

District of Peachland Cools Off

Peachland is taking action to meet their carbon neutral commitments and discovering they would be getting much more in the process. Once the District embarked on a comprehensive energy assessment to determine their baseline GHG outputs they saw many opportunities to reduce energy costs.

“Although we are doing noble things to meet the GHG reduction targets, we may be really helping in our life-cycle costing in our energy savings” – says Dave Smith, Director of Planning and Development Services.

An energy assessment completed for 2008 and an energy management system are key components within the forthcoming District of Peachland’s Sustainable Action Plan (SAP). Fostering action and implementation in parallel to SAP development ensures the District is moving forward towards GHG reduction now.

Government Operations



Insulated water pipes, an example of low lying fruit.

The District of Peachland was one of the first communities to sign the Climate Action Charter. Their first question was, “What now?”

They started by hiring an energy analyst to do a complete energy audit in March of 2009. The consultant determined total energy usage at the corporate level. “We’ve got a handle on every kind of energy used by the municipality,” explains Smith. The findings have highlighted opportunities for energy and GHG reduction.

Peachland is currently designing a custom energy management system that will take into account several factors such as, how to adjust energy use, waste reduction, and change behaviours.

The strategy is still unfolding. By mid-2010 the district anticipates further action to help reduce costs while also reducing GHG emissions.

Paul Dupuis, a planning technician, is completing the Simon Fraser University sustainable development certificate program in order to bring the latest research to Peachland’s planning process and to aid in the development of the District’s Sustainability Action Plan (SAP).

“We are moving quickly to address the most basic sustainability objectives.” Dupuis explained. “The District is not waiting for the Plan to be complete to take action we are moving in parallel to the development of the SAP by ‘picking the low lying fruit’. Many retrofits to date have been inexpensive while the cost benefits should be substantial.”

They will continue to monitor the difference between the 2008 baseline energy assessment to the outputs in 2009.

The District drafted a contract with UBC Okanagan to do a complete review of bylaws. This comprehensive review is finding gaps that could potentially address energy management and GHG reduction.

Community-wide

They are also undergoing an analysis for potentially installing district heating for several downtown public buildings; a curling rink, community centre, seniors housing, and a now-closed primary school. The District is currently in discussion with Terasen gas regarding doing a feasibility study that will identify whether such a project should move forward. A solar expert has reviewed the community centre. Solar hot water heating system may be part of the mix if cost estimates are favourable.

Council has created a focus on the downtown core, which hasn’t changed much in the last 20 years. The UBC Centre for sustainability will conduct a three-phase design Charrette to gather community visions for how downtown should take shape around a strong sustainability component.



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The District will also be engaging the community to develop a 'Community Wide Vision of Sustainability'. It has become clear to the District that they need to engage developers around the benefits of going beyond capital costing model and using a life cycle model which ultimately is more cost efficient.

Policies & Programs

In April 2008, there was a first generation review of the [Official Community Plan \(OCP\)](#) "We thought our OCP was relatively sound but there were key policy areas that weren't addressed" says Smith. Those areas were affordable housing, sustainability, wildfire interface protection and fine-tuning of the development permit areas. Sustainability was a key area that was updated. The new statements as found on Page 29 of the OCP include:

Section 6.4 Policies

The District of Peachland will:

1. Consider and assess the potential and value of green building design when it is time to build new civic buildings.
2. Encourage the Planning and Development Services Department to advocate for green building design and implementation.
3. Through the Planning and Development Services Department create a sustainability checklist that will be used to assess new developments.
4. Create guidelines for xeriscape landscaping
5. Encourage the development of pedestrian and cycling networks.
6. Continue to implement universal water metering.
7. Work with the Regional District as appropriate to support the Air Quality Management Plan.
8. Implement the Water Master Plan.
9. Implement the Drought Management Plan
10. Implement other sustainable development initiatives as considered appropriate.

Peachland's OCP can be downloaded from www.peachland.ca/cms.asp?wpID=60

Implementation



Opportunity for weather stripping to minimize heat loss.

Council has been supportive of the energy assessment project. And the District has been lucky to work with a highly skilled local consultant.

The District is excited to see implementation at the corporate level of some substantial changes. There will be a custom energy management system in place as well as the full SAP in 2011.

"This is not just a nice study that we stick on the shelf but we will keep it going and have it implemented as time goes on." says Smith, "we're trying to inject a lot of the best practices that our out there to save energy while showing how this can be achieved at the local level, but it's going to amount to a lot more discipline and behavioural changes on our part ."