

SUSTAINABILITY HIGHLIGHTS - 2013

CAMPBELL RIVER RECOGNIZED AS A BC CLIMATE ACTION COMMUNITY

In recognition of efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions as part of its commitment to the BC Climate Action Charter, the Provincial-Union of BC Municipalities Green Communities Committee provided the City with Level 2 recognition. The City's 2012 actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in community and corporate operations include energy retrofits to City facilities and purchasing hybrid and electric fleet vehicles. The majority of these initiatives are funded through external grants. Federal Gas Tax funding paid for the green roof on City Hall. Solar BC and ecoEnergy funding supported solar hot water systems at the RCMP station, Sportsplex, Simms Creek washroom and the Fire Hall. BC Hydro funding helped pay for energy upgrades to City facilities.

POWER DOWN CAMPBELL RIVER HOME ENERGY CHALLENGE

From April 6 to May 4, the Bellwood-Behan, Klein, Loeb, Millward and Seldon families competed in the City of Campbell River and BC Hydro's first Home Energy Video Challenge. Every family lowered their hydro and natural gas bills by at least \$100/month. The Bellwood-Behans won Best Rap Video, the Kleins won Best Educational Video, the Loeb's won Best Actors and Actresses, the Seldons won Best Original Song and the Millwards won Best Creative Director – and took home the grand prize: \$1,500 for a home energy retrofit of their choice. Learn more about energy conservation and watch the highlights from the challenge on the Sustainable Campbell River Facebook page and the City of Campbell River's Youtube Channel. The final film, which incorporates the families' video footage, will premiere at the Earth Week Film Festival in 2014.



CITY AND CHAMBER DEVELOPING LOCAL FOOD MAP

Work began to launch a web-based *Food Map* to help raise awareness about local food production, processing and purchasing by identifying retailers, restaurants and farms selling local, regional and Vancouver Island-sourced agricultural products. Building on the Chamber's Think Local initiative, the *Food Map* will help strengthen the local economy and support a positive business climate. The *Food Map* will also provide an opportunity for private land owners to list their property as available space for small scale local food production. Primary goals of the City's *Agriculture Now Plan* and the *Sustainable Official Community Plan* are the development of local food systems and access to local food markets. The City has received \$12,900 from the Real Estate Foundation of BC toward the development of the food map and supporting tools to encourage local food initiatives.

FOURTH ANNUAL EARTH WEEK FILM FESTIVAL

With School District 72, the City hosted the Earth Week Film Festival in April at the Tidemark Theatre. The event screened student films, the highly-entertaining 2012 Compost Video Challenge documentary that follows six Campbell River families as they compete to reduce their waste and Bag it, an award-winning documentary that delves into the impacts of plastic on human health and the environment. City representatives and community environmental groups were on hand to share information about composting, recycling, and other green initiatives in Campbell River.



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ELECTRIC VEHICLES CHARGING STATIONS – FULLY PAID WITH GRANT FUNDING

Electric vehicle owners can re-charge their cars in Campbell River at 11 new charging stations that officially opened in time for International Earth Day, April 22. EV charging stations are located at the Visitor Information Centre in Tye Plaza, City Hall, Dogwood Operations Centre, North Island College, and Discovery Harbour Shopping Centre Gas Bar and the new Target store. The stations in Campbell River are part of a province-wide network installed to support the growing demand for electric vehicle charging infrastructure. Similar initiatives are underway in Washington, Oregon, and California. The City of Campbell River received \$24,000 from the Community Charging Infrastructure Fund toward its six stations and used matching funding from the Climate Action Revenue Incentive Rebate Program from the Province of B.C. This enabled the City to complete the project entirely through external grant funding. One Campbell River family reports that, in 2012, they travelled more than 7,000 km, including trips to and from Courtenay on a regular basis, and only spent \$112 on electricity to charge their car. Electric vehicles greatly reduce vehicle-related greenhouse gas emissions, which is one of the goals of the City's Community Energy and Emissions Plan.



