



Environment and Climate Change Committee Minutes

1E – Committee Room B
City Hall
13450 - 104 Avenue
Surrey, B.C.
WEDNESDAY MAY 8, 2024
Time: 5:01 p.m.

Present:

Councillor Bose, Vice-Chair
D. Jack
M. Lamont
K. Purton
S. Sajda
D. Smith

Absent:

Mayor Locke, Chairperson

Staff Present:

Y. Yohannes, Director Engineering Ops
D. Matsubara, Director Utilities
A. Tanggara, Water Planning Manager
J. Sung, Legislative Services Coordinator
G. Yeung, Legislative Services Coordinator

Councillor Bose assumed the role of the Chair.

A. ADOPTIONS

1. Adoption of the Agenda

It was Moved by S. Sajda
Seconded by D. Smith
That the agenda of the Environment and
Climate Change Committee meeting of May 8, 2024, be adopted as amended by
adding C.2 *Verbal Update on Bear Creek Park Improvement.*
Carried

2. Adoption of the Minutes

(a) April 17, 2024 Environment and Climate Change Committee

It was Moved by M. Lamont
Seconded by D. Smith
That the minutes of the Environment and
Climate Change Committee meeting of April 17, 2024, be adopted.
Carried

B. DELEGATIONS

This section had no items to consider.

C. NEW BUSINESS**1. Water Use and Seasonal Water Conservation in Surrey***A. Tanggara, Water Planning Manager*

The Water Planning Manager provided a presentation regarding drinking water management. The following information was highlighted:

- Metro Vancouver (MV) allocates the amount of water to be withdrawn each year for drinking water purposes and reserves 100 billions of litres for emergency purposes during drought conditions. Based on current data, there is an inverted relationship between precipitation and water consumption patterns, underlining the importance of water conservation especially in the summer where there is higher demand for water. The City of Surrey purchases all its drinking water supply from MV which is approximately 17% of the total regional consumption, even though the population is around 22% of the regional population. Surrey's per capita water consumption has consistently been one of the lowest in the region but relatively high in comparison with cities in Eastern Canada. Water consumption at the municipal level, including commercial and industrial activities, are important factors when considering total water consumption.
- MV increases their pricing in the summer, thus, the cost of water consumption will increase even more as the City's water consumption increases. With climate change, summer pricing and demand, the cost ratio will continue to increase. According to the Water Research Foundation, the top 4 contributors to indoor water use are toilets, faucets, showers and washing machines. Water leakage is a significant contributor to indoor water use at 13%.
- Key initiatives to manage Surrey's drinking water include the usage of water meters, sprinkler regulation and enforcement, installation of water meters for construction use, and continuous detection of leaks. Metering provides awareness and incentive for better water consumption behavior. A positive correlation can be seen between the decrease in per capita consumption and the increase in the number of meters installed, confirming the importance of the metering program in the City.
- Future potential initiatives to improve water conservation include increasing water-wise gardens, promoting water reuse, providing rebates or incentives that support water conservation and reduction, installing advanced metering systems, delivering more effective education and outreach programs, and developing and updating Demand Management Plans.

In response to questions from the Committee, the following information was provided:

- The City of Surrey engages in an annual program where contractors are hired to pinpoint and fix leaks using listening devices in different areas of the city.
- Metro Vancouver currently holds the authority on how water would be managed if water levels were to fall below the reserves.
- Surrey's population is anticipated to increase by 50% in 25 years. The trend for increased multi-family housing is expected to decrease water use per capita since lawn watering is more prominent in single-family dwellings.
- Different municipalities have different levels of water use for industrial, commercial, institutional, and agricultural purposes; all of which are metered and included in the per capita consumption. Water audits are conducted for high water consumers to evaluate their water use processes and to recommend more efficient tools or better water conservation methods, which in turn, is also beneficial to the owner.
- The City of Surrey currently pays \$66 million a year for water. Currently, there are projects to increase water capacity in treatment plants and piping systems.

A. Tanggara left the meeting at 6:00 p.m.

The Committee provided the following comments:

- The use of rain barrels allows residents to collect fresh water and help to conserve water from the reservoirs.
- It was suggested that water conservation measures be incorporated into building codes when developing new buildings.
- Education, outreach, and incentive programs are vital in promoting water conservation.
- While looking at the projection for 2050, it is important to review what our carrying capacity is, how to build capacity for a growing population, and what sustainable growth looks like.
- The City will continue to monitor whether the consumption spike in 2023 is a new trend or a one-off incident.
- For reference, there is a farm in Arizona that farms 13,000 acres of hay by taking tertiary septic water for flood irrigation. Eighty percent of the water leaves the farm and becomes potable water.
- Irrigation water is in limited supply.

- It was suggested to seed grassed areas with clover which would stay green longer.

It was

Moved by S. Sajda

Seconded by D. Jack

That the Committee recommends that

Council receive the *Water Use and Seasonal Water Conservation in Surrey* presentation, as provided in Appendix I, for information in light of climate change and population growth.

Carried

2. Verbal Update on Bear Creek Park Improvement

The chair provided the following verbal update:

- On April 22, 2024 Council endorsed improvements to the natural environment and ecological value of Bear Creek Park under recommendation of the ECCC and ECCC sub-committee. Based on the \$836,000 funding allocated towards this initiative the funding will be utilized to create a wetland and rearing pond along the areas of King Creek. Legacy Environmental has been retained to design the wetland and rearing pond. It is anticipated that preliminary designs of the wetland and rearing pond will be presented to the ECCC for input in July 2024.
- As the construction of the wetland and rearing pond is located within sensitive environmental habitat along King Creek, Provincial and Federal regulatory agencies approval is necessary. The proposed wetland is located within BC Hydro's right-of-way and will require their approval before the construction may proceed. Construction of the wetland and rearing pond is anticipated for Summer of 2025, subject to Council approval of related contracts.

