autumn of 2008.

## BACKGROUND

In the summer of 2007, Council authorized several initiatives and opportunities for the 2007 - 2008 *City Beautification Program* in Corporate Report R086. Key projects included:

1. Decorative Twinkle Lights in Trees
2. A Civic Banner Program
3. Public Art
4. Entrance to Surrey Signs
5. Median Redevelopment, King George Highway in City Centre

These projects have been implemented over the past ten months by mobilizing appropriate resources and processes, with most led by the Beautification Coordinator. The various projects were initiated according to time sensitivity and the factors that influenced the implementation of a project (i.e. appropriate weather, partnership establishment, public art process etc.). All projects identified will be completed by August 2008.

Several other initiatives have also been undertaken, resulting in the creation of a comprehensive program that is designed to develop both short and long term beautification outcomes. Efforts have been made to ensure that appropriate guidelines have been put into place in order to sustain the goals and objectives of the Beautification Program.

The following is an overview of the accomplishments from September 2007 – July 2008.

## **DECORATIVE LIGHTING**

*Decorative Street Tree Lighting* - In November 2007 over 3000 LED lights were implemented in 83 street trees as permanent lighting to provide an enhanced atmosphere to the streetscapes of City Centre, Newton, Fleetwood, South Surrey, and Cloverdale. Three special large trees were decorated in Cloverdale, Fleetwood, and the City Hall as accent features. Community members provided positive feedback on the street tree lights. It is anticipated that additional lighting and locations will be established in the autumn of 2008.

*Seasonal Lighting Decorations* - In December 2007 seasonal pole light features depicting snowflakes and stars were implemented on 108 poles in City Centre, Guildford, Fleetwood, Cloverdale, and South Surrey. It was intended that the presentation of snowflakes and stars would ensure that the City supported a seasonal display that represented an inclusive atmosphere to all community members.

All pole features were specifically supplied with LED lights as part of the City's corporate responsibility for sustainable planning. Surrey was identified as the sole Municipality in the Metro Vancouver region that only uses LED lights for seasonal displays. Community members indicated that they thoroughly enjoyed the seasonal pole light features, particularly in concentrated locations such as City Centre and Cloverdale.

*Tree Lighting Ceremony* - On December 14, 2007 the Mayor lit up over 5000 LED lights for the Urban Forest Tree Lighting Ceremony in City Centre. To further the City's sustainability practices, 23 live trees that were part of the Green Streets program created an Urban Forest display and were subsequently replanted in the spring of 2008. Over 400 community members attended the ceremony and were able to enjoy the display until February 2008. The community expressed their enjoyment of the grouping of trees in a creative forest setting.

Several partnerships were established to develop the financial capacity to produce the tree lighting event, resulting in significant sources of in-kind financial and voluntary support. Simon Fraser University graduate students provided over \$5000 of in-kind voluntary support by producing a technological light show of interactive snowflakes on projector screens. Blackwood Partners from the City Centre Mall contributed over \$5000 by implementing the projector screens and maintaining the plaza surface area for the tree display. Other partners included the Semiahmoo High School Jazz Band who provided evening entertainment, Tim Horton's who provided refreshments, and the Cloverdale Rodeo who provided decorative fencing around the display.

A new and different tree lighting ceremony is being planned for December 2008. Anticipated activities may include a lit pathway in Holland Park, a special tree feature, and a procession of the lighted vehicle parade in coordination with the Cloverdale BIA. Selected Photos of Seasonal Lighting is included in Appendix 1.

## **BANNER PROGRAM**

The Banner Program provides visually attractive and community-oriented images that beautify the streetscapes of Surrey. Banners enhance the aesthetics of areas of the City to create a welcoming atmosphere. Banners are displayed in locations that highlight gateways, main arterials, and showcase City attributes with the intention of developing an appreciation of community assets.

The Banner Program is comprised of different banner designs supported by the City and various community organizations. Three categories contribute to the banner program.

