

February 13, 2007

For Immediate Release:

District of Squamish Pledges to Go Green A 12-Step Pledge to Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Squamish, BC – The District of Squamish has pledged to “go green” with a 12-step pledge to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Council unanimously approved Squamish’s Global Warming Action Plan through a motion at their Regular Business Meeting held on February 6, 2007.

Councillor Patricia Heintzman brought forward this initiative in December as the environment is the critical issue for Canadians today and because climate disruption is a reality and a challenge requiring urgent, collective and collaborative action.

On February 16, 2005, the Kyoto Protocol, an international agreement to address climate disruption, went into effect in the 141 countries that had ratified it. At that time, Canada was one of the countries that made a commitment to Kyoto emissions reduction targets and timelines. Kyoto is only a beginning. Scientific opinion suggests it is really an order of magnitude short of what will be necessary this century to stem global warming and ultimately climate disruption.

“This pledge is about inspiring action,” stated Councillor Heintzman. “Municipal leaders and governments have the extraordinary ability to change the current trend of global warming at a grassroots level. Municipalities can do this by finding and facilitating innovative and practical solutions, and positively influencing the behaviour and attitudes of their employees and citizens.”

Turning the pledge into action begins immediately with staff examining each point in the pledge and bringing information back to Council on: what the District already has in place; what can be done next and implemented this year; and future steps for 2008 and beyond. Staff will also look at the benefits of implementing these recommendations and the costs associated with each one.

“If municipalities across Canada live up to this pledge, Kyoto targets are achievable,” said Mayor Ian Sutherland. “We are committed to making this happen and are already undertaking a number of green, sustainability, greenhouse gas reducing initiatives. Staff already work tirelessly on achieving these imperatives. This pledge supports and ultimately inspires us all to not only achieve these goals, but to seek innovative and bold solutions.”

The District of Squamish will challenge other municipalities in British Columbia and across Canada to make a similar pledge, and to meet or exceed Squamish’s commitment;

and the District of Squamish will urge the Federal and Provincial governments to enact policies, legislation and programs to meet or beat the Kyoto targets of reducing global warming pollution levels to 6 percent below 1990 levels by 2012, including efforts to reduce Canada's dependence on fossil fuels and accelerate the development of clean, economical energy resources and fuel-efficient technologies.

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Squamish's 12-step Pledge to Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions:

The District of Squamish will strive to meet and ideally exceed Kyoto Protocol targets and timelines for reducing global warming pollution by taking action in our own operations and our community by committing to initiating and achieving the following:

1. Do an inventory of global warming emissions in municipal operations and in the greater community in order to set reduction targets and create an action plan.
2. Adopt and enforced anti-sprawl land-use policies, preserve open spaces, and create compact walkable/bikeable communities.
3. Promote transportation options such as bicycle/pedestrian commuter trails, commute-trip reduction programs, incentives for car-pooling, expanded public transit and regional transportation options, and adopt traffic policies that reduce idling.
4. Encourage and increase the use of clean, alternative, renewable energy. Purchase only "green", non-Greenhouse gas producing fuels.
5. Make energy efficiency a priority through building code improvements- i.e. building bylaws that set highest standards for insulation, mandatory that all new homes be "solar ready", all new homes have smart meters, practice and promote sustainable building practices using LEED standards or a similar system.
6. Purchase only Energy Star [or comparable] equipment and appliances for municipal use; help develop a program that encourages residents to purchase energy efficient equipment, use only reusable grocery bags and encourage businesses and residents to minimize plastic bag usage.
7. Increase efficiency of existing municipal facilities and infrastructure by retrofitting municipal building with energy efficient lighting, urging employees to conserve energy, solar water heating systems, car pooling programs etc.
8. Increase the average fuel efficiency of the municipal fleet i.e. Hybrid / biodiesel; reduce the number of vehicles in fleet; launch an employee education program. Encourage fuel alternatives for the community.

9. Evaluate opportunities to increase pump efficiency in water and wastewater systems; institute water metering programs to encourage conservation, to locate leakage and inefficiencies, and maximize existing infrastructure; recover wastewater treatment and landfill methane for energy production;
10. Increase recycling rates in District operations and in the community through a complete compost, recycling and waste collection system;
11. Maintain and encourage healthy urban forests; promote tree planting where necessary and institute tree removal bylaw to increase shading and maximize CO₂ absorption.
12. Educate the public, schools, other jurisdictions, professional associations, businesses and industry about reducing global warming pollution, and be an example of how it can be done efficiently, economically and sensitively.

