

Climate Summit affirmation of Halton Hills sustainability goals

By: Vivien Fleisher

Mayor Rick Bonnette circulated a memo to staff recently elaborating on the “Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy” summit he attended in Chicago from December 4 to 6. Held in the Windy City in one of three countries that withdrew from the Paris Accord a year ago—along with Syria and Nicaragua—

in the same calendar year that saw the U.S. grapple with one extreme weather event after another coast to coast, Bonnette shared a great story of the Mayor of Pittsburgh’s incredulous response to President Trump’s vow to bring back coal to an area that had moved on to renewables.

At council Monday night, he shared another anecdote from the summit, where the

Mayor of Knoxville Tennessee did an impromptu poll to see how many there had campaigned on climate change. No one put their hand up. Bonnette said bluntly that the topic of climate change is “not a vote grabber” but that it always comes down to one thing: money. It’s the dollars, or more specifically, the savings that make people sit up and listen. Right now, for that reason, it’s at the municipal level where real change is taking place.

To Mayor Bonnette’s credit, the small municipi-

ality of Halton Hills is punching above its weight and getting recognized for it. He was invited to attend the summit, rubbing elbows with the Mayor of Paris, France, who is a member of the C40 group, comprised of the forty largest cities in the world. But Bonnette will be the first to tell anyone that resting on our laurels is not an option, given the need to move the agenda forward.

Citing the recent LED streetlight conversion as a shining example, Bonnette says when Hydro CEO

Art Skidmore presented that cheque for \$462,000 in savings to the town, it provided tangible proof of the value of such initiatives that the average tax payer could understand. This example alone put Halton Hills ahead of every municipality he dealt with at sessions he attended in Chicago. He also cited the geothermal implemented at the libraries in the town. He concluded that Vancouver Mayor Gregor Robertson has become the de facto poster child for advances in climate change at the muni-

cipal level, referenced more than once by Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel.

Bonnette said it was President Obama who acknowledged that municipalities that have become the leaders in this fight. In his final remarks, using a hockey analogy, he pointed out that “at the risk of ragging the puck...Moody’s gives the credit ratings to municipalities. If they don’t take it seriously, they could risk losing their triple-A credit rating.” With only three mayors from Canada in attendance, taxpayers here can take that worry off the list.



Halton Hills Transit Service Strategy

NOTICE OF STUDY COMMENCEMENT

The Town of Halton Hills is commencing a study to develop a transit service strategy in Halton Hills. The study will evaluate service alternatives and explore opportunities for a made-in-Halton Hills transit solution to meet the current and future mobility needs of the community. The Town has retained WSP Canada Group Ltd. to develop the Transit Service Strategy which will be completed in 2019.

Over the next 18 months, consultation activities will be used to engage the public and businesses to identify the issues, opportunities, and challenges for developing a transit service strategy for the community. Through the consultation process, residents and businesses will help to identify solutions that will support the development of a strategy that aligns with the Town of Halton Hills Strategic Action Plan and address the needs of the community.

HOW CAN YOU BE INVOLVED?

We need your help to shape the future of transit in Halton Hills. There are a number of ways you can get involved!



Find out more about the study and provide your input using the project website: <http://haltonhills.ca/TransportationStrategy>



Attend the upcoming public information session on February 21, 2018 to meet and speak with members of the team.



Contact one of the study team members and provide your input and ideas via email or telephone.

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Contracts awarded for Halton Hills Electronic Agenda Management

By: Vivien Fleisher

In a report to council on January 2, Director of Legislative services Suzanne Jones presented Mayor and council with a proposal to manage documents electronically as well as implementing web streaming. Further, purchase requests for software totalling \$64,225 plus tax, \$38,113 plus tax to cover the annual fees for second and third year renewals, \$94,222 plus tax for Video Capture and Encoding Services, and \$10,000 for closed captioning services—already approved in the annual operating budget. Funding for software would come from the already-approved “Electronic Document Management” project.

All this furthers the Town’s goal to become paperless, and was started in January 2017 with the installation of enhanced audio/visual equipment in council chambers. Requests for proposals went out October 2017. eSCRIBE was chosen from eight bids to provide software, having succeeded on the strength of their ranking and prior experience with several municipalities in Ontario. MacLean Media Systems was selected to provide hardware based on their success providing other related services in the past at the town.

Aside from the bene-

fits of not wasting paper, Councillor Albano noted that documents can be accessed “anytime, anywhere” so staff won’t have to wait on physical delivery of agendas, for even greater environmental benefits. He asked if the technology was in place to support the software, to which Jones replied yes, and that the software is very intuitive, while annual maintenance fees will support all soft and hardware. Regarding security and breaches around documents, Jones said several protocols were in place, while assuring council that storage is in a secure safe location at every level of operations.

Councillor Kentner spoke for the less tech-savvy by asking plainly and to much laughter, “When we get all this wonderful equipment, and go wireless, will there be a little yellow sheet to show how to turn it on?” Jones assured him that adequate and thorough training would take place. Councillor Somerville said he was happy it would be the last term of council to use paper. Councillor Inglis congratulated staff for “getting us to this point”, and that at the net cost of \$17,000—cost of system less the annual amount saved not using paper—the eSCRIBE software was a bargain, especially when he saw what you can do with so much less clutter.

If you require this information in an alternate format please contact the Town of Halton Hills representative noted above.