
REGULAR COUNCIL

TO: **Mayor & Council** DATE: **February 18th, 2010**

FROM: **General Manager, Parks, Recreation & Culture** FILE: **0350-01**
General Manager, Finance & Technology
General Manager, Engineering
General Manager, Planning & Development

SUBJECT: **Civic Beautification Program – Annual Program Update**

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Council receive this report as information.

INTENT

The intent of this report is to provide Council with a report on the 2009 Civic Beautification Program and to inform Council about the beautification initiatives planned for Surrey for 2010.

BACKGROUND

In 2007, the adopted Five-year Financial Plan provided new resources for City Beautification. The objective was to develop a comprehensive 'Civic Beautification Program' designed to address both short and long term beautification objectives. Funding was included for a staff position to develop the program, build partnerships and ensure that relevant guidelines and policies are adopted to meet the goals and objectives of the program.

In July 2008, Council received an update from the Beautification Steering Committee regarding the Beautification Program and a prioritized series of initiatives and opportunities for the 2009 City Beautification Program. The 2009 Program was to include the following:

Ongoing Beautification Initiatives

- i) Seasonal & Decorative Lighting Initiative
- ii) City Banner Program
- iii) Graffiti Mitigation
- iv) City Signage
- v) Area & Neighbourhood Enhancement

Other Beautification Initiatives

- vi) Community Enhancement Partnership Program (CEPP)
- vii) Commercial Streetscaping Improvements
- viii) Civic Beautification Award Program
- ix) Civic Beautification Plan Development
- x) 2010 Olympic Games Opportunities

The implementation of these initiatives has been coordinated by the new Civic Beautification Coordinator.

DISCUSSION

The following is a brief overview of the 2009 Program initiatives:

Ongoing Beautification Initiatives

i) Seasonal & Decorative Lighting Initiative

The City continued its annual seasonal and decorative lighting initiative. The objective is to celebrate the winter season with a coordinated display of pole light features and decorative tree lighting. Seasonal and decorative lighting was concentrated within the City Centre and Newton and Cloverdale Town Centre areas to generate the greatest effect within available resources, and based upon community feedback from previous years.

Street Pole Lighting – In November and December, 2009, decorative pole light features depicting snowflakes and stars were installed on 112 poles in City Centre, Cloverdale, and Newton. This represents a 25% increase over 2008. All pole features were undertaken with LED lights in support of the City's sustainability. The lighting features will remain in place until March, 2010 to correspond with the Olympic Celebration period.

Street Tree Lights – In November and December, 2009, over 25,000 LED lights were installed in street trees to provide an enhanced atmosphere to the streetscapes of City Centre, Newton, South Surrey and Cloverdale. Three larger trees were decorated in an enhanced manner as accent features; one in each of Cloverdale, City Hall and City Centre. Large format LED lighting is also being tested in Holland Park on several trees to explore the potential for a more comprehensive seasonal lighting exhibit in the future. Features will remain until March, 2010, to correspond with the Olympic Celebration period.

Tree Lighting Ceremony – The City's annual seasonal & decorative lighting initiative was officially celebrated through a tree lighting ceremony. On December 1, 2009 the Mayor flipped the switch to light up over 14,000 LED lights in City Centre as part the annual tree-lighting ceremony held in Holland Park. Over 300 community members attended the ceremony.

2010 Initiative:

In 2010, the Beautification Program will continue the seasonal & decorative lighting campaign. Staff are partnering with the business community to leverage additional town centre lighting and decoration. The City is also working with the Downtown Surrey BIA to explore the potential for an expanded 'Winter Wonderland' installation in Holland Park for the 2010/2011 winter season.

ii) City Banner Program

The City Banner Program provides visually attractive and community-oriented graphics that enhance the streetscapes of Surrey. Banners create a welcoming atmosphere and help celebrate special City events and programs. Banners are displayed in locations that highlight gateways and main arterials and showcase City attributes to build civic pride and public appreciation of prominent features of the City. At the end of 2009 the City had banners on 575 poles. By the start

of the Olympic Games the program had expanded to 750 poles involving over 1,500 banners. The following banners are included within the Banner Program:

- *'Future Lives Here' Banners* – In 2008, as part of the Public Art and marketing banner collections, nine “Future Lives Here” designs were created to represent *Natural, Cultural, and Active Spirit* themes to support City messaging. The designs were created through a Public Art process involving a “Call of Interest” to artists, and were then supplemented with City branding. Approximately 500 banners were produced and will remain in rotation throughout the City with other banners until the end of 2011.
- *'Olympic' Banners* - In December 2009, the City began installing its Olympic banners. A set of four designs were created to celebrate the City’s involvement with the 2010 Olympic Winter Games. A total of 512 Olympic banners have been installed at key Central City, town centre and gateway locations. They will remain until after the Olympic Celebration period.
- *'Right to Play' Banners* - In November 2009, the City installed 206 ‘Right to Play’ banners at key town centre and community locations. Three designs were created to celebrate the City’s partnership with the Right to Play Charity. They will remain in place until the end of 2010.
- *'Surrey City Centre' Promotion Banners* - As part of the City Promotion banner collection a new design of ‘the future lives here’ is being created to celebrate the vibrancy and significance of Surrey City Centre. Approximately 150 new banners will be manufactured for rotation on City centre poles from 2010 through 2013.
- *'City Art' Banners* - As part of the Public Art banner collection, **new City Art banners are being designed by Robert Davidson, one of Canada’s prominent First Nation’s artists.** Approximately 400 new banners will be manufactured as a result of this process for rotation on town centre poles in 2010 and 2011. Installation of these banners will coincide with the Surrey Art Centre’s Robert Davidson exhibition following the completion of the Olympic Celebration period.
- *Event Banners* – To help celebrate the World Police and Fire Games, in which Surrey hosted the road cycling and softball events, 148 special banners were placed in prominent locations throughout the City during July and August 2009.
- *Community Group Banners* - Various community groups are currently involved with the banner program. In 2010 the City will work closely with the Cloverdale BIA to create 175 new community banners for Cloverdale Town Centre. This element of the program is expected to expand as more community organizations become involved to further complement the number of banners on poles throughout the City.

iii) Graffiti Mitigation

Surrey Anti-Graffiti Committee - City graffiti strategies are discussed at regular meetings by a Graffiti Task Force, a multi-departmental and inter-agency group chaired by the Beautification Coordinator. Throughout 2010 the Civic Beautification Coordinator will be working with the Committee to enhance the City of Surrey inter-departmental/agency anti-graffiti strategy.

As part of this process the Beautification Coordinator has reviewed and updated the City's anti-Graffiti website that presents information to the public on the different City graffiti mitigation strategies and provides information on stakeholder responsibilities and involvement opportunities.

Utility Cabinet Wrapping Initiative – The City has continued the street cabinet wrapping initiative as a long-term preventative solution to graffiti. The program has been very successful in reducing random and reoccurring incidences of graffiti on City traffic signal cabinets. Work is continuing with the wrapping of additional cabinets in 2010. The City has wrapped 44 cabinets to date, with a further 60 planned for 2010.

In addition to reducing both incidences of graffiti and costs of removal, vinyl wrapping improves the civic landscape through display of photography and art work.

The Beautification Coordinator is also communicating with BC Hydro and Telus toward developing a program to wrap their utility boxes in key areas of City Centre and the other town centres.

Preventative Landscaping – Climbing vines have been planted along hundreds of meters of sound barriers on Highway 10 to deter graffiti. Coniferous trees have been planted along sections of King George Boulevard to deter fence line graffiti. Additional locations are presently being reviewed for specialized landscaping applications at private-public interfaces.

iv) City Signage

Gateway Signage – Gateway signs have been installed at key entry points to the City. To date, new gateway signs have been installed at four locations, including: King George Hwy & Scott Road (Pattulo), Hwy No. 10 and 194th Street (Langley border), Highway No. 10 and Scott Road (Delta border) and Highway No. 15 and 2nd Avenue (US border). A sign is planned for 152nd Street just south of Highway No. 1.

Olympic Signage – Ten Olympic entrance signs were installed at key entry points to the City in November, 2009 to identify Surrey's active involvement with the 2010 Olympic Games.

Neighbourhood and Community Signage – The Beautification Coordinator is developing a program of neighbourhood entry and way finding signs. One such sign is presently being erected at the entrance to Crescent Beach to replace an old, dilapidated sign that was erected by the community many years ago. Neighbourhood-scale signs are being developed for the Cloverdale and Semiahmoo Town Centres. Other locations are being reviewed for such signs.

v) Area & Neighbourhood Enhancement

Unightly Property/Brownfield Management – The Beautification Coordinator will continue to work with Planning & Development to identify opportunities and strategies for brownfield management, particularly concerning fuel station site rehabilitation.

Civic building Enhancements – Newton Wave Pool enhancements were completed in 2008. The Beautification Section is working with Facilities staff on potential building enhancements in Semiahmoo, Bear Creek Park, Newton and City Centre. Enhancements will respect

neighbourhood character and surrounding architecture while offering aesthetic and graffiti mitigation benefits.

Bus Shelter & Street Furniture Design – Engineering Department, Planning & Development and external partners have worked on the design and formatting of the City’s new bus shelters and supplementary furniture (benches, garbage cans, bike racks etc.). New shelter installation is nearing completion.

City Centre Green Network Plan – The Beautification Coordinator is assisting Park’s Planning, Research and Design in developing the City Centre Green Network Plan – a response to ‘Principle 2’ of the Vision for Surrey Centre (Surrey City Centre Plan Update – Phase II, Stage 1). Parks Planning and Beautification are developing a pilot project to test the initiatives identified within the Plan – a site assessment is underway.

