

## **COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – JUNE 7, 2004**

### **VAUGHAN ENVIRONMENTAL TASK FORCE & TORONTO AND REGION 2004 INTER-GOVERNMENTAL DECLARATION ON CLEAN AIR**

#### **Recommendation**

The Vaughan Environmental Task Force recommends:

1. That this report be received;
2. That the Toronto and Region 2004 Intergovernmental Declaration on Clean Air be endorsed by Council;
3. That the Chair or their designate (Vice Chair) of the Vaughan Environmental Task Force be appointed the City's representative at the signing of the Declaration at Smog Summit V on June 21, 2004 and
4. That Economic & Technology Development Department (ETDD) staff be directed to work with the Human Resources Department to draft a job description and post for an Environmental Coordinator.

#### **Purpose**

To update Council on the progress of the Task Force and to seek Council's endorsement of the Toronto and Region 2004 Intergovernmental Declaration on Clean Air.

#### **Background**

In 2003, Council approved the formation of a Vaughan Environmental Task Force to guide the City in its environmental initiatives. The first meeting of the Task Force was held on April 15, 2004. The Task Force reviewed the draft terms of reference and discussed funding solutions for the Environmental Coordinator position and its associated program costs. With the anticipated 2004 budget shortfalls, it was suggested that Hydro Vaughan Distribution Inc. (HVDI) and/or other organizations be approached to fund some of the startup cost. Notwithstanding the future amalgamation of the hydro utilities in Markham, Vaughan and Richmond Hill, there may be advantages to partnership, especially for environmental purposes. Another suggestion was to explore the model employed by the University of British Columbia's Sustainability Office whereby funding is derived from costs savings achieved through energy conservation.

The Task Force identified two initiatives: anti-littering and anti-idling programs as starting points for action. There was discussion about the challenges faced by these programs, namely the need for public awareness and the ability to enforce any bylaw infractions. Staff was asked to report on the status of these programs and suggest possible future directions.

On May 18, 2004 the Task Force held its second meeting. It was confirmed at that meeting that Budget Committee would be recommending that the Environmental Program be approved, including the hiring of the Environmental Coordinator. HVDI's Board of Directors has also approved funding of the partnership for 2004 only, pending the approval of the City's operating budget.

#### **Smog Summit V & the Toronto and Region 2004 Intergovernmental Declaration on Clean Air**

The City of Vaughan has not participated in any of the past Smog Summits. The Task Force felt that it was imperative that Vaughan is represented in this year's proceedings. Smog Summit V is scheduled for June 21, 2004 at the Toronto Metro Hall. Speeches and political proceedings will occur in the morning, and the public events will take place in the afternoon.

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May 12, 2004*

Smog Summit V's format has been revised from previous years. Municipalities and regions will issue and sign a joint declaration, instead of individual declarations. The attached draft is this year's Declaration. Individual municipality wishing to make announcements may do so using a press release. The Task Force will determine the programs to be highlighted in Vaughan's release.

### **Relationship to Vaughan Vision 2007**

The Environmental Program is consistent with Vaughan Vision 2007 as it supports the goal of serving citizens by safeguarding the environment. Council will be approving the necessary resources as part of the ETDD's 2004 Operating Budget on May 25, 2004.

### **Conclusion**

The Environmental Program is desirable and indeed, necessary to the long-term sustainability of the city. In 2004, the role of the Task Force will be to guide the City in implementing those immediate and low expenditure environmental initiatives that are related to the operation of the municipality and its facilities. In addition, the Task Force will complete an inventory of the City's environmental initiatives for inclusion on the Clean Air Online website in the Fall of 2004.

The Chair of the Vaughan Environmental Task Force requests Council's endorsement of the Toronto and Region 2004 Intergovernmental Declaration on Clean Air and appoints the Chair or their designate as the City's representative at Smog Summit V.

### **Attachments**

1. Draft - Toronto and Region 2004 Intergovernmental Declarations on Clean Air

### **Report prepared by:**

Shirley Kam, Supervisor/Senior Economic Developer  
Frank Miele, Commissioner of Economic/Technology Development and Communications

Respectfully submitted,

Joyce Frustaglio  
Chair, Vaughan Environmental Task Force

Draft for discussion

## TORONTO AND REGION 2004 INTER-GOVERNMENTAL DECLARATION ON CLEAN AIR

### PREAMBLE

**WHEREAS** representatives of the City of Toronto, the Government of Ontario, and the Government of Canada, out of concern for the risks that air pollution poses to public health and the local economy, gathered in Toronto on June 21, 2000 and together with representatives of municipal governments in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA), gathered again on the occasion of the Toronto Smog Summits in 2001, 2002 and 2003 to sign **Inter-governmental Declarations on Clean Air**;