PROMOTING LOCAL FOOD

The City and North Island College continued to promote local food opportunities through Lettuce Grow, a film and workshop series. The 2013 courses focused on permaculture, planning and designing veggie gardens, edible landscaping, natural pest management, raising livestock, pruning and farming for profit. Lettuce Grow courses support the implementation of Agriculture Now – the City's Agriculture Plan, and help grow the gardening and farming community in Campbell River.

FULLY PAID WITH FEDERAL GAS TAX FUND:

NEW HYBRID AND ELECTRIC VEHICLES AND FORESHORE RESTORATION

The federal Gas Tax paid for Campbell River's new hybrid Toyota Highlander and one electric-gas hybrid Toyota Prius C that replaced older, less efficient vehicles in the City's Fire Department and operating fleet this year. The locally purchased vehicles (value \$86,000) will reduce greenhouse gas emissions and operating costs. The fund also covered the cost of shoreline improvements between the 50th Parallel Marker and Hidden Harbour that repaired extensive damage from past storms. The \$40,000 project to restore 100 metres of natural shoreline will help slow erosion, improve foreshore habitat, provide easier public access to the beach, and protect nearby City infrastructure— including roadways, sewer lines and the popular seawalk, from powerful wind and waves. The foreshore restoration used an estimated 720 cubic yards of gravel and logs that had clogged the Ken Forde and Big Rock boat ramps.

YEAR TWO FOR YELLOW FLAG-IRIS REMOVAL ON BAIKIE ISLAND

A second attack on yellow flag-iris at the Baikie Island Nature Reserve took place over the summer. Yellow flag-iris is an aquatic plant that can grow in both saltwater and freshwater. The invasive plant has spread widely by seed and by underground stems into natural areas and is listed as a noxious weed under the BC Weed Control Act. In the Campbell River estuary, plants on BC's endangered list are at risk from the spreading iris. Approximately 1,080 kilograms of the iris was dug by hand, and another 76 tonnes were removed by excavator. Volunteers on the project included employees from Strategic Group, the Greenways Land Trust and the Nature Conservancy of Canada. Also for the second year in a row, yellow flag-iris flowers were removed from plants in a portion of the ditch along Petersen Road to prevent the plant from spreading downstream. Efforts to control the iris are in line with the City's invasive plant species management policy that was adopted in 2013.



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FORESHORE RESTORATION GETS PROVINCIAL NOTICE

The City of Campbell River presented a summary of our successful foreshore restoration work at the Green Shores Workshop for Coastal Professionals and Decision Makers in November. Campbell River is one of the few communities restoring large areas of our foreshore to a natural beach slope using debris that clogs boat ramps to protect infrastructure, improve public access and safeguard habitat. Also, Campbell River is quite unique with 16 kilometres of linear foreshore, a significant portion of which is public. Plus, Campbell River is the only community that has signed a memorandum of understanding with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans to streamline the foreshore work review process. The workshop included a discussion of additional funding sources for foreshore restoration.

115 FREE HOME ENERGY AUDITS DISTRIBUTED

Rebates valued at \$150 covered the cost of an energy assessment conducted by a certified energy advisor for 115 Campbell River homeowners. Applicants to the City's Leisure Involvement for Everyone (LIFE) program could apply for the Energy Conservation Assistance Program (ECAP), which provides qualified lower-income BC Hydro residential account holders with free home energy evaluations and energy-saving products such as energy saving light bulbs, faucet aerators for the kitchen and bathroom, water-saving showerheads and many more products to help reduce monthly energy bills. These programs are a partnership between the City of Campbell River and BC Hydro Power Smart – and a key step in implementing the City's Community Energy and Emissions Plan as buildings represent approximately 51 per cent of energy use and 23 per cent of Campbell River's greenhouse gas emissions.