1) *City Promotion Banners*

- Emphasize particular locations and programs (Gateways, civic centres, athletic and nature park activities)
- Highlight special events or initiatives (i.e. Federal and Provincial awards or activities)

2) *Public Art Banners*

- Provide public participation opportunities through “Calls for Entries” for designs produced by local artists

3) *Community Group Banners*

- Present themes and designs that accent a particular feature or activity.

### Banners for 2008 - 2009

*Spirit of BC* - In February 2008, the City received 20 Spirit of BC banners from the Provincial government to support the 2010 Olympics. These were placed in City Centre and at the Surrey Sport and Leisure Complex to complement Winter Fest and Spirit of BC events. These banners will be part of the program for the next 2 years.

*Cultural Capital of Canada* - In March 2008, the City received 375 Cultural Capital Banners from the Federal government to showcase the Heritage Canada award that recognized Surrey as a significant multi-cultural community. A total of 356 banners were placed at primary arterial locations throughout the City to highlight the Cultural Capital achievement. The remaining banners have been used for display in parades and festivities.

*Public Art Banners* - As part of the Public Art banner collection, 9 different designs will be on display representing *Natural, Cultural, and Active Spirit* themes to further support City messages. Examples of these banners are included in Appendix 2. The designs were created through a Public Art process involving a “Call of Interest” to artists. The Banner Selection Team selected one artist to create the designs and this individual received an honorarium for his contribution to the program. Approximately 500 Public Art Banners will go on poles around the City in the Week of July 28.

*City Promotion Banners* – These banners feature a design selected by the Marketing & Communications Section. Five hundred banners, incorporating the 6 Town Centre names, the new City logo, and ‘the future lives here’ message will be put up on poles in

the week of July 28. Each City Promotion banner will be paired with a Public Art banner to provide a complementary display throughout Surrey. Surrey will be the only city in Canada to display a unique banner shape that has a significant benefit because of the increased wind movement and resultant artistic streetscape enhancement. The anticipated duration of these particular City Promotion and Public Art banners is eighteen months, ending in December 2009.

*Community Group Banners* - Various community groups are currently involved with the banner program. The Downtown Surrey BIA, Cloverdale BIA, and the Ocean Park Community Association display banners on City poles, assisting in providing focus to an area of the City. The Fleetwood Community Association has banners displayed at the Fleetwood Community Centre plaza. The Banner Program is anticipated to expand as more community organizations become involved and further complement City banners.

#### Banner Program Guidelines and Approval Process

The Beautification Steering Committee adopted a comprehensive set of guidelines. This document provides details on the banner design criteria, application procedures, and stakeholder responsibility. A new Banner Program page on the City's website provides guideline information and maps indicating existing City and community banner locations.

Proposed Public Art and Community Group banners will be reviewed by a Banner Selection Team which consists of five (5) members: two from the Public Art Advisory Committee and 3 City staff representatives from Public Art, Marketing, and Beautification/Planning.

## **PUBLIC ART**

The City is addressing unsightly property concerns and graffiti issues through a combination of public art projects and processes. A planning team is reviewing policy options to address unsightly brownfield properties.

*Traffic Signal Cabinet Enhancement* - Telus was engaged as a beautification partner to mitigate graffiti by enhancing their cabinets in the City Centre area. The corporation implemented vinyl wraps on 5 utility cabinets in April 2008 displaying images of Surrey parks, as illustrated in the photos in Appendix 3.

The City will implement vinyl wraps on 60 traffic signal cabinets in July 2008 and each traffic cabinet will display a unique photograph portraying natural, cultural, and historical images of Surrey. The 6 town centres will have specific photographs portraying scenes that reflect the area.

As part of the community engagement process, students from Sullivan Heights Secondary School were asked to contribute to the production of 20 photographs. This project was integrated into curriculum-based activities thereby providing an excellent opportunity for the students to display their work in the public realm. Additional images representing scenes from Surrey parks will also be include, with each traffic cabinet having some text to describe the photographs.

*Mural Art* - Several community organizations were approached to participate in a 'pilot' mural art project to paint 3-5 traffic signal boxes. Kla-how-eya, Pacific Community Resources Society, and the Surrey School District have indicated an interest in the project. One of the primary goals of the mural project is to engage youth and youth at risk who participate in the restorative justice program in order to provide opportunities to enhance skills and create relationships with mentors and peers. Commencement of the project is anticipated for the autumn of 2008.

