

September 29, 2009

File No.:SP-

To: South Pender Island Local Trust Committee

From: Robert Kojima
Island Planner
Local Planning Services

CC: David Marlor, RPM
Andrea Pickard, Island Planner

Re: Climate Change Mitigation

BACKGROUND:

Trust Council has identified Climate Change mitigation as strategic plan priority for several years. Trust Council endorsed the BC Climate Action Charter in 2007, which is a non-binding statement of commitment by local governments to take action on climate change. Charter signatories committed to develop strategies and take action to achieve three goals:

- Achieve carbon neutral operations by 2012
- Measure and report on community GHG emissions
- Create complete, compact, more energy efficient rural and urban communities

Bill 27 requires all local governments, including LTCs, to amend their OCPs to include targets for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in the area covered by the plan, and policies and actions of the local government proposed with respect to achieving those targets by May 31, 2010

At its most recent meeting, Trust Council recommended that all local trust committees make climate change mitigation a work program top priority. To support this, staff developed background information and a menu of potential policy options for LTCs.

The South Pender Island Local Trust Committee identified “Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation” as a future initiative on its projects list in April; however, it has not yet amended its work program to make targets and policies for the reduction of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions a top priority. The purpose of this report is to provide the LTC

with options and recommendations for initiating this project, including: targeting setting, potential OCP policy amendments, and community consultation.

PROJECT SCOPE AND TIMELINE: A proposed timeline was presented to Trust Council at the recent meeting which would achieve the required changes by May 2010 (this timeline is attached as Schedule A). In order to complete amendments within this timeline, the LTC will likely need to determine that more detailed or complex potential initiatives cannot be completed within the timeline; these should be identified in the OCP in a general way, with the provision that they will be considered when resources permit. As the project proceeds over the next several months, staff may recommend that the LTC schedule one or more special meetings, outside of the regular meeting schedule, to review the issues and options in more detail.

INVENTORIES: GHG emission inventories have been prepared for each local trust area. While there are limitations to the inventories, based on the availability of data and the small size of the populations, they do provide useful information on the key sources of GHG emissions in the Trust Area. In particular, they highlight that:

- transportation (vehicle emissions) are the primary source of emissions in the Trust Area
- emissions per capita in the Trust Area are higher than the provincial average per capita emissions.

Neither of these should be surprising given the low density settlement pattern, length of roads, lack of transportation alternatives, and the distances between most residences and services.

TARGET SETTING: Bill 27 requires that each Local Trust Committee (LTC) set greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reduction targets in their official community plan (OCP). At least one of the targets set by the LTC must be a measurable and numerical emissions reduction target, expressed as a percentage reduction or number of tonnes reduction in GHGs. The LTC essentially has two options:

1. Establish a target based on the available information on current emissions and an analysis of the effects that proposed policy changes would have on current emissions. This type of target would have to follow from any policy changes and would require some analysis of the anticipated effects of those policy changes, expectations concerning timing of changes, and assumptions about external changes beyond the LTC's control.
2. The second approach is to establish an overall "aspirational" target, and then state that the LTC will work to achieve that reduction through policy changes that fall within its area of jurisdiction. This option recognizes the importance of achieving reductions, despite lack of knowledge about current emissions and the overall relative effects of LTC policies or changes resulting from other effects.

Staff are recommending that the LTC consider the second option for setting a target. An aspirational target:

- Recognizes that while the inventories of current emissions are informative, there are concerns with the specific quantitative accuracy of the results for each LTA and the limitations inherent in the data sources.
- Allows the LTC to proceed with considering policy changes within the limited time available.
- Supports overall reductions from all sources and sectors, rather than narrowly focussing on changes that may be the result of LTC policy changes.

Specifically, the following target wording is suggested:

The Local Trust Committee supports the provincial target of a reduction of 33% in Greenhouse Gas emissions by 2020. Within the local trust area this reduction will be achieved by actions resulting from individual and community initiatives, the actions of other levels of government, technological changes, and changes to land use policies and regulations.

This supports the provincial target for the local trust area, and emphasizes that the achievement of meaningful reductions will only result from changes from all sectors.

OCP POLICIES: The LTC will need to consider amendments to its OCP to support reductions in GHG emissions. These policies can be specific and detailed, or can identify a topic for future review and deliberation. For example, a policy can state that an LTC will “consider implementation of development permit area designations and provisions for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and energy efficiency.” The actual development of the DPA provisions can occur as a future initiative; for the purpose of meeting the current deadline the fact that the future action is identified in the OCP is sufficient.

Organizationally, the most common, and the recommended, approach is to insert a new section into the OCP that would specifically address climate change; this would include the target, some objectives to achieve that target and the more specific policies and future actions. Other policies, including those related to adaptation can be inserted in this section subsequently. Climate change mitigation and adaption is a long term commitment and one consequence of creating a new OCP section is that it can be refined, revised and expanded upon over time, either as part of an overall OCP review or as a result of specific initiatives or amendments.

