



Item.....
Meeting.....2013 Apr 22

COUNCIL REPORT

TO: CITY MANAGER **DATE:** 2013 April 17
FROM: DIRECTOR PLANNING AND BUILDING **FILE:** 2125 20
Reference: UBCM
SUBJECT: LOCAL GOVERNMENT AWARENESS WEEK 2013

PURPOSE: To propose Burnaby’s participation in Local Government Awareness Week 2013.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. **THAT** Council approve the City’s involvement in Local Government Awareness Week 2013, as outlined in Section 2.3 of this report.
2. **THAT** a copy of the report be forwarded to the Burnaby Board of Trade, at 201-4555 Kingsway, Burnaby, BC, V5H 4T8, for information.

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 2010, following an endorsed resolution at the 2009 UBCM Convention, the initiative was reinstated 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 ‘*Public Works: Creating A Lasting Impression*’ as the week coincided with National Public Works Week (NPWW). The theme focused on building a greater

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>.

public awareness of the ‘core’ civil infrastructure and services that local governments provide and maintain for their citizens. Burnaby marked the week with the issuing of an official proclamation, a website feature detailing public works milestones in Burnaby’s history, and a library display of related books and other informational materials at the Bob Prittie Metrotown Library. In addition, six community outreach workshops⁴ were provided. Four of the workshops took place at City Hall, and two workshops at South Burnaby Neighbourhood House. These workshops, offered upon request, provided information on what local government is, what the responsibilities of local government are, and how to participate in local government processes.

This year, LGAW will take place from 2013 May 19 – 25. No particular theme has been designated by the UBCM, and local governments are encouraged to develop their own themes.

The purpose of this report is to propose a theme and activities for Burnaby’s participation in Local Government Awareness Week 2013.

2.0 PROPOSED LOCAL GOVERNMENT AWARENESS WEEK 2013 IN BURNABY

This section presents the rationale for the City’s involvement in Local Government Awareness Week (LGAW) 2013, outlines a proposed theme, and includes a list of suggested activities to mark the week.

2.1 Rationale for Involvement

One of the major topics 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 aware and engaged in civic matters. Several 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. The majority of the subject actions are ones that the City is already involved in and will continue implement on an ongoing basis. Select other subject actions, such as Action #50 (creating a ‘how to’ about how citizens can get more involved and provide their input at the civic level) and Action #51 (exploring opportunities to expand the City’s existing public consultation programs) have been identified for focus during Phase 1 implementation of the Strategy, to occur in the next five or so years.

In support of the Social Sustainability Strategy, Local Government Awareness Week provides an appropriate opportunity for the City to highlight its responsibilities, roles and functions, to encourage and educate its citizens about how to become involved, and to celebrate local history.

⁴ Three workshops have been provided to Immigrant Resources Society of B.C., and three workshops have been provided to the Burnaby School District (SD41) ‘English as a Second Language’ classes.

With Council's approval, this would be the third annual observance of LGAW in Burnaby.

2.2 Proposed Theme

Within the Strategic Priority area of 'Getting Involved' in the Social Sustainability Strategy, Action #59 suggests that, recognizing economic implications, the City look for opportunities to promote, among other elements, local production as a means of strengthening Burnaby's unique identity. Consideration and implementation of this action is already underway with the City's Green Team leading activities to-date to promote and encourage local purchasing where possible and appropriate.

With this in mind, it is proposed that the theme of Local Government Awareness Week 2013 be '*Support Burnaby Business*'. This theme would seek to:

- increase citizen awareness of the role(s) the City plays in promoting economic development (e.g. development of the Economic Development Strategy 2020), supported by its partnership with the Burnaby Board of Trade; and
- further educate the public as to the benefits that accrue to the local economy when citizens support Burnaby-based businesses.

In conversation with staff, the Burnaby Board of Trade has agreed to partner with the City in celebrating this theme, should it be approved by Council.

2.3 Suggested Activities for Local Government Awareness Week 2013

Based on the '*Support Burnaby Business*' theme, the following activities are proposed to recognize LGAW 2013 in Burnaby:

- City Proclamation: issue an official City proclamation recognizing 2013 May 19 – 25 as Local Government Awareness Week in Burnaby.
- Website and Social Media Features: highlight information on the www.burnaby.ca website about the City's investment in economic development, including vignettes regarding key economic achievements in Burnaby's history to focus attention on the diversity of Burnaby-based businesses. These vignettes would also be distributed through the City Facebook page and Twitter account.
- Newspaper Highlights: explore opportunities with the local newspapers to contribute to and/or collaborate on feature articles outlining the '*Support Burnaby Business*' theme, including the City's role in promoting economic development, supported by its partnership with the Burnaby Board of Trade, and as a way to highlight the full range of Burnaby-based businesses.

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- Board of Trade Display at City Hall: provide a public display of Board of Trade information and promotional materials in the public lobby of Burnaby City Hall and/or at the City Tourism Information Booth in Metropolis at Metrotown to showcase both Burnaby's existing economic strength and opportunities for future growth. Display materials could include general information on 'places to do business' in Burnaby and other information to help find Burnaby based businesses and services.

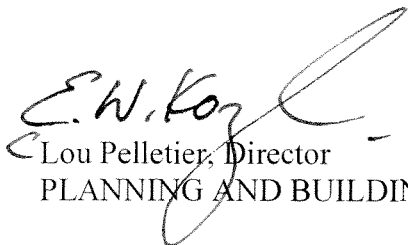
All of the suggested activities would be undertaken with existing staff and budget resources.

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.

The proposed 2013 theme of '*Support Burnaby Business*' would focus on increasing public awareness of the role(s) the City plays in promoting economic development and in promoting to the public the benefits that accrue to the local community through support for Burnaby-based businesses.

As such, this report recommends that Council approve the City's involvement in Local Government Awareness Week 2013 through four proposed activities, as outlined in *Section 2.3* of this report. It is further recommended that a copy of this report be forwarded to the Burnaby Board of Trade for information.


Lou Pelletier, Director
PLANNING AND BUILDING

RM:sla

cc: Deputy City Managers
Director Finance
Acting City Clerk