

TO: CITY MANAGER

1997 JANUARY 08

FROM: DIRECTOR PLANNING AND BUILDING

OUR FILE: 01.250.1

**SUBJECT: PROPOSAL FOR A SUCCESSOR ORGANIZATION,
FRASER BASIN MANAGEMENT BOARD**

Purpose: To provide information and make recommendations regarding the City's support for a proposed successor organization for the Fraser Basin Management Board.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. **THAT** the City support the proposed successor organization of the Fraser Basin Management Board through participation by the GVRD in an organization involving the participation of the 7 regional districts within the Fraser Basin.
2. **THAT** Council support a funding strategy for the successor organization whereby the GVRD institutes a regional levy for Fraser Basin planning of 20 cents per capita of which 10 cents per capita is already accounted and thereby credited for in the region's contribution to the FREMP and BIEAP.
3. **THAT** a copy of this report be forwarded to the Chair of the GVRD Board of Directors, 4330 Kingsway, Burnaby B.C., V5G 4G8.
4. **THAT** a copy of this report be forwarded to the Environment and Waste Management Committee for information.

R E P O R T

1.0 BACKGROUND

At its meeting of 1996 December 16, Council received correspondence from the GVRD regarding a proposal for a successor organization to the Fraser Basin Management Board. The City of Burnaby is a member municipality of the Fraser Basin Management Program (FBMP) and has provided funding for the program which will complete its 5-year mandate in May of 1997. The GVRD has requested feedback from all member municipalities on a successor organization proposal by mid January, 1997. The purpose of this report is to update Council on the recent actions of the FBMP, provide information on the proposed successor organization including the financial implications and to make recommendations regarding the City's future support of a successor organization to the Fraser Basin Management Board.

2.0 SUMMARY OF THE FRASER BASIN MANAGEMENT PROGRAM (FBMP)

In May, 1992, Council authorized the signing of the Fraser Basin Management Agreement which established Burnaby's involvement in the FBMP. By signing the agreement, Burnaby joined local governments, tribal councils, and the Provincial and Federal government agencies associated with the Fraser River watershed in a five-year program dedicated to environmental, economic and community sustainability within the Fraser Basin. The Fraser Basin encompasses the Fraser River, its tributaries and a land area of 234,000 km² that drains into the Fraser River which is arguably the most important salmon-bearing river system in the world. Signatories to the agreement share the administrative costs of the Fraser Basin Management Board according to a cost-sharing formula based on a 10 cent per capita allocation. Burnaby's 1996 annual contribution was approximately \$18,300 which is comparable to the City's previous year's contributions.

The FBMP is led by a Board consisting of government and non-government representatives from 4 geographical regions of the Basin. The mandate of the Board is to:

- ▶ facilitate the coordination of programs and initiatives in the basin;
- ▶ provide leadership in developing improved institutional arrangements and consensus-based decision-making;
- ▶ foster public attitudes that support and reflect sustainability;
- ▶ audit progress towards sustainability in the basin; and
- ▶ make recommendations to the participants in the program

A local government Steering Committee which meets annually at the UBCM conference was also established to guide the program and provide input to the Board. Councillor Lee Rankin has served as Burnaby's representative on the Steering Committee.

Highlights of the 1996 FBMP are discussed below:

Report Card - A Report Card assigning a subjective grade to key environmental, social and economic issues in the Fraser Basin was issued in 1996 as a means of monitoring and raising awareness about specific issues throughout the basin in a coordinated manner. Issues include: basin fisheries, water resources, forest resources, agriculture, population growth, transportation, economy, decision-making, aboriginal/ non aboriginal relations and planning processes. The report card provides a snapshot of progress being made towards sustainability involving the 2.4 million residents who live, work and play in the Fraser Basin.

