



Item.....
Meeting.....2012 Apr 23

COUNCIL REPORT

TO: CITY MANAGER **DATE:** 2012 April 17

FROM: DIRECTOR PLANNING AND BUILDING **FILE:** 2125 20
Reference: UBCM

SUBJECT: LOCAL GOVERNMENT AWARENESS WEEK 2012

PURPOSE: To propose Burnaby's participation in Local Government Awareness Week 2012

RECOMMENDATION:

1. **THAT** Council approve the City's involvement in Local Government Awareness Week 2012, as outlined in Section 2.2 of this report.

REPORT

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Local Government Awareness Week (LGAW) is an annual Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) initiative held in May to educate the public about the roles and responsibilities of local government, and to encourage public participation in local government processes.

LGAW was undertaken as a regular program item of the UBCM from 1987 to 2003. In 2009, following an endorsed resolution at that year's UBCM Convention, the initiative was reinstated in 2010 with additional support provided by the UBCM for associated activities. UBCM now delivers LGAW in partnership with CivicInfo BC¹, the Local Government Management Association², the Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development, the Ministry of Education, the BC School Trustees Association and the Public Works Association of BC³.

Last year, the theme for LGAW was '*Be Heard*' in recognition of the local government elections which took place in 2012 November. Burnaby marked this week with the issuing of an official proclamation, the hosting of a LGAW quiz posted on the City's website and Facebook page, and the hosting of four one-day displays in local shopping malls to introduce LGAW, and present basic voting information in an interactive manner.

¹ CivicInfo BC is a co-operative information service for those who work, or have an interest in British Columbia's local government sector. The main goal of CivicInfo BC is to facilitate the free and open exchange of local government information, which is done primarily through the web site: www.civicinfo.bc.ca.

² The Local Government Management Association works to promote professional management and leadership excellence in local government in BC: www.lgma.ca.

³ The Public Works Association of BC is a non-profit organization that supports individuals working for municipalities, utility companies and engineering consulting firms by providing opportunities for information, sharing, education and professional development: <http://pwabc.cpwa.net/Index.html>.

This year, LGAW coincides with National Public Works Weeks (NPWW), with both taking place from 2012 May 20 – 26. The Public Works Association of BC, which has hosted National Public Works Week since 1960, focuses on educating and informing the public about the essential role that public works play in the quality of community life. This year, LGAW and NPWW have a shared theme of ‘Public Works: Creating A Lasting Impression’. This theme focuses on building a greater public awareness of the ‘core’ civil infrastructure and services that local governments provide and maintain for their citizens.

The purpose of this report is to propose activities for Burnaby’s participation in Local Government Awareness Week 2012. Additional details on activities for NPWW will be forthcoming in a separate report from the Engineering Department.

2.0 PROPOSED LOCAL GOVERNMENT AWARENESS WEEK 2012 IN BURNABY

This section presents a rationale for the City’s involvement in Local Government Awareness Week (LGAW) 2012, along with a list of suggested activities to mark the week.

2.1 Rationale for Involvement

One of the major themes that emerged from public consultation during development of the *Burnaby Social Sustainability Strategy (June 2011)* is ‘Getting Involved’. Indeed, it was identified as one of seven Strategic Priority areas that work together to move Burnaby forward in achieving the goals and vision outlined in the Strategy.

Through the Strategy development process, it became evident that Burnaby residents place great value on the many existing opportunities in Burnaby to be involved with community organizations and initiatives, and to be civically aware and engaged. Several suggested actions in the Strategy reference avenues for increasing public awareness of the roles and responsibilities of local government and how to be an engaged citizen.

In support of the Social Sustainability Strategy, Local Government Awareness Week provides an appropriate opportunity for the City to highlight its core responsibilities, roles and functions, to encourage and educate its citizens about how to become involved, and to celebrate its history. With Council’s approval, this would be the second annual observance of LGAW in Burnaby.

2.2 Suggested Activities for Local Government Awareness Week 2012

Based on information provided by the UBCM, the following activities are proposed to recognize LGAW 2012 in Burnaby:

- City Proclamation: issue an official City proclamation recognizing 2012 May 20 – 26 as Local Government Awareness Week in Burnaby.

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- Website Feature: highlight information about LGAW, including vignettes or ‘fun facts’ from Burnaby’s history which focus on public works milestones, on the City website and Facebook page.
- Outreach Workshop: offer interactive community outreach workshops, on request, to non-profit organizations such as South Burnaby Neighbourhood House, Burnaby Community Connections and others for their clients and members as well as the general public. The workshops would provide a basic introduction to what local government is, what the responsibilities of local government are, and how to participate in local government processes. Some of the workshops would take place at City Hall, as a way to welcome residents to their civic building(s) and educate the public about City functions which take place at/from City Hall.
- Library Display: provide a public display of books and other informational materials at the Bob Prittie Metrotown Library outlining basic civic roles and responsibilities accompanied by information on available City programs and resources.

All of the suggested activities would be undertaken with existing staff resources and within existing budgets.

3.0 CONCLUSION

As demonstrated through the development of the *Burnaby Social Sustainability Strategy (June 2011)*, Burnaby residents place great value on the opportunity to be civically engaged and active in their community. Local Government Awareness Week (LGAW) is an opportunity for the City to build upon this strong base to develop greater awareness among the public of the roles and responsibilities of local government, with a 2012 focus on the importance of public works.

As such, this report recommends that Council approve the City’s involvement in Local Government Awareness Week 2012 through four proposed activities, as outlined in *Section 2.2* of this report.


B. Luksun, Director
PLANNING AND BUILDING

RM:sla

cc:	Deputy City Managers	Director Engineering
	Director Finance	Director Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services
	OIC – RCMP	Fire Chief
	Chief Building Inspector	Chief Librarian
	City Solicitor	City Clerk