



DISTRICT OF SAANICH
UBCM EXCELLENCE AWARDS SUBMISSION REPORT
“Municipal Carbon Neutral Reserve Fund”

1.0 Introduction

“Climate change is a monumental challenge that means we have to think beyond the present and to imagine and plan for the type of future that we want the next generation of British Columbians to inherit.” - Gordon Campbell, Premier, Province of British Columbia

Since our first Energy Conservation Policy was adopted by council in 1985, the District of Saanich has solidified its reputation as a leader in energy conservation and climate change initiatives. This was further enhanced in September 2007 when Saanich Council approved the Carbon Neutral Plan, committing the municipality to being a carbon neutral organization in 2008. The plan contained two key strategies:

a) Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Reductions

Reduce corporate GHG emissions by implementing building, fleet and other operational efficiencies, aiming for a 10% reduction by 2010; and



b) Establishment of a Municipal Carbon-Neutral Reserve Fund

To ensure that carbon offset funds stay within the municipality, a municipal carbon-neutral reserve fund was established that would offset the annual GHG emissions resulting from all municipal (corporate) operations.

The concept of the Fund arose prior to the District’s involvement in and support of the “British Columbia Climate Action Charter” which contains strategies to achieve the following goals: being carbon neutral in respect of municipal operations by 2008; measuring and reporting on Saanich’s operational and community-wide Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions profile; and creating complete, compact, more energy efficient communities.

The District of Saanich is in a significant position within the metropolitan area and traditionally has been the gateway to the downtown core of Victoria. The population of Saanich was

estimated at 113,529 in 2007, the largest municipality in the Capital Regional District (CRD). Further information on Saanich and our climate change initiatives can be found at www.Saanich.ca.

2.0 Principles of the Fund

The Carbon-Neutral Reserve Fund was designed to be used only for new GHG-reducing initiatives or projects within Saanich, such as solar hot water, geo-exchange, photo-voltaic systems or other forms of electrical generation, fleet conversion, transportation demand management, building energy retrofits and urban forestry (carbon sequestration).

To ensure this happens, the Fund was approved by Council with an accompanying list of Principles. These 6 principles ensure accountability for the Fund and will ensure activities supporting the Fund will continue over time. The principles are:

Principle #1) Reduction of GHG emissions is the first priority, with the ultimate goal of reducing the carbon footprint to the lowest possible level using currently available technology.

Principle #2) The carbon neutral reserve fund will respect the principle of “additionality” which means that these funds will only be used for GHG-reducing projects that would not normally be undertaken as part of the municipality’s capital expenditure plan.

Principle #3) Priorities for project funding would be given to those that have the highest and most immediate impact on GHG emissions. For example, replacing fossil fuel use such as natural gas water heating at a municipal pool with solar hot water.

Principle #4) Projects funded by the Carbon Neutral Reserve Fund would be located within the boundaries of the District of Saanich, preferably on municipal or public lands.

Principle #5) Each year, Saanich’s GHG inventory would be updated by Saanich or CRD staff to reflect actual GHG emissions for that year.

Principle #6) Subject to the size of Saanich’s remaining carbon footprint, as expressed in Tonnes of GHG (equivalents), a dollar amount equal to the prevailing market value of a Tonne of Carbon will be set aside in the annual financial plan for inclusion in the Carbon-Neutral Reserve Fund.

3.0 GHG Emissions Inventory

Essential to the Fund is determining accurate greenhouse gas emissions inventories. A baseline inventory of Saanich's corporate and community emissions was conducted by the Capital Regional District in 2004. We are awaiting initiation of another inventory for the 2007 year pending confirmation of inventory requirements from the Provincial Government and the CRD.

Table 1 and 2 below shows data from the Corporate and Community Inventories:

Table 1: Saanich Corporate (Municipal Operations) Greenhouse Gas Inventory 2004

Area	Tonnes of CO2 e
Fleet	3,174
Buildings	598
Buildings (natural gas)	2,100
Street lighting	107
Water/sewage	58
Total	6,037

Table 2: Saanich Community Greenhouse Gas Inventory 2004

Area	Tonnes of CO2 e
Buildings	178,768
Transportation	210,246
Solid Waste	27,227
Total	416,241

4.0 Annual Fund Calculations

a) Corporate Emissions

From our 2004 baseline inventory, we can calculate a total annual cost to offset Saanich's corporate emissions. The total annual dollar contribution will likely fluctuate based on:

- a) The gradual reduction of total emissions due to internal programs and initiative; and
- b) The prevailing market value of a Tonne of Carbon.