In response to questions from the Committee, the following information was provided:

- BC Hydro is amiable to the project but will inquire the City regarding method of construction and machinery used.
- The wetland and rearing pond will not interfere with future BC Hydro related work.
- BC Hydro is not currently contributing to construction of wetland. Voluntary invasive species removal in BC Hydro right-of-way and public court opinion could be used as leverage in contribution negotiation.
- 647 million funding from federal government for salmon habitat restoration is depleted and will not be contributing to this project.

- The \$836,000 funding is all going to this project. Staff will provide a project update and allow discussion at the ECCC meeting in July 2024.

D. OTHER BUSINESS

1. Verbal Update on Heat Bylaw for Rental Units

- The Housing and Social Development Division is in the process of reviewing the City's current Standards of Maintenance Bylaw. In response to the ECCC's suggestion, staff will explore the feasibility of including a maximum heat standard within Surrey's Bylaw. A report on the Standards of Maintenance review will be provided to Council approximately before the summer break.

In response to questions from the Committee, the following information was provided:

- This project has been assigned to Housing and Social Development Division instead of Building Department. The motion moved by the ECCC is important in that it sets a heat standard in rental units to be part of city policy.
- Senior people are more vulnerable to impacts of temperature change, and social isolation compounds the issue. There is concern that caution in updating step code is delaying the completion of heat bylaw.
- Staff can provide verbal updates on motions that have been passed by the ECCC.
- Parks, Recreation & Culture opened cooling centers during extreme weather events in the past. Extreme weather events will become more severe with climate change. Cooling center opening hours are based on weather assessment. Portable water fountain would support the cooling effort. Staff will provide an update on cooling center opening requirement.
- Staff will report on examples and levels of parks protection in the near future.

2. Roundtable

A roundtable discussion ensued as follows:

- There is concern that Climate Change Action Strategy (CCAS) is not higher priority in city process. CCAS is now permanently led by Planning and Development.

It was Moved by S. Sajda
Seconded by K. Purton
That the Committee recommends that
Council direct staff to provide an update on the Climate Change Action Strategy at
a future Environment and Climate Change Committee meeting.

Carried

- Allowing native species to populate boulevards encourages pollinator population and is aesthetically pleasing. There is less mowing and watering required for native wildflower covered areas, possibly reducing local maintenance cost. Public relation campaign is important to promote this concept.
- Staff will provide an update on the tree bylaw at a future ECCC meeting.
- Concern was expressed that there is no existing study on the sustainable population limit for Metro Vancouver based on average available water and general water infrastructure. Staff will contact Metro Vancouver to provide a response to the concern.
- Promotion and education of rain barrel program should be done in September. Staff will provide an update on the rain barrel program regarding number of barrels, upkeep cost, process change, and comparison with other similar programs.
- All transit stops should have shading and seating for seniors as there has been tree removal along transit route. TransLink is responsible for bus shelters at transit exchanges, which are within the TransLink right of way. Outside of these transit exchanges, the City collaborates with Pattison Outdoor and TransLink to install bus shelters based on a demand analysis. According to the contract, up to five shelters per year may be added, removed, or relocated. If the City desires to have more than five shelters in a year, they have the option to purchase the additional shelters..
- The City should have short term explanatory signs on reasoning for tree removal. Permits should also have reasoning for tree removal.
- Surrey Parks division has established a team to provide tree education, clean park garbage, and remove invasive species.
- Portugal's Lonely City Initiative could be a good reference for the City to support socially isolated population. Staff will reach out to the responsible person to discuss this request.
- City of Vancouver has more staff in relation to population and geographical size compared to City of Surrey. A list of civil societies submitted to ECCC could provide a history of outreach effectiveness.
- Annual tax bills could come with educational brochures to provide city wide education. Potential educational topics include invasive species and illegal dumping.

- Garbage accumulation issue on lots can be reported to Surrey Bylaws department. The City charges a punitive fee to owners for cleaning up on their behalf.
- An idea was put forward for a municipal volunteer day to allow workers to take time away from work to volunteer. The lack of volunteer willingness may be due to residents being disconnected from their local neighborhood.

E. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Environment and Climate Change Committee is scheduled for 5:00pm on June 20, 2024.

F. ADJOURNMENT

It was

Moved by S. Sajda

Seconded by K. Purton

That the Environment and Climate Change

Committee meeting be adjourned.

Carried

The Environment and Climate Change Committee meeting adjourned at 6:59 p.m.

Jennifer Ficocelli
City Clerk and Director Legislative Services

Councillor Mike Bose, Vice-Chair

**ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE COMMITTEE
RECOMMENDATION INDEX
May 8, 2024**

1. Water Use and Seasonal Water Conservation in Surrey

The Committee recommends that Council receive the *Water Use and Seasonal Water Conservation in Surrey* presentation, as provided in Appendix I, for information in light of climate change and population growth.

2. Climate Change Action Strategy Update

The Committee recommends that Council direct staff to provide an update on the Climate Change Action Strategy at a future Environment and Climate Change Committee meeting.