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DATE 28 March 2000

TO/DEST. The Chair and Members of Council

FROM/EXP. Chair, Green Steering Committee

SUBJECT/OBJET **GREEN STEERING COMMITTEE**

Information Previously Distributed

To be listed on the Corporate Services
and Economic Development Committee
Agenda 04 Apr 00

BACKGROUND

In March of 1996, Management Committee established the Green Steering Committee (GSC) to identify, evaluate, promote and monitor practices and policies to enhance environmental initiatives within the operating facilities of the Region of Ottawa-Carleton, and to report back to the Committee annually on its accomplishments.

The GSC was formed with representatives or contacts in each of the departments, and has served as a forum for discussion and idea sharing with respect to *greening* within the *internal* operations of the Corporation. Although initially established without dedicated staffing or funding, the Committee achieved many successes. A full-time support role has evolved and is being funded through various employment programs and several departments, all within existing budgets. A significant step in the development of *internal greening* was also the launching of the Green Rep Program in the spring of 1998, which brought more volunteer resources to support the *greening* initiatives and increase the promotion. Those who have participated in the Steering Committee and the Green Rep Program should be proud of their efforts and contributions.

ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The *greening* activities and accomplishments within the Corporation are best described in two categories: (1) those related to the activities of the GSC itself; and (2) those activities originating with the departments and that may in some cases be supported by the GSC. The activities and accomplishments are listed below:



Green Steering Committee Activities in 1999

The Green Steering Committee and its Green Reps have completed the following projects over the past 12 months:

- ◆ *Ongoing* - Coordination of the Green Rep Program entails continuous recruitment, training and support, due to the movement and/or workload of employee volunteers.
- ◆ *Ongoing* - Liaison with internal committees, such as the Interdepartmental Facilities Management Committee, continues.
- ◆ *Ongoing* - A subcommittee reviewed the internal recycling system. The review included the internal recycling collection contract, the type and location of bins (taking into consideration Fire Code concerns), signage and other educational programs. Research included analysis of the data from a waste audit at 111 Lisgar completed in September 1998. (See the departmental initiatives below for Property Services' role in this initiative.)
- ◆ *Ongoing* - Articles on Corporate "greening" are appearing on a regular basis in the *Phoenix* and the *Informers*.
- ◆ *Ongoing* - Battery Collection Depots have been established at several Regional work locations. Staff at those locations have been trained by Occupational Health and Safety in safety procedures for the handling and transportation of batteries.
- ◆ *April 22* - The highlight for Earth Day was the launch of a "Keen to be Green" Intranet Site on Regional Contact. The Site (at <http://intris/green/splash.html>) promotes GSC activities and provides useful information on *greening*. The event for the launch was a luncheon that also honoured the Green Reps for their dedication to environmental initiatives throughout the year. The Chief Administrative Officer, Merv Beckstead, attended to present certificates and launch the Intranet Site.
- ◆ *June* - Environment Week featured the Commuter Challenge, an environmentally-friendly competition to see which city in Canada could reduce its pollution and greenhouse gas emissions the most by using "green means" of transportation. Ottawa-Hull challenged Calgary and came out the winners. Participants included Federal government locations, the City of Ottawa, and many corporations as well as the Region.
- ◆ *June and September* - The GSC co-sponsored three Climate Change workshops conducted by EnviroRis, which offered practical ways in which each participant could contribute to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

- ◆ *August and September* - E. Gibson, GSC Coordinator, assisted in the collection of data needed by Torrie-Smith consultants to measure the Region's level of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in 1990 and 1997. A contract with Torrie-Smith and with the City of Ottawa will produce a Corporate Action Plan to partially meet the Region's commitment to lower GHG emissions by 20% by the year 2007. The Region will next need to produce a Community Action Plan to complete its commitment.
- ◆ A "*Buy Green*" Powerpoint presentation was developed and presented to staff whose duties include purchasing and requisitioning. The module was designed to encourage the consideration of environmental criteria when making purchases or setting stipulations in contracts. The module has now been developed for the intranet site and can be accessed there http://intris/green/e_buygreen.html.
- ◆ Planning has begun for the launch of an internal Transportation Demand Management Program, entitled *SmartCommute*. Many of the components are already in place - incentives for public transit, carpooling, cycling and walking.

Highlights from 1997 and 1998:

- ◆ *October 1997* - A logo was selected (a contest offered and voted on through the RIS) to represent the *greening* of the Corporation. This logo now appears on communications materials for all initiatives sponsored by GSC and on promotional items such as mugs, tote bags and pens.
- ◆ *November 1997* - A survey of 100 employees was conducted to establish a benchmark of environmental knowledge and practices among staff.
- ◆ *20 - 26 April 1998* - The highlight for Earth Week was the launch of a Green Rep Program. Through a "Volunteer Opportunity Posting", over 40 volunteers were recruited, trained and positioned in most work locations as representatives of the GSC. Recruitment and training are ongoing as the volunteer turnover is continuous. These volunteers, who meet once a month, have greatly increased environmental awareness in Regional workplaces and have assisted in promotions and other initiatives.
- ◆ *September 1998* - A sub-committee organised a waste audit for 111 Lisgar/Heritage buildings to determine the level of recycling and contamination in the bins located in those buildings. The data assisted Property Services in making decisions with changes in the internal recycling program.