**AND WHEREAS** the GTA Clean Air Council has been working to follow-up on key issues raised at previous Summits, to convene ongoing annual Summits, to explore opportunities for joint initiatives between annual Summits, and to liaise with other municipalities across Canada to share best practices information on smog reduction;

**AND WHEREAS** annual Smog Summits are a part of the ongoing efforts of our respective governments to address the air pollution problem;

**AND WHEREAS** progress to date on the path toward cleaner air, in the form of individual and joint announcements made by GTA member governments at previous Smog Summits, is recorded in the GTA Clean Air Council's publication entitled *Governments' Action on Clean Air in the GTA*;

**AND WHEREAS** this Smog Summit marks the 5<sup>th</sup> annual Smog Summit, with much having been accomplished, and much remaining to be done;

**AND WHEREAS** we, the representatives of the City of Toronto, local and regional municipal governments in the GTA, the Government of Ontario, and the Government of Canada, have gathered in Toronto on June 21, 2004 on the occasion of the fifth Smog Summit;

**THANKING** Enbridge Gas Distribution Inc., Toronto Hydro, the Government of Ontario, the Government of Canada, the Toronto Atmospheric Fund, and the City of Toronto for providing financial support for the Summit; and

**THANKING** the member jurisdictions of the GTA Clean Air Council for their support and assistance in developing the Toronto and Region 2004 Inter-governmental Declaration on Clean Air, thanking the corporations, non-governmental organizations and members of the general public who assisted in planning the Summit, and thanking the Clean Air Partnership and the City of Toronto for organizing the Summit,

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May 12, 2004*

## **WE DO HEREBY DECLARE:**

### **ARTICLE 1 – STATEMENT OF COMMON UNDERSTANDING**

- 1.1 Scientists and physicians have linked air pollution to premature deaths, illnesses and hospitalization each year in major Canadian cities including the GTA. Even a small increase in air pollution increases health impacts, particularly to those who are sensitive to air pollution. Air pollution-related illnesses threaten the local economy as well as our well-being.
- 1.2 Smog and climate change are two atmospheric problems sharing common sources. Fossil-fuel combustion is a key contributor to air pollution, producing smog precursors and greenhouse gas emissions.
- 1.3 Actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions are often associated with reductions of other atmospheric emissions that contribute to smog and its associated health, economic and ecosystem effects. Equally, a key co-benefit of reducing smog precursors is to reduce some greenhouse gas emissions.
- 1.4 A number of sources are responsible for a large proportion of the emissions of major air pollutants in the GTA. These sources also contribute to emissions of carcinogens and greenhouse gases. The major air pollutants include nitrogen oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>), sulphur oxides (SO<sub>x</sub>), volatile organic compounds (VOCs), inhalable particulate matter (PM<sub>10</sub>), respirable particulate matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>) and carbon monoxide (CO). The primary sources of these pollutants are:
  - industrial activity,
  - electric power generation,
  - on-road and off-road use of diesel fuel and gasoline,
  - residential fuel and fuel wood combustion, and
  - surface coating and solvent applications.
- 1.5 Ground level ozone is a principal constituent of smog. It is formed via reactions of precursor gases, including nitrogen oxides and volatile organic compounds, in the presence of solar radiation and ambient heat. Ground-level ozone can adversely affect people's health, even at low levels. It also has detrimental effects on plants and ecosystems. Ozone can irritate lung passages and cause inflammation. Symptoms include wheezing, coughing and breathing difficulties during exercise or outdoor activities. People with respiratory problems are most vulnerable, but even healthy people who are active outdoors can be affected when ozone levels are high. Even at very low levels, ground-level ozone triggers a variety of health problems including aggravated asthma, reduced lung capacity and worsening of symptoms from respiratory illnesses like pneumonia and bronchitis.
- 1.6 Particulate matter (PM) may be released directly into the air from a variety of sources, or indirectly formed from precursors including nitrogen oxides, sulphur dioxide, ammonia

and volatile organic compounds and it is a primary component of smog. The finer the particle, the greater the threat it poses to human health because it can be inhaled deeper into the lungs. Short-term exposure to PM at the levels typically found in urban areas in North America is associated with a variety of adverse health effects. PM can irritate the eyes, nose and throat and cause coughing, breathing difficulties, reduced lung function and an increased use of asthma medication. More importantly, exposure to PM is also associated with an increase in the number of emergency department visits, an increase in hospitalizations of people with cardiac and respiratory disease, and premature mortality. Some studies suggest that long-term exposure to PM can increase risk of death from lung cancer.

- 1.7 Addressing key sources of major air pollutants requires collaboration of all levels of government.
- 1.8 The air quality index is used to inform the public of current and forecasted air quality conditions, allowing them to take appropriate action to protect their health, and to reduce emissions resulting from their own activities. Smog alerts are used to make people aware of periods of poor air quality when the health risk is increased. Because the number of smog alerts per year depends very heavily on weather patterns, the number of smog days alone does not tell us whether our air is getting “better” or “worse” over time.
- 1.9 Compact urban form, combined with pedestrian and transit-friendly design, fosters opportunities to reduce air pollution through the shift from automobiles to alternate forms of transportation like walking, cycling and transit, thereby creating the potential to reduce emissions from single-occupancy vehicles.