YOUTH ACTION COMMITTEE & YOUTH ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

In 2013, City Council adopted a Youth Engagement Strategy prepared by students in Grades 9 to 12 on the Youth Action Committee (YAC) to ensure meaningful inclusion of youth in public consultation processes, and a target for 10 per cent of all public input to come from youth. (Students in Grades 7 to 12 represent 10 per cent of the population in Campbell River.) Also, based on a survey of 357 local youth, the YAC presented a proposal to the City's Community Services, Recreation & Culture Commission for a Campbell River youth centre. This year, the YAC awarded its first \$500 Environmental Bursary to a graduating student. Funds for the bursary were raised by the YAC at the annual Earth Week Film Festival. The YAC's Youth Charter has been signed by the City, RCMP and School District 72 in recognition of the importance of the vision of youth for Campbell River's future.

BIKE TO WORK WEEK 2013 SUPPORTED CR HEAD INJURY SOCIETY

At the midweek barbecue in Spirit Square sponsored by Marine Harvest, more than 200 salmon burgers were sold, raising \$1,500 for the Campbell River Head Injury Society. For Bike to Work Week 2013, Campbell River had 84 teams and 314 cyclists participating. They cycled a total of 11,965 kilometres, preventing 2,776 kilograms of greenhouse gases from entering the atmosphere – the equivalent of driving a mid-sized car for six months. Campbell River's participation in Bike to Work Week 2013 trumped communities like Nanaimo, Squamish and Whistler. More info: www.biketowork.ca



WOODSTOVE EXCHANGE PROGRAM CONTINUED

In its fourth season, Campbell River's popular Woodstove Exchange Program saw another 36 woodstoves replaced – for a total of 150 cleaner burning wood-burning appliances installed since the program began, and approximately 8,240 kg of fine particulate air pollution removed from the local airshed each burning season. The City provided \$250 rebates to residents making the upgrade, thanks to \$11,000 in grant funding secured from the BC Lung Association with support from the Province of BC and the Hearth, Patio and Barbecue Association of Canada. Participating retailers Bennett Sheet Metal & Heating, Just Wood Stoves, Quality Stoves and Fireplaces Ltd and Guardian Chimney Services offered additional rebates on many wood and gas appliances. By upgrading inefficient stoves, smoke and fine particulate air pollution can be reduced by up to 70 per cent, and new appliances burn up to one-third less wood. The program also involved Master Burner home visits with certified professionals.



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12TH ANNUAL STEWARDSHIP AWARDS

At the Haig-Brown Festival in September, the City honoured contributions to the common cause of environmental achievement.

Leona Adams (Environmental Excellence) for decades of work under the umbrella of many organizations to address water quality and preserve wildlife habitat, participation in policy development and coordinating shoreline clean-ups and broom bashes.

The Loeb family (Energy Conservation) for their participation in the City's 30-day Energy Challenge and reducing energy consumption by more than 50 per cent.

Clay Carlson (Habitat Protection/Creation) for years of mentorship as a biology teacher and career counselor and for organizing Timberline Stewardship Day.

Bud Logan & Kathleen Sharpe (Waste Reduction) for their efforts to clean up illegal dumping.

Chelsea Holley (Pesticide Free/Urban Agriculture) for her work with the Laughing Willow Community Garden.

Ecole Phoenix Middle School Grade 6/7 teacher Dionne Lapointe-Bakota (Youth Special Recognition) for stewarding local natural areas including a shoreline cleanup, broom bashing and Ocean's Day participation.

Clean Sweep Chimney (Air Quality) for commitment to Burn it Smart and Master Burner programming supporting clean wood burning. Thank you for your hard work and dedication to taking care of Campbell River's natural environment!



