



GREEN COMMUNITIES UPDATE

101 Local Governments Adopt Climate Action Charters

One hundred and one local governments in BC have now signed or declared their intention to sign the BC Climate Action Charter. Lumby is the most recent signatory. Municipalities and regional districts representing three-quarters of the provincial population will now be covered by the Charter. A list of all current signatories appears in alphabetical order on page three of this release.

The Charter recognizes the need for action on climate change, the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and the important role that the Provincial Government and Local Governments can play in affecting change. The Charter is a statement of commitment by the parties towards common climate change action goals.

Local Governments who have signed the Charter are committing to developing strategies and taking action to achieve three goals: becoming carbon neutral in respect of their operations by 2012; measuring and reporting on their community's GHG emissions profile; and creating complete, compact, more energy efficient smaller and urban communities.

The Green Communities Committee established under the Charter will develop a common approach to determining carbon neutrality for the purposes of the Charter in the coming months. Local Governments need not implement their carbon neutral commitments until after the Green Communities Committee has completed this work.

**More information on the Charter
can be found at www.civicnet.bc.ca under:
"Featured Policy/Climate Action"**

**Local Governments interested in becoming a
signatory can contact Jared Wright
at the UBCM office - jwright@civicnet.bc.ca**

Green Communities Committee Up and Running

UBCM and the Provincial Government are also signatories to the Charter and committed to establishing a Joint Provincial-UBCM Green Communities Committee (GCC) and Green Communities Working Groups. The GCC and working groups have been asked to:

- identify a range of actions that can affect climate change;
- build local government capacity to plan and implement climate change initiatives;
- support local governments in taking actions on becoming carbon neutral in respect of their operations by 2012; and
- share information and explore additional opportunities to support climate change activities.

The GCC was established in December 2007 and three Green Communities Working Groups were struck in January 2008.

The four current members of the GCC are:

Dale Wall (Provincial Co-chair)
Alan Osborne (Province)
Gary MacIsaac (UBCM Co-chair)
Richard Taylor (UBCM)

The Committee has completed its terms of reference. It has begun substantive work including:

- reviewing the "green communities" proposed provincial legislation for 2008; and
- reviewing preliminary research on Community Gardens and Urban Forestry. The Committee intends to produce best practices guides on both topics in the near future.

The Committee was advised that the Ministry is finalizing a response to the UBCM Policy Paper #3 adopted at the Convention that responded to the Premier's invitation to identify legislative impediments to climate action.

Please make copies of this circular and distribute to Council/Board Members /Staff.

The GCC will meet again in February after the Throne Speech and Budget to consider the implications of those announcements for its work. Work will continue to intensify leading up to the 2008 UBCM Convention.

Three Green Communities Working Groups Struck

The Green Communities Committee has approved the terms of reference and is in the process of making appointments to three working groups. It is recognized that many local governments in BC are actively taking steps towards reducing their corporate greenhouse gas emissions, and GCC wishes all three working groups to build upon that wealth of experience.

The first working group has a technical focus - the **Carbon Neutral Working Group**. This working group will support the GCC in helping local governments to take action on becoming carbon neutral in respect of their operations by 2012. The working group will provide practical advice on:

- developing a common approach to determining carbon neutrality for the purposes of the BC Climate Action Charter, including defining the scope or breadth of local government operations that should be captured and a common measurement and reporting methodology; and
- identifying carbon neutral strategies and actions appropriate for the range of communities in BC, including identifying barriers to taking action, and proposing options to overcome these barriers.

In addition, the working group may be requested to provide advice on proposals developed or initiated by the GCC, the Province or UBCM, regarding greenhouse gas emission reductions related to local government operations, services and/or infrastructure or carbon neutral initiatives, offsets and/or registry programs.

There are also two practical working groups:

- the **Urban Strategies and Actions Working Group**; and
- the **Small Communities Strategies and Actions Working Group**.

The groups have been organized based on urban and small communities, rather than along topical lines (e.g. capacity building and topics like land use or transportation) because the topics mean such different things to urban and small communities. Where it makes sense, the two working groups may form joint sub-committees. The GCC will begin its work with practical ideas that communities can share now - thus building the capacity of communities and leading to an explanation of what a robust green community looks like.