Basin Plan/Charter for Sustainability - In 1996, the FBMP developed the BasinPlan Workbook, a draft of a 5-year strategy for managing the Fraser Basin sustainably. The Workbook received feedback from members of the program and was adopted by the Board as a "Charter for Sustainability" which is essentially a blueprint for sustainability for the Fraser Basin. A five-year Action Plan which involves actions by governments, industry, businesses, individuals, non-government organizations, educators and media to achieve sustainability in the Fraser Basin in the short term, will be released in late January, 1997.

Integrated Flood Hazard Strategy - The FBMP recently released its Integrated Flood Hazard Management Strategy. A task force of technical experts drawn from federal, provincial, local and First Nations governments worked two years to advise the Board on development of the Strategy following the end of the federal-provincial Fraser River Flood Control Program. The Integrated Flood Hazard Management Strategy:

- ▶ balances the objectives of public safety, flood damage reduction, community development and environmental protection;
- ▶ clarifies agency roles and responsibilities;
- ▶ minimizes costs to taxpayers; and
- ▶ assigns responsibility and accountability to all appropriate parties.

Sustainability: It's Time for Action Conference and Proceedings - The FBMP was one of the key partners who coordinated this conference in November, 1995 where the purpose was to "develop practical strategies and actions to advance multi-stakeholder processes." Proceedings from the conference were released in early 1996. The City of Burnaby participated in the conference which was an effective milieu for exchanging information and coordinating environmental stewardship efforts including partnerships, indicators for measuring sustainability, funding alternatives and environmental citizenship activities associated with the Fraser Basin.

Navigating for Sustainability: A Guide for Local Government Decision-Makers - The City participated with the FBMP and partners in a process for developing this guide which was made available in 1996. The guide identifies principles and means towards environmental sustainability in the municipal government context. Key issues facing local governments including economic diversification, growth management, environmental protection, health and safety are addressed.

Environmental Management Processes - A variety of key multistakeholder processes which worked towards sustainable basin management were facilitated by the FBMP in 1996. These included processes associated with the Salmon River in Langley, the Alouette River in Maple Ridge, the Nechako River in northern B.C. and the Salmon River in Salmon Arm, BC. These processes provide valuable experience in implementing the FBMP's 5-year strategy for sustainability and are useful examples for local government environmental management.

3.0 PROPOSAL FOR A SUCCESSOR ORGANIZATION TO THE FRASER BASIN MANAGEMENT BOARD

As described in the GVRD's correspondence received by Council at its meeting of 1996 December 16, a successor organization to the FBMP Board is proposed through the participation of the 7 regional districts within the Fraser Basin. Each regional district would have a representative on the Board which would increase representation from Fraser Basin municipalities from the current 3 representatives to 7. The duration of the proposed successor organization is five years to see the implementation of the five year Action Plan for sustainability. Member municipalities would retain the ability to discontinue support as in the current Fraser Basin Management Board.

Participation in a successor organization through the GVRD is compatible with the GVRD's related programs and policies in strategic planning including the *Livable Region Strategy*, growth management initiatives and involvement in the Burrard Inlet Environmental Action Program (BIEAP)/Fraser River Estuary Management Program (FREMP). Regional coordination and representation is seen as an appropriate structure for managing the Fraser Basin due to its large scale and the many municipalities involved.

The structure of a successor program to the FBMP has not yet been determined however, a Fraser Basin Council which would be a non-profit society is envisioned. This would allow the work of the current program to continue while facilitating opportunities for outside funding. Funding for the society will be provided by federal, provincial and local governments as well as the private sector. The role of the new Council will be to oversee implementation of the Fraser Basin Five-Year Action Plan as well as the Flood Hazard Management Strategy.

