

2009 Energy and Climate Action Awards – Leadership in Action

The Town of Gibsons has won the 2009 Energy & Climate Action Award in the Community Planning and Development category for development of the Upper Gibsons Neighbourhood Plan. The centerpiece of this neighbourhood plan is the new Upper Gibsons Geo-exchange District Energy Utility. The first of its kind in North America, this system, which will be owned and operated by the municipality, will provide renewable earth energy heating to all new buildings in Upper Gibsons, reducing GHG emissions from heating and hot water by an astonishing 96% (1,450 tonnes). This innovative project will result in energy cost savings of \$350,000 annually and about 1/3 of that will be returned to residents as energy cost savings.

The District of Lake Country has won the award in the Corporate Operations category for the Lake Country Hydroelectric Generating Station, a low impact micro-hydro project that harnessed the power of the existing high elevation water supply system to produce clean, green energy. The municipally owned and operated hydro project, which is the first of this type to sell power back to BC Hydro, will produce approximately 3900 Megawatt-hours of emission-free, renewable electricity per year, enough to power roughly 400 homes.

The awards were presented at the Union of B.C. Municipalities Convention by John Yap, Minister of State for Climate Action. “These communities are showing how local governments can be creative in building energy efficient and resilient communities,” said Yap.

An Honourable Mentions was awarded to the City of Prince George in the Community Planning and Development category. The City of Prince George has implemented a broad spectrum of innovative initiatives demonstrating city-wide dedication and commitment to reducing greenhouse gases, including programs for small and medium sized business, pilot programs for energy efficiency for both new and existing buildings, and several transit planning programs, including “Free Fare for Clean Air,” a program that provides free transit to the community on air quality advisory days. The “Free Fare” program is the first of its type in Canada.

An Honourable Mention was awarded to the Corporation of Delta for its Climate Change Initiative, a comprehensive, progressive and dynamic climate action strategy. This initiative set a goal of reducing corporate greenhouse gas reductions to 20% below 2006 levels by 2015. The plan is updated every two years. Tracking and reporting is integrated into the process and energy management is part of the Corporation’s broader business planning and casing processes. Implementation of the plan is underway and organizational structures, specifically the Interdepartmental Climate Change Working Group and the Office of Climate Action and Environment, have been established to move implementation forward. The Corporation has also installed a solar hot water system for Municipal Hall and this is the first installation of this kind the Lower Mainland.

The awards are organized annually by the Community Energy Association in partnership with the Province of British Columbia, Union of British Columbia Municipalities and BC Hydro. A record number of outstanding entries were received this year and we would like to extend our congratulations to all applicants in recognition of their significant efforts. As Richard White,

Co-Chair, Community Energy Association and Director of Community Development, City of North Vancouver noted: "The awards celebrate leadership of local governments taking action on climate change and energy. This year's applicants and winners have all demonstrated that energy planning, energy efficiency and renewable energy are possible no matter where you live in the province," said Richard White,

2009 Energy and Climate Action Award Applicants

Corporate Operations

City of Abbotsford, for the joint Abbotsford Mission Environmental System (JAMES) Wastewater Treatment Plant

Capital Regional District, for their green roof/living wall retrofit project

City of Colwood, for their neighbourhood Zero Emission Vehicles bylaw and other transportation initiatives

City of Coquitlam, for the Poirier Recreation Complex District Energy

City of Dawson Creek, for their On the Path to Carbon Neutral corporate plan

Corporation of Delta, for Delta's Climate Change Initiative (awarded Corporate Operations Honourable Mention, 2009)

The District of Lake Country, for the Lake Country Hydroelectric Generating Station (Winner of Corporate Operations Energy and Climate Action Award, 2009)

City of Richmond, for their comprehensive Energy Management Plan

District of Saanich, for a wide variety of innovative corporate initiatives

Resort Municipality of Whistler, for the Passive House Whistler demonstration project

Community Planning and Development

Village of Burns Lake, for actions taken to implement their Community Energy Plan

City of Colwood, for the Mayor's Task Force on Energy and Economic Growth, Colwood Community Place, and other community initiatives

Town of Gibsons, for the Upper Gibsons Neighbourhood Plan and Upper Gibsons Geo-exchange District Energy Utility (Winner of Community Planning and Development Energy and Climate Action Award, 2009)

City of North Vancouver, for the 100 Year Sustainability Vision and Concept Plan jointly completed with the District of North Vancouver

City of Port Moody, for the Suter Brook Village mixed use development

District of Sparwood, for the Community Sustainability Plan and implementation of LED streetlights