Peterson Hill Enhancements – Peterson Hill, as the primary north entry point to City Centre on King George Boulevard, provides an important transition between the commercial-industrial character of the Scott Road area and City Centre. The Hill is an emerging area with medium density residential town homes developing. It is also the planned location for Public Art’s ‘Necklace’ project, an 800 m linear LED art piece. To support the Necklace project, and the emerging Surrey City Centre Plan’s vision for King George as a ‘great street,’ Beautification is working with Public Art, Planning and Engineering to identify actions that will enhance the Peterson Hill section of the Boulevard (through the implementation of design elements, landscaping and graffiti mitigation).

New Beautification Initiatives and Programs

vi) Community Enhancement Partnership Program (CEPP)

The Community Enhancement Partnership Program (CEPP) was launched in early February, 2010. The goal of the program is to generate neighbourhood-based projects and activities that enhance neighbourhood aesthetics and build stronger, more vibrant communities.

The Program allows neighbourhood groups to apply to the City for a grant that will match funds and/or value that is contributed by the neighbourhood/group to plan, organize and implement small neighbourhood-based projects, activities and celebrations. Under the Program, neighbourhood contributions can include volunteer labour, donated materials, professional services and/or cash. The Program will assist the City of Surrey in achieving city beautification and citizen engagement objectives. Applications are being received on an ongoing basis.

vii) Commercial Street and Landscape Improvements

Over the past year it has been observed that some sections of commercial streetscapes are deteriorated including unmaintained landscaping, illegal temporary signage and litter. This creates an unpleasant environment and public interface. To address these issues, in 2010 the Beautification Program will coordinate actions between Engineering, By-Law Enforcement and external businesses to explore ways to improve the aesthetics of these streetscapes.

viii) Civic Beautification Award Program

Civic Beautification is developing an award program aimed at recognizing external contributions to community and street enhancement. The objective of the program will be to encourage private investment into street and landscaping improvements and management. Awards will recognize individual residents, neighbourhoods, and businesses. Winners would receive an official certificate and would be recognized by the City through print and online media. Businesses would receive a sticker as acknowledgement of their enhancement efforts. Further information will be brought to Council on this program, which will run in coordination with the Community Enhancement Partnership Program (CEPP) and the Commercial Street and Landscape Improvement Initiative.

ix) Civic Beautification Plan Development

As directed by Council, the objective of the 'Civic Beautification Program' is to address both the short and long term beautification objectives of Council. The Civic Beautification Coordinator position was initiated to develop the program, build partnerships and to ensure that relevant guidelines and policies are adopted. As such, there is an identified need for the development of a formalized "Civic Beautification Plan" – a document that will aim to formalize the Civic Beautification Program and the longer term beautification efforts of the City.

The Civic Beautification Plan development process will include departmental and community consultation. The Civic Enhancement Committee (CEC) will assist in prioritizing the strategic direction and actions areas of the Plan. The process will build upon the 1994 Surrey Street Beautification Strategy and the City's Official Community and Neighbourhood Plans.

Communication

Several communication methods have been implemented or are planned to ensure that staff and the general public are aware of the City's beautification initiatives. Activities that will heighten communication and promote community involvement through engagement opportunities include the following:

- Maintaining a Beautification site on the City website to present the various initiatives, resources and public engagement opportunities.
- Engaging community partners in decision making through having the Beautification Coordinator attend stakeholder and community meetings.
- Enhancing opportunities to leverage community and business partnerships to increase the capacity of beautification efforts.

x) 2010 Games Consideration

During the 2010 Games and the opening of the Surrey Celebration Site, the visual corridor along the SkyTrain route from the Fraser River to the King George Station, as well as King George Boulevard from the Pattulo Bridge to Old Yale Road, was carefully scrutinized for dumped refuse and graffiti. Public areas (e.g. Parks, Boulevards, Road Ends) were promptly cleaned when dumped refuse was found. Private properties were dealt with through the By-law Enforcement

Section as expeditiously as possible. The area remains a high priority for anti-dumping and anti-graffiti efforts.

Beautification also supported the 2010 Celebration Site through the installation of Olympic banners on Holland Park light poles and the vinyl wrapping of a recently installed power utility kiosk.

SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS

The initiatives within the Civic Beautification Program support the development of civic pride, encourage the promotion of social connections, volunteerism and community ownership and provide opportunities for citizen engagement. The Program recognizes distinct neighbourhood identity and social connections, encourages diversity and facilitates community celebration and gatherings. Where possible the initiatives within the Program encourage environmental sensitivity and energy conservation, lengthen the useful life of civic infrastructure and assist in enhancing the perceptions of safety and security in the community.

CONCLUSION

The Civic Beautification Program has been active through 2009 in undertaking initiatives focused on enhancing the overall aesthetics of the City. A busy program of initiatives, some continuing from last year and some new, is planned for 2010.

Laurie Cavan
General Manager
Parks, Recreation &
Culture

Vivienne Wilke
General Manager
Finance & Technology

Vincent Lalonde, P. Eng
General Manager
Engineering

Jean Lamontagne
General Manager
Planning & Development