



Item .....  
Meeting ..... 2018 Apr 16

COUNCIL REPORT

**TO:** CITY MANAGER **DATE:** 2018 April 11  
**FROM:** DIRECTOR PLANNING AND BUILDING **FILE:** 2125 20  
*Reference: UBCM*  
**SUBJECT: LOCAL GOVERNMENT AWARENESS WEEK 2018**  
**PURPOSE:** To propose activities for Burnaby’s participation in Local Government Awareness Week 2018.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- 1. **THAT** Council approve the City’s involvement in Local Government Awareness Week 2018, as outlined in Section 3.2 of this report.
- 2. **THAT** a copy of this report be forwarded to the Sustainable City Advisory Committee for their information.

**REPORT**

**1.0 BACKGROUND**

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 BC<sup>1</sup>, the Local Government Management Association<sup>2</sup>, the Provincial Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, the BC School Trustees Association and the Public Works Association of BC<sup>3</sup>. Burnaby has participated since 2011.

<sup>1</sup> 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](http://www.civicinfo.bc.ca).  
<sup>2</sup> The Local Government Management Association works to promote professional management and leadership excellence in local government in BC: [www.lgma.ca](http://www.lgma.ca).  
<sup>3</sup> 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>.

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Over the past few years, the City of Burnaby has implemented several ongoing civic engagement and awareness initiatives. For example, City Hall stays open late on Thursdays in order to better serve the public. As well, staff and the Mayor's Office offer tours to the general public and elementary students to introduce them to City Hall and City functions.

Last year, LGAW took place from 2017 May 22 – 26. Activities centered on celebrating Burnaby's 125<sup>th</sup> birthday. These included:

- An official City proclamation recognizing Local Government Awareness Week in Burnaby;
- A 'celebration' themed colouring contest for Burnaby Grades 5, 6, and 7 students. The contest was promoted via the Burnaby School District. Approximately 100 student submissions were received. All entries were excellent in quality and the most impressive were featured via social media, on the City's website, and in a feature InfoBurnaby cover story (Summer 2017 issue). The winners were also invited to attend a Council meeting where their art work was officially recognized by the Mayor; and
- A refreshed 'Be Involved' portal on the City's website ([www.burnaby.ca/BeInvolved](http://www.burnaby.ca/BeInvolved)).

The purpose of this report is to propose activities for Burnaby's participation in LGAW 2018. The UBCM is encouraging municipalities to develop their own theme. Due to the meeting schedule for the Sustainable City Advisory Committee, this report is being advanced directly to Council with the concurrence of the Committee Chair.

## 2.0 POLICY

The *Burnaby Social Sustainability Strategy* supports the City's continued participation in Local Government Awareness Week. Two of the seven strategic priorities identified in the Strategy are 'Getting Involved' and 'Learning for Life'. Through the Strategy's development process, it became evident that Burnaby residents place great value on the many existing opportunities in Burnaby to be involved, aware and engaged in civic matters and to have access to opportunities for informal learning.

In addition, the proposed 2018 Local Government Awareness Week activities are aligned with the City of Burnaby's Corporate Strategic Plan by supporting the following goals and sub-goals of the Plan:

- An 'Connected Community',
  - 'Provide online access to core City services and information'.
- A 'Healthy Community',
  - 'Improve upon and develop programs and services that enable ongoing learning';
  - 'Encourage residents and businesses to give back to and invest in the community'.

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### 3.0 PROPOSED LOCAL GOVERNMENT AWARENESS WEEK 2018 IN BURNABY

Local Government Awareness Week provides an appropriate opportunity for the City to highlight its history, roles and functions and to encourage its citizens to become involved civically, socially and culturally. In 2018, LGAW dates will occur from May 21 – 25. This would be the eighth annual observance of LGAW in Burnaby.

#### 3.1 Proposed Theme

The proposed theme for Local Government Awareness Week 2018 is '*Your Voice Counts*'. This theme would seek to increase citizen awareness of the many avenues for Burnaby residents to get involved in their local government and community, and further educate residents as to their rights and opportunities surrounding voting and the election process.

#### 3.2 Suggested Activities for Local Government Awareness Week 2018

Based on the '*Your Voice Counts*' theme, the following activities are proposed to recognize LGAW in 2018:

- City Proclamation: the City would issue an official proclamation recognizing Local Government Awareness Week in Burnaby.
- Launch of Elections Information: The Elections Office would initiate the promotion and distribution of the 2018 local government election basic voter guide, including both a regular and 'pocket' sized version, to correspond with LGAW.
- 'Local Government 101 Workshop': it is proposed that staff work with the Burnaby Intercultural Planning Table (BIPT) to host an information workshop for new citizens on the mechanics and responsibilities of local government. The BIPT was formed in 2007 to help immigrant and refugee service providers share resources and identify ways to better meet the needs of newcomers. The City has been a member of the BIPT since its inception.

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

### 4.0 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, and pursue life-long learning. 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 and improve access to this information.

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The proposed 2018 theme of ‘Your Voice Counts’ seeks to increase citizen awareness of the many avenues for Burnaby residents to get involved in their local government and community, and further educate residents as to their rights and opportunities surrounding voting and the election process.

It is recommended that Council approve the City’s involvement in Local Government Awareness Week 2018 through three proposed activities, as outlined in Section 3.2 of this report. It is further recommended that a copy of this report be forwarded to the Sustainable City Advisory Committee for their information.

  
Lou Pelletier, Director  
PLANNING AND BUILDING

RM/sa

cc: Director Corporate Services  
Chief Librarian  
Chief Election Officer  
City Clerk

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