

NO: R039

COUNCIL DATE: March 1, 2010

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## REGULAR COUNCIL

TO: **Mayor & Council**

DATE: **February 26, 2010**

FROM: **General Manager, Engineering**

PROJECT FILE: **1210-1010**

SUBJECT: **Operation Save H<sub>2</sub>O Program for 2010**

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## RECOMMENDATIONS

The Engineering Department recommends that Council:

1. Receive this report as information;
2. Award a contract to manage the 2010 Operation Save H<sub>2</sub>O Program to Dillon Consulting Ltd. in the amount of \$55,000 including GST/HST and contingencies; and
3. Award the student salary component of the 2010 Operation Save H<sub>2</sub>O program to Dillon Consulting Ltd. in the amount of \$85,000 including GST/HST, contingencies and disbursements.

## PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to inform Council about the Operation Save H<sub>2</sub>O Program for 2010 and to obtain Council approval for the award of contracts in support of the Program.

## BACKGROUND

The Operation Save H<sub>2</sub>O program was initiated in 2008 to promote water conservation in Surrey. The program is focused on improved stewardship of the Region's water resources. This outcome is achieved through providing homeowners information and strategies about how to lower their water usage, which will also save them money.

The education component of the program is delivered through a community-based approach, with teams of students traveling on bicycles to deliver the program messages door to door. The teams provide an approachable and friendly face to the community throughout the duration of the program.

In addition to delivering information, the teams answer any questions raised by residents regarding water and sewer utility charges and offer information that will assist residents in reducing the charges they incur on their utility bills.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **2009 Operation Save H<sub>2</sub>O Program**

In 2009, the program was focused on residences that used higher than average amounts of water. A team of 5 post-secondary and 5 high school students was employed from May to August to deliver information to approximately 2,000 homes that were considered high consumers of water. The program places a high focus on attending community events and acts to encourage homeowners to take advantage of the City's Volunteer Water Metering Program.

The teams provided homeowners with information on outdoor and indoor water conservation methods. The teams also provided homeowners with tips and tools to assist in reducing water consumption. This combination of printed information and tools, as well as direct discussion between the teams and residents about site-specific issues demonstrated how simple changes could result in significantly lower water consumption and, in turn, lower water and sewer charges.

The water consumption of the 2,000 homes that were visited in 2009 was monitored during the late part of 2009 and a comparison was made with the water consumed by the same homes in 2008. The results of this comparison indicate that the program acted to reduce water consumption by 19%, or a total of over 90,000 m<sup>3</sup>. A review of the homes that were visited by the teams during the 2008 Program indicated that water consumption of these homes in 2009 continued to decrease despite the hot, dry summer of 2009, with a further decrease of 16% over the previous year's consumption.

The residents' direct cost savings are realized through a reduction in their utility bills while the City also realizes indirect cost savings through a reduction in the cost of pumping water and, more significantly, in the deferral of upgrades to the City's watermain network that would otherwise be necessary due to increasing water consumption by the City's residents.

### **Proposed 2010 Operation Save H<sub>2</sub>O Program**

The 2010 Operation Save H<sub>2</sub>O program will continue with an education campaign targeted at high water users and will also include more broadly based water conservation education for Surrey residents through various community events with additional emphasis put on homes with irrigation systems. The program will continue to promote the City's voluntary metering program.

The program will include 8 students divided into 4 teams of 2. Three teams will be assigned as ambassadors to specific communities of Surrey and will visit homeowners within these areas. The fourth team will prepare educational materials and attend community events throughout the City promoting water conservation.

The estimated cost for the program in 2010 is summarized in Table 1.

*Table 1*

<b>Operation Save H<sub>2</sub>O Program</b>	<b>Costs</b>
Program Management Costs	\$ 55,000
Student Salaries	\$ 85,000
<b>TOTAL PROGRAM COST</b>	<b>\$140,000</b>

The following factors will impact the relatively high program management costs versus the student salaries program:

1. Operation Save H<sub>2</sub>O is a new program established in 2008, and since then the scope of work has been evolving and there is a new component each year. For example, in 2008, we targeted primarily high water consumers. In 2009, we added community education, attending community events, and a small portion of voluntary metering. In 2010, we plan to further expand voluntary metering marketing efforts and lawn irrigation versus metering. The new component of the program requires extra effort from the consultant.
2. Significant efforts were spent on monitoring the challenges and difficulties encountered by students in their visits to residents and community events, feedback/discussion between students and consultant because there is no program of a similar nature in Lower Mainland, and the Program only started two years ago.
3. We require the consultant to provide us with a final report on the implementation and measureable results of the program.
4. There are components of the fee that are independent of the size of the student group or extent of the program, e.g. preparation of material for the students including improvement or add-on information from previous years, ordering of materials for hand-out to residents, setting up programs, searching for information, etc.

Currently, funding for the program is provided under 2010 Water Utility Budget.

### **Consultant Assignment for Operation Save H<sub>2</sub>O**

The Engineering Department will oversee the 2010 Operation Save H<sub>2</sub>O program with the day-to-day management of students being provided by Dillon Consulting Ltd. (Dillon). Dillon managed the program in 2008 and 2009, and performed the work very successfully. Dillon has submitted a proposal for the 2010 program that is satisfactory.

Over the past 2 years, Dillon's program management costs have not changed significantly. Their knowledge and experience with the program has lead to good value for the City.

It is recommended that Dillon be awarded the contract to manage the Save H<sub>2</sub>O program in 2010 and to manage the student salaries component of the program as well. Dillon provides student labour at cost; there is no markup on the student salaries.

With a view to identifying a larger pool of potential consultants for the management associated with the continuation of this program and the SHaRP Program in future years, the Engineering Department will be issuing an Expression of Interest (EOI) to the consulting industry in the next few months.

## **SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS**

The City's Save H<sub>2</sub>O program discussed in this report supports the Social and Environmental Pillars of the City's Sustainability Charter in relation to goals:

- SC5: Plan for the Social Well Being of Surrey Residents; and
- EN16: Land, Water and Air Quality Management,

by providing programs for youth, and by protecting water resources by promoting water conservation.

## **CONCLUSION**

The primary benefit of the Operation Save H<sub>2</sub>O program is to reduce overall water consumption by assisting high-water consumers in reducing their indoor and outdoor water consumption, to increase the awareness of the general public on water conservation which results in reduced costs to both the homeowner and the City. Important secondary spin-off benefits are the employment opportunities and experience provided for Surrey secondary and post-secondary students.

The Engineering Department recommends that Council:

- Award a contract to manage the 2010 Operation Save H<sub>2</sub>O Program to Dillon Consulting Ltd. in the amount of \$55,000 including GST/HST and contingencies; and
- Award the student salary component of the 2010 Operation Save H<sub>2</sub>O program to Dillon Consulting Ltd. in the amount of \$85,000 including GST/HST, contingencies and disbursements.

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