## **ARTICLE 2 – SIGNATORIES TO THE 2004 INTER-GOVERNMENTAL DECLARATION ON CLEAN AIR**

**Town of Ajax  
City of Brampton  
City of Burlington  
Town of Caledon  
Government of Canada  
Municipality of Clarington  
Durham Region  
Regional Municipality of Halton  
Town of Halton Hills  
Township of King  
Town of Markham  
City of Mississauga  
Town of Newmarket  
Town of Oakville  
Government of Ontario  
City of Oshawa**

**Region of Peel  
City of Pickering  
Town of Richmond Hill  
City of Toronto  
City of Vaughan  
Town of Whitby  
Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville  
Region of York**

### **ARTICLE 3 – Call for GTA Clean Air Council Action**

In order to reduce air pollution in the GTA airshed, the GTA Clean Air Council has identified needed research, studies, workshops and actions to reduce air pollution in the GTA airshed and, where appropriate, will initiate the following joint actions:

- 3.1 Further engage all four levels of government operational in the GTA and, on a case-by-case basis, involve other departments of the Government of Canada and ministries of the Government of Ontario to bring their multi-functional expertise and advice to the work program of the GTA-CAC.
- 3.2 Seek out more diverse partners with whom to dialogue, promote, and deliver air quality activities.
- 3.3 Identify opportunities in member organizations to implement energy retrofit measures to improve the energy efficiency of buildings and operation of facilities within their jurisdiction.
- 3.4 Evaluate the effectiveness of municipal emission reduction measures, with a view to sharing and encouraging best practices and developing a model Clean Air Plan for smog and greenhouse gas emission reductions.
- 3.5 Explore opportunities to share data for GTA-wide air quality modelling and examine the potential to improve estimates of public health impacts.
- 3.6 Support reductions in smog and greenhouse gas emissions through reduced energy demand and by promoting the development and use of supplies of green power from solar, wind, small scale hydro and district energy systems from diverse power producers including power co-ops, municipal utilities, district energy companies and other low-environmental impact energy producers.
- 3.7 Explore and promote the benefits of developing a consistent approach to exceeding building performance for new construction projects by GTA Clean Air Council members' by a minimum of 25 per cent better than the current Model National Energy Code For Buildings. Study the energy and greenhouse gas reduction benefits of, and strategies for, extending the increased minimum standard to all new construction through the Ontario Building Code.
- 3.8 Explore and promote the benefits of adopting an ENERGY STAR® corporate procurement policy by GTA-CAC members, which would require that procurement of new computer technology, appliances and other applicable office and operations equipment be ENERGY STAR certified.
- 3.9 Further study the most effective methods to implement urban heat island mitigation strategies in the GTA which can lessen extreme summer temperatures, reduce the demand for cooling energy and emissions of harmful pollutants that contribute to smog and climate change.

- 3.10 Explore and assess options for developing corporate green fleets transition planning and implementation strategies.
- 3.11 Promote the benefits of trip reduction strategies, more energy efficient commuter options and the reduction of single-occupancy vehicle trips, through workshops at workplaces in government and business organizations.
- 3.12 Explore opportunities to support and coordinate with the GTA-wide Urban Transportation Showcase pilot projects.
- 3.13 Develop model anti-idling practices and policies for GTA-CAC member fleets and research specific requirements for identified priority areas such as schools, public buildings, hospitals and transit stations.
- 3.14 Support members and community organizations throughout the GTA to raise awareness about the benefits of reducing unnecessary engine idling and conduct idle-free campaigns.
- 3.15 Promote reductions in smog and greenhouse gas emissions by increasing public access to information on energy efficiency and energy conservation through activities such as 20/20 The Way to Clean Air, the Clean Air Online website and the Clean Air Consumer Guide, which are supported by Canada's Climate Change Plan and the One Tonne Challenge.
- 3.16 Continue the development of, and launch, the Clean Air Online Web site (CAOL) a Web-based clearinghouse of public information materials to identify, summarize, review and disseminate recent and emerging research on smog, air quality, climate change and the related health and environmental impacts; while providing links to the Web sites of the GTA-CAC and its members as well as other environmental organizations working on clean air and climate change issues.
- 3.17 Expand outreach, coordination and facilitation of public awareness and involvement in 20/20 The Way to Clean Air throughout the GTA in schools, workplaces and at community events, where possible.
- 3.18 Co-ordinate activities for the next Smog Summit in June 2005 with Clean Air Day, which is celebrated by groups across the country, as a means to raise awareness of clean air activities conducted by governments in the GTA.