Departmental Activities

More important than the Green Steering Committee's accomplishments are the activities of various departments. Following is a partial list of those *greening* accomplishments. Some of the accomplishments deal with services that we provide to the public, but are included here because through staff efforts, supported by Council, they are being delivered in a *greener* fashion or accomplish *greener* goals.

Homes for the Aged:

- ◆ As a follow-up to last year's *greening* initiatives at Carleton Lodge, with the helpful assistance of Craig Huff of the Environment and Transportation Department and his staff, a second grouping of coniferous trees was planted along the northwest flank. This is intended to provide a barrier against the wind and road noise as well as for visual screening.

Environment and Transportation Department:

- ◆ *Infrastructure Maintenance Division* - The Forest Renewal Program has provided 7000 property owners with tree kits through the Plant for Tomorrow Program. Rural Community Forest Restoration Projects, designed as self-directed tree planting projects - 58 rural communities were contacted and offered assistance to restore their cultural landscapes lost due to the 1998 Ice Storm; nine communities are actively participating. Community Partnership Tree Planting Projects identified through the office of the Regional Forester, assisted urban interest groups with tree planting projects with commitment obtained by the Region's partners to assist with financial and/or in-kind resources. To date, 30 interested groups have been contacted with 16 actively participating in 1999. Further details of the Forest Renewal Program are contained within its Report of 12 August 1999.
- ◆ *Corporate Fleet Services* - fuel consumption is considered on all acquisitions, with scoring benefits going to more efficient vehicles:
 - a) smaller displacement engines;
 - b) vehicle specifications critically assess weight and payload capability resulting in the purchase of smaller, lighter, efficient and flexible vehicles;
 - c) electronically controlled engines and transmissions are specified, resulting in more engine specifications that are based on overall performance requirements generally resulting in efficient operation and lower emissions;
 - d) large vehicles and equipment have automatic shut-down after a set idle period;
 - e) operating departments are charged for the cost of operating the fleet.

◆ *Solid Waste Division -*

- (a) since the introduction of the new Black Box/Blue Box program in June 1999, the amount of recyclable material has increased by 11 %. As well, the new program requires 30% less recycling vehicles, reduces greenhouse gas emissions and makes collection more cost-efficient;
- (b) in the spring of 1999, the Region of Ottawa-Carleton received the Outstanding Product Responsibility Award from the Recycling Council of Ontario for its innovative "*Take it Back!*" program. With this new product stewardship program, residents can take back waste products to local retailers for recycling, reuse or proper disposal. Since its inception in 1997, "*Take it Back!*" has constantly expanded and includes now more than 250 responsible retailers and 30 products.

OC Transpo:

- ◆ entered into a partnership with Environment Canada as a demonstration suite for Pollution Prevention Programs for Transit type occupancy, and some 12 projects have been identified;
- ◆ planted 8500 tulip bulbs along the Transitway and at the garages;
- ◆ used 45 dump-truck loads (15 cubic yards) of mulch from Trail Road Waste Facility along the Transitway trees and gardens (savings of \$10,000);
- ◆ switched to "environmentally friendly" cleaning products with installed dispensers that have greatly reduced consumption of chemicals (No mixing is done);
- ◆ installed spill clean-up kits in all Plant service trucks (35 +);
- ◆ greatly improved the landscaping servicing along the Transitway, increasing frequency of grass cutting and eliminating need for spraying noxious weeds.

Planning and Development Approvals Department:

- ◆ Region is supporting and facilitating a working group developing a natural area and open space land trust strategy for Ottawa-Carleton;
- ◆ The Conroy Woods area (regional property) was preserved as greenspace in 1999 and regional staff are working with the community association on management and passive recreational use.
- ◆ Region continues to work with the City of Cumberland in supporting passive recreation on the regionally owned Petrie Island - a study co-funded by the Region examining natural environment features and an interpretative trail system was completed in 1999.
- ◆ In April 1999, Regional Council registered over 30 kilometres of abandoned rail corridor in its ownership as part of the Trans Canada Trail. Regional staff, in collaboration with staff from Goulbourn, is supporting and facilitating a committee of Ottawa 2000 to develop the trail.
- ◆ The Region is reviewing design guidelines for Regional Road corridors - these guidelines will recognize the use of the road by all travel modes and encourage walking, cycling and transit use - the review will also make recommendations on improvement of roads as public spaces and consider environmental qualities.

Health Department:

- ◆ The Health Department has been involved as a partner in two Regional Heart Beat related activities which focus on environmental support for pathway use:
 - a) The first project, Pathways to Health, is a project which creates booklets with community maps and environmental and physical activity information. These booklets have been a product of a partnership with the City of Ottawa, City of Nepean, City of Kanata, Gilmore Productions, Nortel Networks, the Region of Ottawa Carleton and the Pathway Patrol. The maps currently focus on communities within Nepean and Kanata. Plans to cover more community areas are being developed as part of the Regional Heart Beat Four-Year Plan.
 - b) The second project is the support of the Pathway Patrol. The City of Ottawa leads this project with various partners contributing funding and/or in-kind support in various ways. The Health Department sits on the steering committee and staff helps support the patrol with training, special events, planning, and coordination. Regional Heart Beat partners support the initiative through funding and the promoting the Pathway Patrol to other groups and communities.