It has been proposed that the local government Steering Committee continue have a more active role in the successor organization and liaise with regional representatives on the Board.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The proposal for a successor organization to the Fraser Basin Management Board involves a 20 cent per capita levy on member municipalities associated with the regional districts within the Fraser Basin. This levy, however represents a no net increase in cost over the current funding scheme whereby the City of Burnaby has contributed a 10 cents per capita levy annually (totalling approximately \$18,300.) to the FBMP while the GVRD contributes a 10 cent per capita levy annually towards the Fraser River Estuary Management Program (FREMP) and the Burrard Inlet Environmental Action Program (BIEAP) through a regional levy. In the GVRD's proposal for a successor organization, it is stated that of the proposed 20 cent per capita levy, a credit totalling approximately \$180,000. or 10 cents

per capita would be provided to municipalities in the GVRD for their FREMP/BIEAP contribution. Therefore, the remaining cost to municipalities would be 10 cents per capita which is the same amount as contributed by member municipalities including Burnaby in the previous five years of the FBMP.

Also included in the proposal are two options of how the net 10 cent per capita would be paid:

- 1) Member municipalities of the FBMP could continue to provide funds to the revised program based on a 10 cent per capita levy as in previous years payable to the UBCM. This would involve an approximate \$18,300 direct contribution by Burnaby as in previous years, or
- 2) A regional levy (net 10 cents per capita) could be instituted by the GVRD to provide a total of \$180,000. which was formerly contributed by member municipalities in the FBMP.

The above funding approaches were discussed with the Executive Director of the Fraser Basin Management Program. Based on this discussion, the second option involving a regional levy was seen as a more desirable approach for the funding of a successor organization to the Fraser Basin Management Board. As the proposed successor organization is based on representation from each of the seven regions associated with the Fraser Basin, it is appropriate that funding be directly associated with the GVRD. It is felt that this would serve to enhance the GVRD's accountability in a successor organization. Although residents would continue to pay 10 cents per capita towards the Fraser Basin Management Board in this proposal, funding would not be directly paid by the City of Burnaby. The Director Finance concurs with this funding approach.

Based on the above assessment, it is recommended that the City support a successor organization to the Fraser Basin Management Board whereby funding occur through a GVRD regional levy whose net amount totals 10 cents per capita.

5.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

There is benefit to having an organization that promotes communication and cooperation in sustainability planning for the entire Fraser Basin. Such a watershed-based approach to management builds trust that all stakeholders are committed to improving sustainability which is important in a basin where biodiversity in the lower reaches is essential to biodiversity in the headwaters and vice-versa as is the case in any salmon-bearing river.

The City of Burnaby has supported and participated in the FBMP since its inception in 1992 and currently has a member of Council on the local government Steering Committee.

The program has been highly successful in coordinating various interests including government, industry, residents, local groups and organizations and others in working towards managing the Basin sustainability. As the FBMP is currently completing a 5-year Action Plan for sustainability which will be released in late January, 1997 and has recently completed an Integrated Flood Hazard Management Plan, implementation of these key initiatives is necessary to ensure environmental, economic and social integrity of the Fraser Basin. It is therefore seen as appropriate that a successor organization to the Fraser Basin Management Board be established to ensure initiatives associated with the FBMP are implemented to work towards sustainability in the Fraser Basin. Of the 7 regional districts within the Fraser Basin, 6 outside of the GVRD have expressed support for the successor organization. Three of these have formally declared financial support for the proposed successor organization. The GVRD and FBMP Executive Director have also indicated that the preliminary response to the proposal by several GVRD member municipalities has been favourable and 3 municipalities have formally approved the proposed successor organization. This report recommends:

1. **THAT** the City support the proposed successor organization of the Fraser Basin Management Board through participation by the GVRD in an organization involving the participation of the 7 regional districts within the Fraser Basin, and

2. **THAT** Council support a funding strategy for the successor organization whereby the GVRD institutes a regional levy for Fraser Basin planning of 20 cents per capita of which 10 cents per capita is already accounted and thereby credited for the region's contribution to the FREMP and BIEAP. This option represents a no net increase in funding associated with the program.



D.G. Stenson, Director
PLANNING AND BUILDING



SH/db

cc: Director of Engineering
Director Finance
Director Recreation & Cultural Services