



CITY OF RICHMOND

REPORT TO COMMITTEE

TO: Community Safety Committee
FROM: Suzanne Bycraft
Manager, Emergency & Environmental Programs
RE: June 17-21, 2001 Toronto International Best Practices Exchange

to Community Safety - Nov. 14/01
DATE: November 5, 2001
FILE: 6125-01

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

1. That the City of Richmond approves the Communiqué contained in the Toronto Declaration as outlined in Attachment 2 to the staff report dated November 5, 2001.
2. That a letter be written to the Greater Vancouver Regional District (GVRD), the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM), the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI) and the Toronto Atmospheric Fund advising them of City of Richmond's support of the Communiqué.

Suzanne Bycraft
Manager, Emergency and Environmental Programs

Att. 3

FOR ORIGINATING DIVISION USE ONLY		
ROUTED TO:	CONCURRENCE	CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER
Director, Engineering	Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	
Manager, Policy and Planning	Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	
Director, Public Works	Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	
Manager, Transportation	Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	

STAFF REPORT

ORIGIN

Richmond City Council received a letter from the Greater Vancouver Regional District (GVRD) requesting that GVRD member municipalities consider approving the Communiqué contained in the Toronto Declaration. A copy of the letter is provided in Attachment 1. A copy of the Toronto Declaration and Communiqué is provided in Attachment 2.

The Communiqué was developed by local governments participating at the 2001 Toronto International Best Practices Exchanges. The GVRD as well as representatives from 16 cities worldwide were in attendance.

The Communiqué contains a pledge that local governments will continue their collective efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and urges national government to act on their commitment to reduce global climate change. The Communiqué was approved by the GVRD Board at their July 27th Board Meeting.

The Communiqué was developed at the International Best Practices Exchange which was held in Toronto last June. The Best Practices Exchange was hosted by the Toronto Atmospheric Fund and the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI). The Best Practices Exchange marked the 10th anniversary of ICLEI's formation of the Cities for Climate Protection (CCP). In Canada, the ICLEI CPP initiative is delivered jointly by ICLEI and the Federation of Canadian Municipalities through the FCM/ICLEI Partners for Climate Protection (PCP) program. The City of Richmond is a member of the FCM/ICLEI PCP program.

ANALYSIS

The Third Assessment Report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Working Group states that "most of the warming observed over the last 50 years is attributable to human activities" and that human-induced "climate change will persist for many centuries" (IPCC; 2001).

The City of Richmond has acknowledged the need for addressing climate change at the local level. On May 28th 2001, Council approved Richmond's participation in the FCM/ICELI Partners for Climate Protection Program. Council has also demonstrated its concern of air quality by adopting the resolutions put forth by the City of Abbotsford to the FCM which urge for strengthened transboundary air quality management at their August 27th meeting. The GVRD, the lead agency responsible for managing air quality in the Greater Vancouver Regional District, has approved the Communiqué.

For the City of Richmond, the Communiqué represents a re-affirmation of the commitment that the City has already made to ensuring acceptable air quality and reducing local greenhouse gas emissions. Support of the Communiqué would extend this commitment to the international community. There are no identified disadvantages to the City associated with endorsing the Communiqué.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There is no direct cost to the City associated with supporting the Communiqué.

CONCLUSION

The GVRD has approved the Communiqué contained in the Toronto Declaration which urges national government to act on their commitment to reduce the threat of global climate change and asks that local governments continue their collective efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The GVRD has requested that all GVRD municipalities approve the Communiqué.

Endorsement of the Communiqué is an extension of an existing City commitment to addressing climate change and ensuring good air quality. There is no financial impact or other disadvantage associated with supporting Communiqué. Staff recommends that Council support the Communiqué and thereby, communicate our commitment to addressing climate change to the international community. A draft letter of support is provided in Attachment 3.



Margot Daykin
Environmental Coordinator

MMD:mmd

Letter to: GVRD Member Municipalities
From: George Puil
Re: June 17-21 2001 Toronto International Best Practices Exchange

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Thank you for considering this issue and for any support that you are able to provide for this very important issue.

