

NO: R175

COUNCIL DATE: **September 23, 2013**

REGULAR COUNCIL

TO: **Mayor & Council**

DATE: **September 16, 2013**

FROM: **Manager, Sustainability**

FILE: **0512-02**

SUBJECT: **Surrey's Participation in Earth Hour City Challenge 2013**

RECOMMENDATION

The City Manager's Department recommends that Council:

1. receive this report as information; and
2. endorse the City's participation in the Earth Hour City Challenge 2013 as generally described in this report.

INTENT

The purpose of this report is to obtain endorsement in relation to the City being involved in the Earth Hour City Challenge 2013.

BACKGROUND

To inspire cities around the globe to address climate change, the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) has again launched the Earth Hour City Challenge, a competition among cities to prepare for increasingly extreme weather and to take steps to transition towards a 100% renewable energy future. It aims to reward cities that are leading the way towards a fully sustainable future.

Building on the success of the Earth Hour City pilot in 2011, the Earth Hour City Challenge was rolled-out globally in 2012 with cities from Canada, India, Italy, Sweden, Norway and the USA being invited to participate. A total of 66 cities across those six countries participated.

The City of Surrey participated in the 2012 Earth Hour City Challenge. After submitting required information to a juried process, Surrey was selected as one of three Canadian finalist cities and engaged in a number of Challenge-related activities to promote its successes, including webinars and a social media voting campaign. The Challenge provided a number of opportunities for Surrey to be profiled in local and regional media related to its sustainability and climate-related efforts.

In July WWF Canada contacted Surrey to invite our participation in the 2013 competition. This year, the EHCC will focus on how cities enable the redirection of funds from fossil to renewable energy solutions. Participants will demonstrate their commitments and activities in this area including how they procure and otherwise stimulate investment in more renewable energy.

DISCUSSION

While this year's focus is primarily on measures to increase investments in renewable energy, some important general elements that will also be rewarded in the evaluation include:

- Commitments to transitioning towards 100% renewable energy;
- Measures to support dissemination of climate-friendly solutions;
- Integrated, relevant and climate-smart solutions for human needs (especially housing, energy security, mobility and food); and
- Promoting public participation and entrepreneurship.

The deadline for entry submission is October 13, 2013. Plans and relevant data are submitted via the “*carbonn*” Cities Climate Registry (cCCR), an internationally-recognized carbon reporting platform managed by ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability. The City of Surrey signed the Mexico Pact - Global Cities Covenant on Climate in 2011, a voluntary commitment toward transparency and comparability of local climate actions; signatories report their GHG inventories and climate actions to the cCCR. As such, the City of Surrey is already reporting to the cCCR and can readily report its current actions as part of the Earth Hour City Challenge.

Finalist cities related to the Earth Hour City Challenge will be selected by January 2014, followed by the People’s Choice Award process where citizens can vote for their preferred finalist city. The international jury will select one Earth Hour Capital in each country and one Global Earth Hour Capital. The final international conference and award ceremony will be held in Vancouver in March 2014.

SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS

Participation in the Earth Hour City Challenge will assist in achieving the objectives of the City’s Sustainability Charter; more specifically, Scope Action EN11, *Surrey’s Commitment to the Climate Change Action Plan* and its commitment to take action to reduce the causes of climate change and mitigate potential impacts.

CONCLUSION

Based on the above discussion, it is recommended that Council endorse the City’s participation in Earth Hour City Challenge 2013 as generally described in this report.

Anna Mathewson
Manager, Sustainability

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