## **GRAFFITI MITIGATION**

The City has identified several graffiti mitigation strategies (March 2008 Corporate Report—Graffiti Mitigation). The Beautification Coordinator will produce a graffiti strategy report with an anticipated completion date for September 2008.

*Graffiti Task Force* - City graffiti strategies are discussed at regular meetings by a Graffiti Task Force, a multi-departmental group chaired by the Beautification Coordinator. The group consists of representatives from RCMP, Engineering, Corporate Facilities, By-law Enforcement, and Parks.

*Graffiti Reporting and Responsibility Awareness* - A Graffiti Contact page is now available on the City website to ensure that citizens have accurate and up-to-date information relating to reporting graffiti on public and private property. The contact list provides phone numbers of the responsible stakeholder and includes links to the City service request page and to the City Graffiti website.

A comprehensive Graffiti website presents information to the public on the different City graffiti mitigation strategies and provides information on stakeholder responsibilities and involvement opportunities. The website includes reference to the Surrey Property Maintenance and Unsightly Premises By-law (#16393) and provides links to relevant graffiti mitigation sites which educate property owners on responsibilities, and provides information on tools that will help mitigate graffiti pressures.

Information on graffiti mitigation strategies is also planned as part of the City Beautification promotion material, which will be distributed to the community in late summer 2008 to encourage citizen involvement and partnership for the enhancement of streetscapes.

*Private Property* - The City is committed to supporting private property owners in their efforts to mitigate graffiti concerns through a paint voucher program, public-private interface landscaping efforts, and a grant issued to Surrey Crime Prevention Society.

In June 2008, ICI Paints became the partner company for the City of Surrey Paint Voucher Program where property owners can receive paint at more than a 50% reduced rate. By-law officers assess private property graffiti incidents and issue a Paint Voucher to the affected owner. The voucher can be presented to ICI Paints to receive paint for the site.

During favourable fall weather conditions, some private-public interface fences and sound barriers will have landscaping implemented to deter graffiti.

Staff are also working with the Surrey Crime Prevention Society to revise grant criteria and responsibilities for graffiti removal. By-law Enforcement officers continue to provide information to affected property owners about the Surrey Crime Prevention Society's anti-graffiti programs.

*Planning Efforts* – Staff are working to revise policies to ensure that graffiti pressures are mitigated at the onset of new developments. The City will work with developers and BC Hydro to address the placement and design of utility cabinets so that they do not present graffiti opportunities after they are installed. The City will also work with developers to identify fencing and landscaping techniques for new developments to further deter graffiti pressure.

### **GATEWAY ENTRANCE SIGNS**

Staff are developing the design and landscaping elements of the new Gateway Entrance Signs featuring the new City logo, with an anticipated implementation date for September 2008.

### **STREETSCAPE LANDSCAPING AND AMENITIES**

In July 2008, 45 new self-watering planters were added to the City streetscapes at various locations throughout Surrey further augmenting existing landscaping features. The planters contain a combination of perennial and annual species for year round enjoyment.

In June 2008 an interdepartmental *Public Realm Enhancement* planning team formed to include Beautification, Planning, Engineering, Public Arts, and Parks. The purpose of the team is to identify opportunities to ensure that elements implemented for aesthetic purposes provide a balance between enrichment and long term maintenance feasibility.

Some of the initial projects include:

- Exploration of a coordinated street furniture amenities contract to include items such as bus shelters, garbage cans, benches, and bike racks similar to the model introduced recently by the City of Toronto.
- Review of existing street amenity standards and the implementation of guidelines to introduce for all aesthetic treatments including elements such as poles, concrete wall treatments, sidewalk treatments, tree grates etc.

### **CIVIC AREA ENHANCEMENTS**

*Newton* – Recently, visual treatments of the Newton Wave Pool were implemented to enhance the façade of north and west walls of the Newton Wave Pool building. This included two large 16' x 24' vinyl banners hung from the north wall of the building, seven large 4'x10' panels with recreation images were mounted on the north and west walls of the building, power-washing & painting of exterior elements. The transit loop will shortly be cleaned up, with shrubs trimmed back and trees lift-pruned for better light penetration, and surface treatments of the area. New signs and other enhancement features are being considered for the intersection at 72<sup>nd</sup> and King George Highway.