The **Urban Strategies Working Group** will develop actions and strategies that could be employed by urban local governments in reducing community-wide greenhouse gas emissions. In this regard, a community-wide focus relates to emissions other than the local government's corporate operations (which will be the focus of the Carbon Neutral working group) but within the sphere of local government influence.

It is a widely held view that the most significant impact urban local governments can make in relation to reducing community-wide greenhouse gas emissions is to work toward a goal of complete, compact communities (e.g., communities that avoid sprawl and the extensive infrastructure needed to support it; communities that are oriented around public transit; and communities that meet the social, cultural and economic needs of their residents).

It is recognized that many urban local governments in BC are actively taking steps towards a vision of complete, compact communities and GCC wishes to build on that wealth of experience. Consequently, the working group will provide practical advice on:

- strategies and actions to move communities towards a goal of complete, compact communities, including identifying barriers to taking action and proposing options to overcome these barriers;
- developing greenhouse reduction targets and strategies applicable to urban jurisdictions;
- strategies and actions to support green development, infrastructure and energy; and
- other activities or strategies that may be employed by urban local governments in helping to reduce community-wide greenhouse gas emissions.

The **Small Communities Strategies and Actions Working Group** will develop actions and strategies that could be employed by smaller local governments in reducing community-wide greenhouse gas emissions. In this regard, like the Urban working group, this group will focus on emissions other than those from local government corporate operations, but still within the sphere of influence of local governments.

The working group will provide practical advice on strategies and actions that may be employed by smaller local governments in helping to reduce their community wide greenhouse gas emissions, including identifying barriers to taking action and proposing options to overcome these barriers.

BC CLIMATE ACTION CHARTER

Signatory Local Governments

1. 100 Mile House
2. Abbotsford
3. Alert Bay
4. Bowen Island
5. Cache Creek
6. Campbell River
7. Cariboo Regional District
8. Castlegar
9. Central Coast RD
10. Central Kootenay RD
11. Central Okanagan RD
12. Central Saanich
13. Chetwynd
14. Chilliwack
15. Comox Strathcona RD
16. Coquitlam
17. Courtenay
18. Cowichan Valley RD
19. Creston
20. Dawson Creek
21. Delta
22. Duncan
23. East Kootenay RD
24. Enderby
25. Fernie
26. Fort St. John
27. Fraser Valley RD
28. Fraser Fort George RD
29. Fruitvale
30. Gibsons
31. Golden
32. Grand Forks
33. Greenwood
34. Harrison Hot Springs
35. Hudson's Hope
36. Islands Trust
37. Kamloops
38. Kaslo
39. Kelowna
40. Keremeos
41. Kimberly
42. Ladysmith
43. Lake Country
44. Lake Cowichan
45. Langford
46. Langley, Township
47. Lantzville
48. Logan Lake
49. Lumby
50. Merritt
51. Metro Vancouver
52. Mission
53. Nakusp
54. Nanaimo City
55. Nelson
56. New Denver
57. North Cowichan
58. North Saanich
59. North Vancouver City
60. North Vancouver District
61. Oak Bay
62. Okanagan-Similkameen RD
63. Peace River RD
64. Peachland
65. Penticton
66. Pitt Meadows
67. Port Clements
68. Port Moody
69. Pouce Coupe
70. Powell River City
71. Powell River RD
72. Prince George
73. Prince Rupert
74. Qualicum Beach
75. Queen Charlotte
76. Quesnel
77. Saanich
78. Sayward
79. Sidney
80. Skeena Queen Charlotte RD
81. Spallumcheen
82. Squamish
83. Squamish Lillooet RD
84. Sunshine Coast RD
85. Surrey
86. Tahsis
87. Taylor
88. Telkwa
89. Thompson Nicola RD
90. Trail
91. Ucluelet
92. Valemount
93. Vancouver
94. Vanderhoof
95. Vernon
96. Victoria
97. View Royal
98. West Vancouver
99. Whistler
100. White Rock
101. Williams Lake