

STAFF REPORT: ENGINEERING AND PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT



REPORT TO: **Engineering and Public Works Committee**
MEETING DATE: **October 14, 2008**
REPORT NO.: **EPW.08.104**
SUBJECT: **Environmental Initiatives and Sustainable Path Declaration**
PREPARED BY: **Adam McMullin, Environmental Initiatives Coordinator**

A. Recommendation

THAT Council endorse the 'Sustainable Path and Community Partnership' declaration as part of the broader Integrated Community Sustainable Plan development initiative, as outlined in Report EPW.08.104 and,

THAT the Mayor and Clerk be authorized to sign the Sustainable Path and Community Partnership Declaration on behalf of the Town.

B. Background

The Town is currently involved in a number of environmental initiatives. As part of these initiatives and within the directive of the strategic plan, the Town is developing an Integrated Community Sustainability Plan (ICSP). An ICSP is an overarching document that provides a framework for long-term growth and development that builds on existing planning tools. This plan entrenches sustainable principles within the strategies and actions undertaken by the Town.

To briefly describe, the development of an ICSP involves the following:

- Working with the community to identify a common long-term vision of the Town. Key stakeholders representing the economic, social/cultural and environmental interests of the community help develop this vision.
- Compiling an inventory of the sustainable capital of the community to identify gaps and serve as a baseline to develop objectives and goals within the ICSP.
- Develop a local action plan that outlines the action items required to fulfill the identified objectives and goals and ultimately, the long-term vision of the community.

Sustainable Path Declaration & Community Partnership

In an effort to kick-start the ICSP initiative, the Town has engaged a number of key stakeholders, or 'early adopters' within the community. These early adopters have endorsed a Sustainable Path and Community Partnership Declaration which expresses a support and commitment of the ICSP initiative (Attachment #3). The declaration is part of an over-arching goal to build strong relationships among the key stakeholders and the Town early in the ICSP development process. Ultimately, the quality of the ICSP will be a product of the efforts of those constituents who contributed to its development.

As leaders of the community, a Sustainable Path declaration endorsed by Council would demonstrate a top-down commitment to the principles of sustainability and development of the ICSP. Additionally, the Council endorsement would encourage other community leaders to step into the role of the 'early adopter' and further strengthen the base in which the ICSP will be developed.

Pre-initiated Action Items

Although the ICSP is in the preliminary development stages, the Town has initiated action items within the framework of sustainable development. First, an Integrated Community Sustainable Plan Steering Committee has been assembled to oversee the development of this initiative. Additional action items have focused on a long term waste management solution and greenhouse gas reduction initiatives.

The long term waste management solution is a framework that outlines the Town's current waste management practices and future directives. Future directives include the completion of an organics collection and processing feasibility study.

The Town has also embarked on the implementation of greenhouse gas reduction initiatives under the Community Go Green Fund (CGGF) and the Partners for Climate Protection (PCP) programs. These initiatives focus on mobilizing the corporate and community citizens in an effort to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

The following items are examples of some early actions initiated/completed to date:

- Hiring of an Environmental Initiatives Coordinator (completed)
- Assessment of the Town's Waste Management System and Future Needs (initiated)
- Development of a Waste Diversion Plan (completed)
- Establishment of a Greenhouse Gas Inventory and Forecast (completed)
- Implementation of an Anti-Idling Declaration (completed)
- Introduction of a Community Bike Program (completed)
- Installation of Solar Lights for Town signage (completed)
- Development of a Community Improvement Plan (initiated by the Planning Dept.)
- Formation of a staff level Greenhouse Gas reduction committee (completed)

Two flow charts have been created that provide a visual representation of the over-arching environmental initiatives currently in development. One chart outlines the steps involved in both the greenhouse gas reduction initiative and the long-term waste management solution (Attachment #1), while the other chart describes the process for the development of the ICSP (Attachment #2). These charts layout the major elements of each project, and provide a generalized timeline for their completion.

C. The Blue Mountains' Strategic Plan

The implementation of a comprehensive, broad, long-term ICSP and associated action items will assist the development of the environmental, economic and social/cultural aspects of the community. This initiative will assist will all aspects of the strategic plan.

D. Budget Impact

The Town has received initial funding under the Green Municipal Fund for the organics feasibility study and the ICSP development. Under the Ministry of The Environment Community Go Green Fund the Town has received funding to undertake the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Initiative.

The funding schemes for these projects are described in general below.

CGGF Funding

Community Go Green Fund - \$99,675
Town - \$7,660

ICSP Funding

Green Municipal Fund - \$115,000
Town (Gas Tax) - \$115,000

Waste Management Solution Funding

Organics Feasibility Study
Green Municipal Fund - \$100,000
Town (Gas Tax) - \$100,000

E. Environmental Impacts

The identified environmental initiatives and the implementation of the ICSP will have a number of positive environmental impacts as a primary goal, including:

- Waste Reduction
- Improved Air Quality
- Improved Water Quality
- Ecological/ Environmental Preservation & Restoration

F. Attached

1. Environmental Initiatives Flow Chart
2. ICSP Plan Development Timeline Flow Chart
3. Sustainable Path and Community Partnership Declaration

Respectfully submitted,

Adam McMullin
Environmental Initiatives Coordinator

Reg Russwurm
Director of Engineering and Public Works