



CITY OF VANCOUVER

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ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

A8

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Meeting Date: July 8, 2008

TO: Vancouver City Council

FROM: General Manager of Engineering Services in consultation with the Manager of the Sustainability Group

SUBJECT: Green City Award Allocation

RECOMMENDATION

- A. THAT Council approve the allocation of \$200,000 Green City Award, received in 2007, as follows:
1. \$25,000 for a business case assessment of the installation of permanent power hubs in Vancouver parks and plazas; and added to the 2008 Engineering Operating Budget,
 2. A \$50,000 grant to support the BEST (Better Environmentally Sound Transportation) Bike Valet program; and added to the "Other" Grants category of the 2008 Civic Grants Operating Budget,
 3. \$45,000 for staff sustainability training and capacity building; and added to the 2008 Sustainability Group Operating Budget,
 4. \$80,000 for corporate initiatives to reduce greenhouse gases (GHGs) in existing buildings and transportation; and added to the 2008 Sustainability Group Operating Budget.
- B. THAT Council authorize the City to enter into an agreement with BEST (Better Environmentally Sound Transportation) to set out terms upon which the grant will be released, it being understood that no legal rights are created hereby and none shall arise until this agreement is drawn to the satisfaction of the Director of Legal Services and executed by her on behalf of the City.

As Recommendation A. 2 and B pertain to a grant, eight (8) affirmative votes are needed.

CITY MANAGER'S COMMENTS

The City Manager supports Recommendation A.1 through 4 and Recommendation B.

COUNCIL POLICY

In March 2005, Council approved the Community Climate Change Action Plan to reduce GHG emissions in the community to 6% below 1990 levels by 2012.

In March 2007, Council passed a motion directing staff to begin planning for significant, long-range GHG reductions with the eventual goal of becoming a carbon-neutral city.

In July 2007, Council adopted targets to reduce Community GHG emissions to 33% below current levels by 2020 and 80% below current levels by 2050. In addition, Council adopted the target of having all new construction in Vancouver be GHG neutral by 2030.

In January 2008, Council adopted the World Mayors and Local Governments Climate Protection Agreement, effectively changing Vancouver's 2050 community target of an 80% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions to be relative to 1990; a change from the target adopted in July, 2007 that references current greenhouse gas emissions as the baseline.

Approval of grants requires eight affirmative votes of City Council.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to seek Council approval for the allocation of the 2007 Green City Award of \$200,000 to the following initiatives:

- \$25,000 to fund a study to evaluate the installation of permanent power hubs at various locations in Vancouver for the film industry and festivals.
- A grant of \$50,000 to BEST to expand the Bike Valet program. This program encourages and enables people to cycle to large events by providing designated and secure bike parking.
- \$45,000 to provide resources for staff sustainability training and capacity building within the City of Vancouver.
- \$80,000 to fund additional corporate initiatives to reduce greenhouse gases (GHGs). The focus will be to identify city-owned buildings that fall outside Facilities current scope of work for energy retrofits and provide funds for energy assessments and minor upgrades. Staff are also discussing additional fleet initiatives to reduce GHGs with Equipment Services.

BACKGROUND

The BC government provides Green City Awards to recognize innovative local governments that are making a difference designing sustainable and vibrant communities that encourage energy conservation, physical activity, and produce environmental benefits.

In September 2007, the province awarded the City of Vancouver \$200,000 for its environmental achievements. The award was intended to fund further sustainability initiatives.

The City of Vancouver was recognized as being world renowned for liveability and “stepping up in its role to reduce the ecological footprint of the community”. The Province acknowledged the City’s promotion of the 2010 New Community Shared Garden Plots by 2010 program, the OneDay social marketing program to encourage sustainable behaviour, the work on green streets and lanes, and the City’s requirement that all new city buildings be LEED Gold.

DISCUSSION

1. *Power Hubs for the Film Industry and Festivals - \$25,000*

There are potentially significant greenhouse gas (GHG) reductions to be gained from eliminating the need for portable generators to supply temporary power to film sets and festivals. The Engineering Department, with participation from the Vancouver Parks Board and other stakeholders would like to evaluate the feasibility and business case of installing permanent power hubs (essentially electrical connections tied into the Hydro grid) in popular locations for filming and festivals including the Olympic Live Sites. Development of this initiative was also recommended by the Mayor’s Task Force on Filming.

The request for \$25,000 is to fund a consultant study for the business case analysis. The work will determine the current power supply requirements and assess the business case for each location, based on the projected capital and operating costs, potential fee recoveries from users, and a risk analysis. It will also identify ownership and operation options.

The business case assessment will examine a number of potential locations for power hub installations. The study will also identify the environmental benefits related to the greenhouse gas reductions associated with using Hydro grid connections vs generators.

The request for proposals for this work is already underway, and the study will take approximately three months to complete once a consultant is selected.

Any further work on power connections, beyond the consultant study, will be reported to Council before proceeding.

2. *BEST Bike Valet Program - \$50,000*

The \$50,000 is to enable a Bike Valet program to operate over three years (2008-10) by the non-profit organization Better Environmentally Sound Transportation (BEST). Providing secure and designated bike parking addresses a key barrier to people choosing to cycle to large events.

BEST has operated a pilot bike parking service through their "Going Active" program over the past two years. In 2006, they serviced 20 events, and in 2007 demand for bike valet parking increased and 40 events were serviced. The "Going Active" program was mainly funded by the federal government as well as a number of other partners, including the City of Vancouver.

BEST is now moving to a business model, focussed strictly on the Bike Valet service, with a goal for the program to become self-sustaining. 2008 is a critical year of transition as the Bike Valet service moves from a pilot phase supported by four levels of government toward building a fee-for-service based operation.