In order to address the significant number and range of potential policies and amendments, staff are suggesting the following approach:

1. Identify climate change mitigation as a work program top priority and direct staff to report back with more detailed options and recommendations.
2. Staff review the OCP and identify existing policies which support GHG emissions reduction efforts. These policies may need to be re-worded, cross-referenced or moved to a new climate change section of the OCP.

3. Third, staff identify potential new policies that are consistent with the goals, objectives and policies of the current OCP and which are relatively succinct. These are policies which could be inserted into the new section of the OCP without much additional elaboration, analysis or development of detailed criteria.
4. Finally, staff identify potential changes or new policies that would require amendments to the goals or objectives of the OCP, that are inconsistent with substantive existing policies in the current OCP, or which would require a significant level staff work to research, develop criteria, or which would be anticipated to entail significant community consultation, and thus would be unlikely to be achieved within the timeline. For these policy options, the LTC will be asked to consider the options and then make one of three decisions:
 - a. Amend the OCP to include the proposed changes as new policy.
 - b. Reject the potential change to the OCP.
 - c. Identify the proposed action or initiative in the OCP for consideration as a future initiative or land use change, either as a part of a future OCP or LUB review, or as a distinct future project.

If the LTC amends the work program to identify this as a priority, staff intend to report back to the LTC at an upcoming meeting with the various options outlined and with recommendations.

CONSULTATION: While some of the policy options may be fairly straight-forward and consistent with the current OCP and best practices, staff anticipate the LTC will want to undertake early and on-going community consultation as part of this initiative. The purpose of community involvement would not just be to obtain comments on identified potential policies, but to identify additional potential initiatives and actions, and to generate community engagement in this issue. Many of changes that can be anticipated to lead to GHG emission reductions would be outside of the control of the LTC and require initiatives of community groups and individuals to be achieved.

Staff are currently preparing a summary of options and recommendations for various community consultation mechanism; those will be included in the next staff report. In addition, several communications efforts are being initiated by Trust Area Services, including development of new section to the website and printed materials. Additional communication support can be developed based on the extent and type of community consultation decided upon by the LTC.

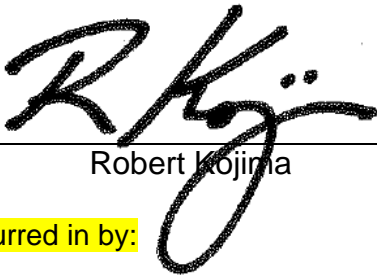
STAFF COMMENTS: this is an initial staff report for this project. As a first step, the LTC should amend its work program to identify this as a top priority. The completion of the project to develop a build-out map and community profile means that initiative can be removed from the work program, staff are recommending that it be replaced. Once this is done, the LTC can anticipate a more detailed report on the OCP policy options and consultation methods at the next meeting. The LTC can also at this point choose to support the proposed aspirational target as worded, or consider target setting in more

detail at subsequent meetings. The LTC should formally direct staff to work on the project and specifically to report back at the next meeting with a review of potential OCP policies and with options for community consultation.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. THAT the Work Program be amended to identify Greenhouse Gas Emission reduction targets, policies and actions be moved from the project list to a top priority item.
2. THAT staff be directed to report back to the LTC at the next regular meeting with options for GHG emission reduction policy amendments and with options for community consultation.

Prepared and Submitted by:



Robert Kojima

September 29, 2009

Date

Concurred in by:

David Marlor, MCIP
Regional Planning Manager

September 30, 2009

Date

SCHEDULE A: SUGGESTED TIMELINE

Sept 15 2009	Trust Council workshop on Bill 27 climate change requirements - DONE
Sept 16 2009	Regional Team Meetings focused on Bill 27 climate change requirements - DONE
Sept 16 2009	Trust Council RFD on Bill 27 climate change requirements - DONE
Sept-Oct 2009	LTC resolutions making Bill 27 OCP amendments a work program priority and directing Island Planners to report with options on OCP climate change policies appropriate for individual LTC
October 24 2009	Two all-islands community climate change events on Salt Spring Island – an opportunity to network with residents working on local climate change initiatives.
Oct-Dec 2009	Island Planners provide LTC with customized climate change policy options for OCP amendment.
Nov-Mar 2009	Public, agency, and First Nation consultation on OCP policy amendments to meet Bill 27 requirements.
Dec 2009 Trust Council	First LTC report-back on progress made towards meeting Bill 27 requirements.
Jan 2010 – May 2010	Bylaw process: information meetings, agency and First Nations referrals, readings, and public hearings.
Mar 2010 Trust Council	Second LTC report-back on progress made towards meeting Bill 27 requirements.
Mar 31, 2010	Budget cut-off. 2009/10 Budget allocation for public consultation on Bill 27 OCP amendments must be used by the end of the fiscal year.
May 31, 2010	Goal for submission of OCP amendments to Minister of Community and Rural Development for approval.
Jun 2010 Trust Council	Final LTC report-back on completion of Bill 27 requirements.