Yours truly,



George Puil
Chair, Board of Directors

Cc: Ms. Nancy Skinner, International Director
Cities for Climate Protection Program
International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives
15 Shattuck Square, Suite 215, Berkeley, CA 94704

Mr. Philip Jessup, Executive Director
Toronto Atmospheric Fund
75 Elizabeth Street, Toronto ON M5G 1P4

Ms. Louise Comeau
Federation of Canadian Municipalities
24 Clarence Street, Ottawa Ontario K1N 5P3

Attachment:

Report to the July 27, 2001 meeting of the GVRD Board of Directors entitled "International Best Practices Exchange Toronto Declaration"

TORONTO DECLARATION

WE THE PARTICIPANTS from 16 local authorities who have taken leadership to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in 12 nations around the world;

TAKING PART in the Best Practices Exchange, sponsored by the City of Toronto, the Toronto Atmospheric Fund, the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI), held during the Smog Summit in Toronto, Canada, June 17 -20, 2001;

RECOGNIZING that climate change is the most critical threat to the sustainability of our planet and that the health of millions of people is at risk from rising heat, increased disease, more frequent and extreme weather events and rising sea levels;

CONCERNED that international progress has stalemated while global emissions continue to rise;

HEREBY pledge to continue our collective efforts to reduce existing emissions and lower future emissions growth. Achieving emission reductions of at least 50 percent worldwide will be necessary to solve the problem. This will require significant and immediate attention by a true worldwide partnership of national governments, local governments, citizens, and businesses. We urge national governments to create strategic plans to support local government in their climate change protection work and to act on their commitments made through their ratification of the Framework Convention on Climate Change;

AND RESOLVE to submit the attached Communiqué, addressed to the nations attending the UN Conference of the Parties 7th Meeting in Morocco in November 2001, to local authorities worldwide for their approval.

Signed June 20, 2001

**Communiqué to United Nations Conference of Parties 7th Meeting,
Morocco, October 29 to November 9, 2001**

To be submitted to Local Authorities worldwide for their approval for
submission to the Conference of Parties

WHEREAS, Local governments worldwide have been leading the effort to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. For example, over 500 local authorities worldwide are participants in the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives Cities for Climate Protection campaign, and more than 700 local authorities are members of the European Climate Alliance. Over the past decade, these and other local authorities have taken action and are making significant progress towards achieving climate protection goals;

WHEREAS, The experience of local authorities is that reducing greenhouse gas emissions is economically beneficial and improves the quality of life. These reductions come from increased energy efficiency, sustainable transportation, waste reduction, air quality improvements, smart land use patterns, and green space protection. Cities that are pursuing these strategies effectively are enjoying robust local economies;

WHEREAS, Commencing at the Rio Summit in 1992, 186 national governments concurred that climate change was one of the most serious threats to the health of our planet, and ratified the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (FCCC). Through the ratification of this Convention, national governments agreed:

“The ultimate objective of this Convention ... is to achieve ... stabilization of greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system. Such a level should be achieved within a time-frame sufficient to allow ecosystems to adapt naturally to climate change, to ensure that food production is not threatened and to enable economic development to proceed in a sustainable manner.”

AND WHEREAS, worldwide emissions reduction of at least 50 percent would be required to stop the rise of the concentration of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere;

THEREFORE, Local authorities believe this is not the time for national governments to be wavering on their commitments to reduce the threat of global climate change. The scientific consensus that human action is causing significant damage to the planet has never been more clear;

Date

GVRD, FCM, ICLEI, and Toronto Atmospheric Fund (see GVRD letter for contacts and addresses)

Dear :

Re: June 17-21, 2001 Toronto International Best Practices Exchange

The City of Richmond is in receipt of correspondence from the Greater Vancouver Regional District (GVRD) requesting endorsement of the Communiqué contained in the Toronto Declaration. This Communiqué was developed by local government representatives at the 2001 International Best Practices Exchange. The Best Practices Exchange was hosted by the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI) and the Toronto Atmospheric Fund. The Communiqué asks that local governments continue their collective efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and urges national governments to act on their commitment to reduce global climate change. The Communiqué was approved by the GVRD Board at their July 27th Board Meeting.

Please be advised that at their November meeting, Richmond's City Council adopted a recommendation to approve the Communiqué contained in the Toronto Declaration.

Correspondence outlining the City of Richmond's support of the Communiqué will be forwarded to the GVRD, ICLEI, the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) and the Toronto Atmospheric Fund.

Yours truly,

Communiqué Attached