

Summary of February 2010 chapter meeting

Date: Monday, February 15, 2010
Topic: How can we provide input to the Bill 27 amendments to municipal Official Community Plans (OCPs) in the CRD?
Speakers: Sarah Webb, Climate Action Coordinator, CRD
Mark Boysen, Sustainability Coordinator, District of Saanich

Sarah Webb, CRD

CRD has 3 focuses:

- a. its Climate Action Program
- b. developing legislation
- c. public involvement

Climate Action Program

The program has 4 goals:

- (1) support local governments to reduce their emissions and adapt to climate change,
- (2) raise awareness of the problem and challenge of climate change among citizens, and local governments,
- (3) work with senior levels of government to develop policies, programs and legislation, and
- (4) to be carbon neutral in CRD operations by 2012.

In 2007, the CRD emitted 1.5 million tonnes of CO₂e (for in-scope items). The 2020 target is 1.06 million tonnes.

Bill 27 mandates LGs (local governments) to include in their OCPs a numerical target for GHG (greenhouse gas) reductions, with policies and actions, by May 2010. Bill 27 further obliges Regional District governments to do the same by May 2011.

This provides citizens an opportunity to provide their input. If local governments do not make these amendments, the BC Government could withhold funding.

How are we holding LGs accountable for their targets? These LGs are now looking for input.

6 municipalities will be actively accepting feedback in the next 45 days: Colwood, Esquimalt, Sooke, North Saanich, the Highlands, and Sidney. View Royal and Victoria are conducting a full OCP review at the same time, and will include GHG targets during that process.

The CRD is also looking for feedback, through the website:

www.crd.metroquest.com/#/challenge

The CRD now has no authority for transportation planning. It maps corridors and networks. The only vested power is in Local Governments. BC Transit puts on buses (governed by the Province).

Bill 44 has impacts on LGs too. This legislation from 2008 obliges entities in the broader public sector—Health Authorities, school districts, Crown agencies, and universities and colleges—to become carbon neutral by 2010. The 2009 report will be ready by June 30, 2010.

Climate Action Charter – a voluntary commitment by LGs and the CRD to be carbon neutral by 2012. Building climate accounting into a regular business.

Mark Boysen – Sustainability Coordinator, Saanich

Changing the ‘culture’ of the way we do things is the biggest challenge.

Saanich’s Climate Action Plan is online. The 1st review of the plan occurred in November and December 2009 and feedback was very positive. The plan has targets for 2012 and 2016, and the same overall numerical target (33%) as the Province of BC.

There are 1.0 FTEs in the Saanich sustainability office (meaning: only Mark).

The Saanich OCP was revised in 2008; it is strong on climate change elements. Saanich also has a climate *adaptation* plan (being prepared by Sheltair and Stantec).

The District has four strategies to reduce GHG emissions 33% by 2020. *Transportation* reductions will comprise 21.7% of the overall reduction; for *buildings*, 7%; 3.1% in the *waste* sector; and 1.9% of the total reduction in the area of *energy*.

Saanich’s task is now to identify the resources needed to take action. Previously, there was nothing integrating the plans of all the various departments; Mark tied them together. All local governments should be doing the same.

Mark is constantly applying for funding to support the activities. He also provides ideas to Saanich staff.

The biggest challenge is to change the ‘culture’ of inaction in the community. This means increasing public engagement activities.

Guy Dauncey’s comments:

- Improving the efficiency of buildings requires local government support at UBCM to push these policies province-wide.
- Transportation should be a big focus. ICBC could oblige drivers to record odometer readings for each annual car insurance renewal.
- Climate action progress in OCPs should be reviewed every 2-3 years, not every 5-7 years as is the case now.