

NO: R152

COUNCIL DATE: July 27, 2009

REGULAR COUNCIL

TO: Mayor & Council **DATE: July 27, 2009**

FROM: Deputy City Manager **FILE: 6950-30**
General Manager, Planning and Development **(Sustainability**
Planning Initiatives)

SUBJECT: Bill 27 – 2008 - Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions Requirements in the
Official Community Plan

RECOMMENDATION

The Planning and Development Department recommends that Council:

1. Receive this report as information; and
2. Direct staff to report back on targets and potential policies and actions available to the City of Surrey for reducing community Greenhouse Gas ("GHG") emissions all within the timeline provided in legislation for the incorporation of GHG reduction targets in Surrey's Official Community Plan ("OCP").

INTENT

The purpose of this report is to update Council on the GHG reduction requirements of Bill 27 - 2008 as they relate to municipalities and to identify how these requirements are being considered in Surrey's OCP update process.

POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

Surrey's Sustainability Charter, adopted by Council in September 2008, makes a number of references to the City's commitment to addressing climate change. It includes a number of Scope of Sustainability items related to Climate Change. In particular, Scope EN11 - "Surrey's Commitment to the Climate Change Action Plan", describes actions to reduce GHGs.

There are currently no direct references to climate change or greenhouse gas reduction in the City's OCP, only brief references to the general issue of "air pollution". Council has, however, endorsed a number of resolutions that support action to address climate change, including:

1. Support for the Federation of Canadian Municipalities ("FCM") Municipal Leaders' Resolution On Climate Change;
2. Joining the FCM Partners for Climate Protection (PCP) program;

3. Membership in the FCM 20% Club, a group of municipal and regional governments across Canada working together to reduce the amount of GHG emissions they produce; and
4. Signing on to the Province's voluntary Climate Action Charter. Signatories to the Climate Action Charter have agreed to develop strategies and take actions to achieve the following goals:
 - (a) Carbon neutrality in respect of their internal operations by 2012;
 - (b) Measuring and reporting on their community's greenhouse gas emissions profile; and
 - (c) Creating complete, compact, more energy efficient communities.

The City's Sustainability Office has initiated a process for making the City carbon neutral in its operations and the Province is now monitoring Surrey's GHG emissions profile. The creation of complete, compact and energy efficient communities will be a key policy focus in the OCP review process.

BACKGROUND

In support of the Provincial Climate Action Plan, the Province passed Bill 44 – 2007, the *Greenhouse Gas Reduction Targets Act*, which established targets for reducing GHG emissions in British Columbia, as follows:

- At least 33% less than 2007 emissions by 2020; and
- At least 80% less than 2007 emissions by 2050.

To help meet these targets, the Province passed Bill 27 - 2008, the *Local Government (Green Communities) Statutes Amendment Act*, which requires municipalities, by 31 May 2010, to include the following in their OCP:

- Targets for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions; and
- Policies and actions to achieve these targets.

In April of 2008, Council endorsed a Terms of Reference for and directed staff to initiate the OCP₂₀₁₀ process, being a major review and update of the current OCP. One of the main objectives of the process is to incorporate policies developed since the last OCP update in 2002, including the energy and climate change policies of the Sustainability Charter.

On March 30, 2009 Council approved Corporate Report No. R040 – "Status, Process and Schedule for the Major Review of Surrey's OCP", which identified areas where additional study and integration of new policy content will be required and advised that "The Province's new Climate Action legislation requires that GHG emission reduction targets and policies be included in Municipal Official Community Plans by May 31, 2010". The report proposed a "Table of Contents" for the new OCP that will include a chapter on "Energy, Resources and Climate Change" focused on energy, climate action policies, resource consumption, waste management, and steps to moving toward a carbon-neutral and zero-waste community.

The OCP review will also provide an opportunity to examine the community indicators currently identified and make these consistent with Bill 27 requirements to identify GHG indicators and targets as well as the Sustainability Charter's requirement to create indicators, set targets and monitor these indicators over time.

DISCUSSION

Local governments have a role to play in climate protection. It is estimated that local government decisions influence up to half of the GHGs being produced in British Columbia, through corporate operations and legislated jurisdiction over matters such as land use, development practices, business license requirements, transportation networks and solid waste treatment.

While the Sustainability Charter provides a vision and goals related to climate protection and GHG reduction, the OCP is the main instrument for establishing plans and policies that put the vision and goals into practice. Examples of potential OCP plans and policies that affect GHG production include.

- **Land Use and Development** - The City controls land use patterns and development practices, including the location, density and use. Compact and complete communities promote walking, cycling and transit-oriented lifestyles compared to lower density and isolated communities where greater car dependence produces more GHGs.
- **Transportation** - The City has direct authority over most roads, sidewalks, paths and Greenways. OCP policies, which are reflected in the Transportation Strategic Plan and more detailed plans such as the Walking and Cycling plans currently being developed, can significantly influence modal choice and GHG reductions.
- **Energy** - While the City cannot change the requirements in the Building Code, a number of policies can be promoted that encourage green buildings and promote the use of renewable energy with lower GHG impacts. The promotion of compact and complete land use also supports the implementation of district energy systems, which can significantly reduce the GHGs required to heat and cool buildings.
- **Infrastructure and Facilities** - The City manages an extensive network of utility infrastructure and community facilities, which use significant amounts of energy. Efficiencies would reduce GHGs.
- **Housing** - The location and type of housing has a number of influences on GHG emissions. For example, multi-family buildings with shared walls reduce energy consumption, buildings can be oriented to maximize solar energy and the provision of a range of housing types close to services can allow residents to age in place and reduce the need to travel to access needed services.

The City is consulting with Metro Vancouver and TransLink to promote the vision for a sustainable region, supported by appropriate levels of transit service.

As part of the OCP review, staff will identify the land use and density patterns that can create a more sustainable, transit-oriented City and reduce GHG emissions.

Sustainability Considerations

The updated OCP is being structured to incorporate the Sustainability Charter's vision and goals. A key Charter direction is to significantly reduce the GHG emissions produced in the City and to move towards carbon neutrality over time. Applicable Sustainability Charter "Scope of Sustainability" action items to be considered will include:

- EC7 - Sustainable Building and Development Practices
- EC8 - Energy Security
- EN1 - Energy Efficiency
- EN8 - Sustainable Engineering Standards and Practices
- EN9 - Sustainable Land Use Planning and Development Practices
- EN10 - Integrated Community Energy Master Plans
- EN11 - Surrey's Commitment to the Climate Change Action Plan
- EN15 - Sustainable Transportation Options

CONCLUSION

The Province's Climate Action legislation requires that by May 31, 2010 municipalities must identify policies and actions in their OCPs to address GHG emission reduction targets. As part of Surrey's OCP review, a chapter will be included that is dedicated to "Energy, Resources and Climate Change". This chapter will meet the statutory requirements of Bill 27, including GHG targets and policies and actions to achieve these targets. Draft policies will be forwarded to Council for consideration of approval.

Based on the above discussion, it is recommended that Council:

- Receive this report as information; and
- Direct staff to report back on targets and potential policies and actions available to the City of Surrey for reducing community GHG emissions all within the timeline provided in legislation for the incorporation of GHG reduction targets in Surrey's OCP.

Original signed by
Dan Bottrill
Deputy City Manager

Original signed by
Jean Lamontagne
General Manager
Planning and Development

MA:saw

v:\wp-docs\admin & policy\o9data\july-sept\07171415.ma.doc
SAW 7/24/09 3:45 PM