District of Squamish Current Greenhouse Gas Reducing Initiatives:

- **Smart Growth on the Ground** - A “concept plan” for Downtown Squamish resulted from an integrated and collaborative process that translated targets and principles of sustainability into concrete planning and design concepts and guidelines. The Plan is based on a sustainability framework and enables the evolution of a viable, walkable, complete downtown neighbourhood. The District is now working ‘on the ground’ with the Concept Plan, including reviewing development projects to meet the concepts and principles of the Plan, and using the Plan to shape a downtown-specific plan into the Official Community Plan.
- **The District of Squamish has partnered with West Coast Environmental Law (WCEL) in the next phase of its Smart Growth evolution.** The goal of the partnership is to work toward a comprehensive municipal framework of policies and bylaws that enable Squamish to implement the principles it developed together with Smart Growth on the Ground (SGOG).
- **Biodiesel Pilot Program** with District Fleet Vehicles is underway testing this alternative fuel source, which is biodegradable, non-toxic, burns cleanly and is made from a renewable resource.
- Squamish has joined forces with other municipalities and partners in the Sea-to-Sky Corridor to make sure that **Sea-to Sky communities continue to have healthy air.** An Air Quality Coordinating Committee has been formed and a draft Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP) developed which identifies a vision, goals and actions to protect and improve air quality.

- **Squamish Bridging to the Future with new Energy Project- 30-year energy plan.**
The project will help Squamish learn about its existing energy use patterns, understand what a 'business as usual' scenario would look like with the expected growth rates, as well as to start to identify climate friendly, energy efficient ways to grow and develop as a community. This ranges from biodiesel fuel, to energy efficient upgrades in houses, to alternate heat and electricity sources in new development areas.

This five-step program involves:

1. Creating a greenhouse gas emissions inventory and forecast;
 2. Setting an emissions reductions plan;
 3. Developing a local action plan;
 4. Implementing the local action plan or a set of activities; and
 5. Monitoring progress and reporting results.
- The District is working on an Idling Reduction Policy for all District vehicles, which would lessen the time District vehicles were left idling and polluting.
 - The District is hosting an Idle Free BC- Idling Reduction and Green Fleet Workshop on March 29, 2007- to share experience and ideas with several other municipalities and firms.

District of Squamish Current Greenhouse Gas Reducing Initiatives (con't):

- **Official Community Plan** – currently under review to ensure that we direct future growth to our existing neighbourhoods, with a particular emphasis on preserving green spaces, evolving neighbourhood nodes that are walkable for residents. Draft Plan, available on www.squamish.ca also includes policies to secure a productive and working land base, local employment lands, trail networks, and enabling a pattern of development that encourages sustainable transportation
- **Squamish Wind Energy** – In partnership with Western Economic Diversification, Community Futures, and Suncor Energy, the District of Squamish is conducting feasibility analysis on developing wind energy in Squamish. Once a year of wind data has been recorded, the community will better understand its options for wind energy business in Squamish.
- **Energy Savings Plan** - Squamish is participating in the Energy Savings Plan to help residents achieve greater home energy and financial savings, the Energy Savings Plan (ESP) has incentive dollars available for a limited time to Squamish homeowners

who improve their home's energy performance. A typical homeowner can receive ESP incentives and utility rebates to help pay for windows, insulation, heating systems, doors and air sealing. Eligibility includes homeowners of pre-1990 single-family, row and town homes.

- **Brennan Park Recreation Centre Energy Efficiencies/Conservation**

2006-8

Installation of a de-superheated on the ammonia gas compressor discharge, reclaimed heat will be used as primary heat source for arena domestic and ice operation needs.

2007

Upgrades to customer Service Air handling units.

2006

- Install direct digital controls on Facility air units, dehumidifiers, and ice plant.
- Changes maintenance schedule to allow building to go black for 4 hours at nights.
- Lights sensor controlled to go on when occupied and off when not.

2005

- Replace old mechanical dehumidifiers replace with high performance desiccant.
- Replace inefficient oil separators on refrigeration compressors.