*City Centre* - The following work is being undertaken in City Centre to refresh the look and feel of the area:

- Cleaning sidewalks to remove gum and other residues from City Parkway and the North Surrey Recreation Centre walkway area.
- Painting tree grates, bike racks, and garbage cans to remove rust and provide a consistent colour scheme.
- Painting fire hydrants to remove rust and enhance their look.
- Eliminating unsightly sidewalk vegetation growth.
- Painting intersection poles with a durable product to reduce wear from posters.
- Fixing and removing pole hardware in order to present a desirable image.

*Cloverdale* - Cloverdale is undergoing a revitalization effort with an anticipated completion date fall 2008. The City Beautification Program is providing additional resources for this multi-departmental effort led by the Engineering Department, which at completion will include:

- Appropriate decorative poles for the streetscape of Cloverdale and selected by the local BIA for implementation.
- Public Art department introduced for the revitalization plan.
- Historical signage was designed to replace existing standard signs to promote a unique look for the area.
- Painting of the City owned Dale Building to introduce historical paint pallet to the building façade and integrated with Cloverdale BIA painting efforts.
- Heritage artefacts identified for potential use as streetscape accent features.

## **COMMUNICATION AND PARTNER ENGAGEMENT**

Several communication methods are implemented or planned to ensure that staff and the general public are aware of the City's beautification initiatives. Some of the processes and activities associated with heightening communication and promoting community involvement through engagement opportunities include the following:

- Maintaining a Beautification page on the City website to present the various initiatives and public engagement opportunities. The intention of the website is to also include information on related issues and community stakeholders by providing a network of resources that will improve communication and collaboration opportunities.
- Introducing a Beautification Partner recognition program that presents a sticker for businesses to display as acknowledgement for their enhancement efforts and an invitation to appreciation event.
- Engaging community partners in decision making through having the Beautification Coordinator attend meetings.
- Participating on the Downtown Surrey BIA Land Use Committee.
- Developing memorandums of understanding with community partners (e.g. Surrey Hospital Foundation's *Tulips for Tomorrow* campaign).
- Enhancing opportunities to leverage partnerships to increase the capacity of beautification efforts. Businesses will be engaged in participating more fully in the Seasonal Decorative Lighting and landscaping efforts.
- Establishing a community-matching program to provide opportunities for a variety of groups to become involved with beautification projects. The intent of this program will be to

develop criteria that will enable small groups to receive support for projects that would improve and celebrate their neighbourhoods, similar to other models in Seattle, Calgary, Toronto, and Victoria.

- Creating a speaker series that provides educational forums for discussion to engage the community to build on the initiative established through the Cultural Capital of Canada.

## CONCLUSION

The Beautification initiatives identified by Council in 2007 have been implemented, helping to increase the attractiveness of Surrey's civic realm. A number of other initiatives are underway or are in the planning stages, leading to increased community participation in beautification projects, and further augmentation of those initiatives previously completed.

Vivienne Wilke  
General Manager  
Finance & Technology

Vince Lalonde  
General Manager  
Engineering

Jean Lamontagne  
General Manager  
Planning & Development

Laurie Cavan  
General Manager  
Parks, Recreation  
& Culture

OCC/OCC

Attachments

Appendix 1. - Selected Photos of Seasonal Lighting

Appendix 2. - Banner Images

Appendix 3. - Traffic Signal Cabinet Images



**APPENDIX 1**  
**Seasonal Lighting and Decorative Tree Lighting City Centre**



**City Centre**



**Seasonal Features and Tree Lighting**



**Seasonal Feature**



**Cloverdale**

**APPENDIX 2**  
**City and Public Art Banners**



**Natural Spirit**



**Active Spirit**



**Cultural Spirit**

**APPENDIX 3**  
**Examples of City Centre Telus Utility Cabinets with Surrey Parks Photographs**