CAMPBELL RIVER CLOSER TO HOSTING REGIONAL COMPOSTING CENTRE

At its November 5 meeting, Council gave the green light to issue a request for proposals that could see a regional composting facility built at the Norm Wood Environmental Centre. At least six private industry proponents with proven technologies for such a facility have indicated strong interest in pursuing development of a regional facility in Campbell River. The City and Comox-Strathcona Waste Management signed a memorandum of understanding in July, which supports exploring options for an organics facility in Campbell River. If the City develops an organics facility, the Comox Valley Regional District would consider constructing a transfer station at the Comox Valley landfill and potentially banning organics disposal at the regional landfills to support a new composting facility in Campbell River. All the major communities within the regional service area have expressed interest in curbside organics collection. The facility would accept organic waste from residents, institutions and businesses, and potentially process Campbell River's biosolids (residual waste from sewage treatment). The opportunity to compost biosolids would reduce the need for expensive land and plant upgrades at Norm Wood Environmental Centre, saving the City up to \$2.5 million. Organics account for approximately 35 per cent of the material currently going into regional landfills

CITY & SCHOOL DISTRICT 72 WIN CLIMATE & ENERGY ACTION AWARD

The Public Sector Collaboration category of the Climate and Energy Action Awards recognized this partnership in environmental efforts at the 2013 Union of BC Municipalities Convention. Over the last four years, School District 72 has collaborated with the City on the development of a number of projects that have reduced operating costs and total greenhouse gas emissions by 12 per cent compared to the City's 2008 emissions and by 19 per cent compared to the School District's 2009 emissions. By involving staff, students and senior management in both organizations, the City and School District are raising the profile of energy conservation initiatives and making great gains in energy conservation in Campbell River. The awards are organized annually by the Community Energy Association in partnership with the Province of BC, Union of BC Municipalities, BC Hydro and FortisBC.



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COMPOST CHALLENGE WINS CAMPBELL RIVER ENVIRONMENTAL AWARD

The 2012 composting video challenge won the environmental award for the public sector category at the Recycling Council of British Columbia's Annual Conference and Gala in May. During the Compost Challenge, 160 new composters were acquired by Campbell River households participating in the compost rebate program. The award recognizes the efforts of community members who participated in the program, local media who helped with judging and promotion, City staff and the Comox Strathcona Waste Management, including the Compost Education Centre (competition sponsor). View both the full-length compost challenge video (28 minutes) and the short version (8 minutes) on the City of Campbell River's You Tube channel.



REGIONAL FUNDING COMPENSATES FOR HOSTING LANDFILL

In an agreement signed this year, the City of Campbell River will receive more than \$1,000,000 to compensate for hosting the regional landfill. The Comox Valley Regional District, which supports the Comox Strathcona Waste Management Board, will pay the City \$50,000 per year for five years to compensate for the social, environmental and economic impacts related to the regional landfill on Argonaut Road. The agreement also includes \$175,000 in funding for landfill road improvements to extend current landfill capacity. Additional funding of \$870,000 will be provided for future road upgrades or other projects of community benefit. The five year term of the agreement reflects current projections that the landfill will be at capacity and closed within that time frame.

BAIKIE ISLAND TOURS

Thirty-five people attended three free guided walking tours of Baikie Island Nature Reserve led by Jim Van Tine this summer and fall. After decades of industrial use, the 12-year restoration of this island in the Campbell River estuary was accomplished through numerous community, provincial and federal partnerships. Funding for the restoration came from the BC Hydro Fish and Wildlife Compensation Program, the Community Works Fund, Parks Parcel Tax and other funders. The Baikie Island Nature Reserve was officially opened on Rivers Day in 2012 and is now home to abundant natural plant species, birds and aquatic life. The amazing transformation has been shortlisted twice for national reclamation awards. The City's Parks Department, Pioneer Home Hardware, the Rotary Club and Campbell River Communities in Bloom planted 380 large trees on Baikie Island this fall. The 30 western red cedar, 175 Sitka spruce and 175 Douglas fir trees were purchased with a \$2,000 grant from Tree Canada.