The District consulted with an economist who recommended (in 2007) a median value of \$15 per tonne of greenhouse gas, measured in units of carbon dioxide equivalents. The contribution will hopefully decrease over time, as Saanich is able to reduce its GHG emissions through reduction efforts. However, the cost per tonne will likely increase due to carbon market conditions. Under the assumption that there will be no reductions or increases in the annual

GHG emissions from municipal operations, Saanich determined an annual estimated cost for offsetting corporate emissions. Our 2008 Carbon Neutral donation to the fund was calculated as follows: 6,037 Tonnes at \$15/Tonne = **\$ 90,555**. These Funds have been set aside in a reserve fund in the 2008 Financial Plan.

b) Community Emissions

The Fund will also receive donations from residents who wish to offset their own emissions. Previously, Saanich residents who wished to offset their greenhouse gas emissions online would have made a donation to an external project outside of their community. Residents can now be sure their donations are going to emission reduction projects within their community. As of June 2008, residents of Saanich began using our **Carbon Neutral Donation Calculator** to determine their greenhouse gas emissions, make a donation and receive a tax deductible receipt. Of course, non-Saanich residents can also use the calculator to determine their emissions and can make a project donation knowing that the project will be focused on local communities.

The calculator can be found at:

<http://www.saanich.ca/climate/climatechange.html>

Calculate your Emissions and Carbon Neutral Donation

Use our Carbon Neutral Calculator below to determine the donation to neutralize your emissions for the year. Please be advised that the calculator data is not saved on our servers. Only the final total of your GHG emissions will be sent on your receipt.

Vehicle Usage	Vehicle 1	Vehicle 2	Vehicle 1:
	0 kms/year	0 kms/year	0 Tonnes of CO ₂ e/Year
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Heavy Truck	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Heavy Truck	
	<input type="radio"/> SUV, Light Truck	<input type="radio"/> SUV, Light Truck	
	<input type="radio"/> Large Car	<input type="radio"/> Large Car	
	<input type="radio"/> Medium Car/Sedan	<input type="radio"/> Medium Car/Sedan	
	<input type="radio"/> Small Car	<input type="radio"/> Small Car	
	<input type="radio"/> Hybrid	<input type="radio"/> Hybrid	
Electricity			
Enter your annual kWh consumption	0 kWh/year or		0 Tonnes of CO ₂ e/Year
Or	0 \$ average bill/month		
Natural Gas			
Enter your annual GJ consumption	0 Gigajoules(GJ)/year or		0 Tonnes of CO ₂ e/Year
Or	0 \$ average bill/month		
Propane			
Please refer to your Propane bill	0 Litres per month		0 Tonnes of CO ₂ e/Year

5.0 Initiatives Supporting the Fund

Saanich's Carbon Neutral Plan supports the Fund through multiple initiatives that are in various stages of implementation. All initiatives are essential contributors to ensuring the Fund achieves its intended objectives.

a) The CLEAR Plan

Saanich is currently developing a Climate and Energy Action and Reduction (CLEAR) Plan to be completed by the end of 2008. The plan will:

- Outline strategies and actions for the District and the community;
- Set a community GHG emissions reduction target; and
- Provide the community with climate change adaptation strategies.

b) Environmental Management System (EMS)

An EMS has been initiated to establish a framework to the environmental aspects of our operations. Projects from the Reserve Fund will be run through the EMS to ensure there is an accountable and measureable process applied.

c) Climate Action Coordinator

This role was established in May 2008 to develop the Saanich CLEAR Plan and to develop a corporate Environmental Management System. The coordinator will also administer the Fund and identify relevant projects that meet the principles of the Fund.

d) Other Supporting Initiatives

There are several other programs that will enhance the education and community awareness of the Fund, its principles and the general concepts of climate change. These include:

- a. Initiation of BC Hydro Community Energy Manager position;
- b. Green Building Rebate Program for community residents;
- c. Application for Solar Community Status with SolarBC; and
- d. "Hands-On" Community Workshops set for the fall of 2008.

6.0 Conclusion

The Saanich Carbon Neutral Reserve Fund is, as far as we understand, a first of its kind in Canada. The originality of the concept has been drawing inquires from across the country

"If we accept collective responsibility for this it can be empowering. If we have created this, we have the capability of reversing it." - **Andrew Weaver, Canada Research Chair, UVic**

The issue of climate change is of significant importance to all communities in BC. The creation of similar Carbon Neutral Reserve Funds can be simply adapted by any municipality. Saanich takes pride in its reputation as a community climate change leader and will continue to seek innovative ways to engage and educate the community and share its success. Thank you for the opportunity to apply for this award.

Sincerely,

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