Highlights from 1997 and 1998:

- ◆ *Carleton Lodge*, of the Homes For The Aged, won a 1998 “*Clean Earth*” award from the Ontario Association of Non-Profit Homes and Services for Seniors. The award, co-sponsored by Enerplan Building Consultants included \$1,000 to be used in support of environmental initiatives. Combined with funds from Craig Huff, the Region's Urban Forester, this money was used to plant 21 Colorado Spruce trees to serve as a noise, wind and visual barrier for Residents of Carleton Lodge.
- ◆ The *Finance Department* arranged for the disposal of surplus computers and office furniture through charitable and non-profit agencies, providing reuse for these items and avoiding disposal to landfill.
- ◆ During 1998, the *Ottawa Carleton Regional Police* established approximately 23 recycling stations at their divisional offices, recruited Green Reps at all divisions, and distributed greening information on the internal e-mail system.
- ◆ *Environment and Transportation Department, Infrastructure Maintenance Division*, is doing more roadwork with “*hot in place*” recycled asphalt, gaining confidence that this type of product can extend the life cycle of the pavement at a reduced cost.
- ◆ *Corporate Fleet Services* has implemented a life-cycle-costing process for new vehicle acquisitions which includes rating fuel efficiency and assessing alternative fuel capability as part of the evaluation process. Fleet fuel efficiency continues to increase due to technology improvements and more stringent specifications. In addition, the groundwork has been laid for an emissions testing program that will be implemented in 1999 for heavy trucks (*Drive Clean*).

- ◆ The *Peter D Clark Long Term Care Centre*, currently being planned by Homes For The Aged Department, has qualified for an incentive award under the Commercial Building Incentive Program sponsored by Natural Resources Canada. The Region will receive a grant towards the design cost of producing an energy-efficient building as well as benefiting from reduced energy cost in operating the building.
- ◆ The Region of Ottawa-Carleton co-generation facility was built with an investment of \$4.5 million and, after a pay-back period of seven years, is expected to save about \$650,000 per year. The new co-generation plant burns methane gas, created by the wastewater treatment process, to produce electricity and heat. This electrical power and heat are then used to help operate the Robert O. Pickard Environmental Centre.
- ◆ Regional employees made tremendous environmental contributions during and following the January ice storm. Approximately 30,000 tons of branches were pruned or collected curbside to produce mulch which was contributed for walking trails, nurseries, gardens, etc., in and around the Region. The Region also contributed new tree plantings to replace trees lost in the ice storm.
- ◆ A staff initiated suggestion program at the Water Division called SCORE (Staff Communicating Ideas to Reduce Expenses) has generated many suggestions for internal greening. Waste reduction practices such as double-sided printing and photocopying are in place, as well as measures to reduce hydro and fuel consumption. SCORE has also generated new exchange practices for boots, hats and safety materials that reduce the waste of these supplies.

GSC WORKPLAN FOR 2000

The GSC will continue its supportive role for *greening* in the Corporation in the following areas:

- ◆ continue to support and promote *greening* efforts through communication and promotion;
- ◆ work in conjunction with the Green Reps to assist with the bottom-up *greening* of the Corporation with site or location-specific programs and promotions;
- ◆ launch and promote a revised internal recycling system;
- ◆ conduct one or more waste audits to assess recycling habits;
- ◆ serve as a venue to share ideas, initiate practices and resolve problems across the Corporation with respect to *greening*;
- ◆ continue to work with the City of Ottawa Climate Change Team (presently on contract to the Region) to support Corporate departments in their implementation of recommendations, subject to Council approval, through the Corporate Climate Change Action Plan, to reduce greenhouse gas emissions;
- ◆ assist in the promotion of an internal *Transportation Demand Management Program* to attempt to reduce the proportion of Regional employees who drive alone to work.

Support to the GSC and guidance to the Green Rep Program have been provided by a Coordinator, funded through “gapping” in 1999 by the Environment and Transportation Department. To continue to meet the goals of the internal *greening* program in the year 2000, the Planning and Development Approvals Department, and the Mobility Services and Solid Waste divisions of the Environment and Transportation Department have budgeted to jointly fund this initiative.

CONCLUSION

From a staff perspective, support for *greening* the *internal* operations continues to enjoy very strong support. At a departmental level, the list of achievements continues to indicate the breadth of commitment in our daily operations. To move toward the leadership role that Management Committee stated when it first established the Green Steering Committee, support for the vision must continue and should be made visible and public. To support the recognition and the importance of environmental principles in the establishment of the new government structure, it is important that key environmental values be passed from staff to staff and administration to administration through the transition.

Approved by
P. McNally, P.Eng.

EG/PM/md