The grant to BEST will assist in expanding and transitioning the program by paying for improved infrastructure (e.g. additional portable lightweight bike racks, a trailer for transporting equipment etc.), development of a marketing strategy for the service to event organizers and end users, and will support a three year operating budget.

BEST has received \$17,000 from Translink toward program operating costs for 2008 which will cover some of the staffing costs for administering and delivering the bike valet service from February to October this year. Should Council approve this request, the City's support will in part be directed toward staff time on market development, service enhancement, and fundraising from corporate sponsors. Resources to develop a marketing plan are important because events choose voluntarily to provide bike parking. A marketing strategy aimed at events (and end users) will help ensure that the number of events being serviced is adequate to cover operating costs.

This program has demonstrated potential to increase the mode share of cycling to large events by removing a key barrier and increasing the visibility and culture of cycling in Vancouver. If more people cycle to large events, associated transportation impacts can be reduced, including transit demand, vehicle parking requirements, neighbourhood spill-over, and vehicle congestion.

3. COV Staff Sustainability Training and Capacity- building - \$45,000

The allocation of \$45,000 will enable Sustainability Group staff to work with other city departments to develop and deliver staff sustainability training and capacity building programs within the City of Vancouver.

Fundamental to sustainability is behaviour change. If we are to move toward a sustainable future as a corporation we must encourage individuals to engage in a multitude of actions, from participating in recycling programs, to taking a sustainable mode of transportation to work, to considering sustainability implications in day to day operating and project decisions. Previously, programs have relied upon disseminating information. Research has demonstrated however that simply providing information has little or no effect on what people do.¹ Over the last decade new approaches and deeper ways of engaging, such as community-based social marketing, "*The Natural Step*", and others, have emerged as effective alternatives.

Municipalities are beginning to offer staff sustainability education and training (such as Whistler, District of North Vancouver, and Calgary). For example the District of North Vancouver delivered training to over 400 staff through "*The Natural Step*", a methodology

¹ Doug McKenzie-Mohr and William Smith, "Fostering Sustainable Behavior" New Society Publishers, 1999.

based on systems thinking that recognizes that what happens in one part of a system affects every other part.

The Sustainability Group will be working with the City Manager's Office and the Business Planning Steering Committee to develop a sustainability strategy as part of the City's Corporate Plan and Strategy in the coming year. The funds will assist with the first step of developing staff sustainability training, including investigating appropriate sustainability education resources, initial senior staff training through workshops and/or purchase of computer or on-line educational modules. Staff will report back to Council with suggestions for a more comprehensive plan for staff training upon completion of this first step.

4. Corporate Initiatives to Reduce GHGs - \$80,000

The allocation of \$80,000 is to support corporate initiatives to reduce GHG impacts. This is particularly important given Council's goal to move toward becoming a carbon neutral city.

If approved, the funds will be used for an inventory and "gap assessment" of existing City-owned but not operated buildings, to pay for energy assessments, and possibly some retrofit work. Staff are also investigating additional initiatives to reduce GHG impacts from City fleet operations.

The City of Vancouver owns more than 100 buildings that are leased and operated by non-profit organizations, businesses, and others. These buildings are not within the scope of work already underway by Facilities for energy assessment and upgrades via the agreements with an energy service company agreement (ESCO). The energy service company agreement provides the City with free energy assessments paid for through energy cost savings in City owned and operated buildings. In expanding the scope to City-owned but not operated buildings, staff recommend paying for energy assessment services, if necessary, noting that the engineering firm conducting energy assessments for the City of Vancouver buildings are currently at capacity in terms of their ability to handle additional work.

An area of particular interest is low-income buildings and neighbourhood houses. There are more than 20,000 low-income housing units and many neighbourhood houses operating on city-owned land. A gap assessment will help identify what buildings are undergoing energy assessments and retrofits through BC Housing or other agencies. Taking the initial step of identifying energy retrofit needs can lead to leveraging significant provincial and other funds to finance energy efficiency updates to the low-income sector.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The one-time allocation of 2007 Green City Award funds, as recommended above, would add \$25,000 to the 2008 Engineering Operating Budget, \$50,000 to the Civic Grants budget and \$125,000 to the 2008 Sustainability Group's Operating Budget. The \$50,000 grant to BEST will be administered by the Sustainability Group based on an agreement that sets out terms and deliverables upon which the grant will be released.

It is anticipated that the \$25,000 for the power hub study will be expended in 2008. Most of the remaining \$175,000 will likely need to be carried forward into the 2009 operating budget.

PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

There are no personnel implications for the City of Vancouver.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

The initiatives proposed for Green City Award funding have an environmental sustainability focus. These initiatives could help to address climate change by:

- clarifying the business model for permanent power hubs in Vancouver, leading to infrastructure investments that support more sustainable film industry practices and festivals,
- promoting sustainable transportation, specifically cycling, to festivals and other large events,
- enhancing understanding of sustainability within the City and eventually affecting behaviour,
- achieving GHG reductions through energy assessments and retrofits of city owned buildings and city fleet initiatives.

CONCLUSION

This report recommends allocation of the 2007 Green City Award (\$200,000). The allocation proposal has considered integration of social and cultural sustainability, opportunities for partnerships with other public, private, non-profit sectors, and the importance of sustainability training and capacity building within the City of Vancouver as an organization.

The Engineering Department is recommending Council approval for:

- \$25,000 for a business case assessment of the installation of permanent power hubs in Vancouver parks and plazas,
- \$50,000 to support BEST (Better Environmentally Sound Transportation for the Bike Valet program,
- \$45,000 for staff sustainability training and capacity building,
- \$80,000 for corporate initiatives to reduce greenhouse gases (GHGs).

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