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**Date:** March 22, 2012

**To:** Area H Committee

**From:** Tanya Bettles, Environmental Coordinator, Economic Development & Planning Services

**Re:** Overview of the Integrated Community Planning (ICSP) Initiative, and Update on the Sumas Mountain Environmental Management Plan

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## **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this agenda item is to provide an overview of the Integrated Community Planning (ICSP) Initiative and present the work to date on the Sumas Mountain Environmental Management Plan (SMEMP), which is one component of the larger ICSP Initiative.

## **OVERVIEW OF THE INTEGRATED COMMUNITY PLANNING (ICSP) INITIATIVE**

The City of Abbotsford is committed to building a sustainable community, as outlined in the Charter of Sustainability, the Official Community Plan, and the Strategic Directions document. The City has recently contracted with Stantec to help develop an ICSP, which involves developing plans and strategies that guide a community towards 'sustainability', which is commonly defined as 'meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.' These plans and strategies are developed through community consultation and are 'integrated' or holistic in scope, in terms of containing initiatives and actions regarding economic, environmental, social, and fiscal sustainability.

The ICSP initiative will involve the creation of four specific deliverables:

- Community Sustainability Strategy
- Green Energy Plan;
- Green Economic Investment Study; and
- Green Community Plan (Sumas Mountain Environmental Management Plan).

### Community Sustainability Strategy

The Community Sustainability Strategy (CSS) will become Abbotsford's long-term (25+ years) vision and 'road map' for moving towards economic, environmental, social and fiscal sustainability. The CSS will update the City's Charter of Sustainability with a new sustainability commitment and identification of a series of 'future states' that define economic, environmental, social and fiscal sustainability for the community. Additionally, an Implementation Plan will be created that will include specific initiatives and actions for implementation by community stakeholders (businesses, developers, industry,

government agencies, community organizations, members of the public) and the City. This framework will also identify how existing City plans and strategies can, where necessary, be made consistent with the CSS content.

Public consultation options include:

- Charter of Sustainability: Online surveys (mid-April to mid-May)
- Charter of Sustainability: Public Open House (May 9)
- Implementation Plan: online surveys (mid-September to mid-October)
- Implementation Plan: Public Open House (tentatively October 11)

### Green Energy Plan

The Green Energy Plan will include specific policy aimed at reducing community energy use and greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs). Green Energy Plan outcomes will directly support the achievement of GHG reduction targets in the Official Community Plan (including a City-wide, per-capita target of 20% by 2025 and 45% by 2040). Additionally, community policies will be used to inform and support corporate initiatives to reduce corporate energy use and GHG emissions.

The Green Energy Plan will identify appropriate alternative energy opportunities and where they could be located within Abbotsford. Recommendations for new City policy supporting alternative energy development will also be included in the Plan.

Public consultation options include:

- Online surveys (mid-April to mid-May)
- Public Open House (tentatively September 26)

### Green Economic Investment Study

The Green Economic Investment Study, through examination of local, regional and global economic trends, will identify local investment opportunities for businesses that create/provide 'green' (i.e. efficient resource use, less pollution) products and/or services, along with policies supporting the 'greening' of local businesses and continued economic growth and diversification. The Study outcomes will directly support and inform the City's forthcoming Economic Development Strategy, as well as the Mayor's Task Force on Economic Prosperity.

### Green Community Plan (Sumas Mountain Environmental Management Plan)

To be discussed separately in the following pages.

### Public Consultation

These deliverables will be developed through extensive consultation with City Committees, community stakeholders (businesses, industry, government agencies and community organizations), City staff and the public. Consultations will consist of stakeholder workshops, public open houses, print and online surveys, and phone

interviews. Targeted consultations may also be undertaken through kiosks at community events and destinations, such as Arbor Day, Canada Day, the Abbotsford Airshow, trade shows, University of the Fraser Valley (UFV) and libraries. Advisory Groups were created to provide direct input into specific project deliverables. These Advisory Groups include a broad range of community stakeholders and sustainability experts from the private sector, government agencies and local institutions. The consultation process will be completed in the Fall of 2012. Completion of the CSS is winter 2013, and the other three deliverables is scheduled for Fall 2012.

## **SUMAS MOUNTAIN ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT PLAN UPDATE**

The Sumas Mountain Environmental Management Plan (SMEMP) will aim to balance future development with the protection of natural areas and ecosystems located within the Sumas Mountain area, through identifying areas that can be developed and areas that need to be preserved or managed carefully, thereby protecting valuable ecological resources and creating increased certainty for the development community.

Plan policies will directly inform revisions to the City's OCP, including the integration of the former Area H Official Community Plan (OCP) into the City's OCP. The SMEMP includes the following tasks/deliverables:

- Delineate a Green Infrastructure Network<sup>1</sup>
- Develop an environmental management areas (EMA) plan, with habitat management objectives for each EMA classification
- Summarize the ecological goods and services provided by Sumas Mountain
- Prepare an implementation plan for the City and its partners

To date, data has been compiled and analyzed, and research has been conducted on the ecosystem goods and services of Sumas Mountain. Maps showing this information were presented to the SMEMP Advisory Group<sup>2</sup> on February 24, 2012, at which time data gaps were discussed. A second AG meeting is scheduled for March 28, 2012, the purpose of which is to review the preliminary Green Infrastructure Network.

Over the next three months, City staff and Stantec will work on the above four tasks. Input will be sought from the Advisory Group, the Community Sustainability Steering Committee<sup>3</sup>, Council Committees, and participants of a targeted external stakeholder workshop. A draft report will be presented to Council in August. This draft report will be brought out to wider public consultation in September, including online surveys and a public open house (tentatively September 19). The final report will be presented to council in November.

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<sup>1</sup> Green Infrastructure Network = an interconnected network of natural systems that provide a diverse range of environmental, social, recreational, psychological, public health, and economic benefits

<sup>2</sup> The SMEMP Advisory Group is comprised of members from organizations/initiatives including the Abbotsford Mission Nature Club, Fraser Valley Conservancy, Bear Aware Network Fraser Valley, Community Futures South Fraser, local development community, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Ministry of Forest, Lands, and Natural Resource Operations, Metro Vancouver Regional District Parks, Ministry of Environment, Environmental Advisory Committee, City Industry Development Advisory Committee, and Area H Committee.

<sup>3</sup> The Community Sustainability Steering Committee is composed of the four City General Managers and Councilor Patricia Ross

### **Request for Area H Committee Input**

- Comments on the work to date.
- Suggestions for potential audiences/events for targeted presentations or displays.
- Suggestions for other individuals or organizations that should be put on a distribution list to receive information regarding the ICSP initiative (e.g. updates, event notification, etc.).

Please contact me if you have any questions or comments.

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