



REPORT

REPORT TO: Mayor Bonnette and Members of Council

REPORT FROM: Damian Szybalski, Manager of Sustainability

DATE: January 21, 2015

REPORT NO.: PDS-2015-0007

RE: Staff Sustainability Team: 2014 Accomplishments and 2015 Workplan

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT Report No. PDS-2015-0007, dated January 21, 2015, regarding the Staff Sustainability Team's 2014 accomplishments and 2015 workplan be received for information.

PURPOSE OF REPORT:

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with an overview of the 2014 accomplishments of the corporate Staff Sustainability Team and its 2015 workplan.

BACKGROUND:

Established in 2009, the Staff Sustainability Team is an effective inter-departmental staff committee focused on the seamless integration of sustainability into the Town's operations. It is composed of engaged and dedicated staff.

Recognizing that sustainability is one of the Strategic Plan priorities and embedded throughout the Plan's Strategic Directions, the Staff Sustainability Team is guided by the following statement in terms of what it aims to accomplish:

"Through collaboration, engagement, leadership and the leveraging of existing initiatives, the Staff Sustainability Team is committed to delivering on Council's and staff priorities. We will accomplish this by coordinating and taking strategic value-added actions that demonstrate corporate sustainability leadership, support continuous improvement, avoid and mitigate risks, achieve

efficiencies, and improve our quality of life through a focus on our economic, cultural, environmental and social wellbeing. In our work, we will live our Core Values.”

The Staff Sustainability Team will do this by:

“We will engage, inform, inspire and assist you in making choices that contribute to our collective economic, cultural, environmental and social wellbeing. This will result in a better workplace and a better community to work, live and play in. We will foster a corporate culture of sustainability. We value your input, if you have any questions, suggestions or comments, please feel free to contact one of us!”

Overall, the work of the Staff Sustainability Team will contribute to ensuring that Halton Hills is a great place to live, raise a family, work, play and invest. It will also support a great workplace.

As shown in Figure 1, this will result in continuous improvement and in “doing things better” with the least impact. In turn, this will lead to efficiencies, support a great workplace, improve service delivery and deliver on Council’s priorities.

Figure 1: Staff Sustainability Team and Continuous Improvement



COMMENTS:

1. 2014 Accomplishments

As in past years, the Staff Sustainability Team had significant achievements in 2014. Below, each is highlighted briefly:

1.1 Sustainability Implications Worksheet: The Staff Sustainability Team was key to the update of the Town's award-winning Sustainability Implications Worksheet and the associated staff report template. The Worksheet and resulting commentary in staff reports provide Council and the general public with a more fulsome analysis of the economic, environmental, social and cultural impacts of staff recommendations.

1.2 Sustainability Champion Award: The Staff Sustainability Team designed the new corporate Sustainability Champion Award staff recognition program. This program provides an opportunity for staff to be recognized (and to recognize other staff) for actions that contribute to creating a great workplace, and a desirable community to work, live and play in. These actions can help achieve efficiencies, demonstrate corporate leadership, and contribute to our collective economic prosperity, cultural vibrancy, environmental health and social wellbeing. They can be taken at or outside of work. These actions also live our Core Values, especially excellence, team and creativity.

In 2014, more than 100 staff were nominated for a wide variety of actions. Many staff were nominated multiple times. Nominations pertained to a wide range of actions, from the relatively simple to the more complex. Staff from all departments were represented. Four overall winners or 'Champions' were recognized at the October 2014 staff Town Hall meeting.

1.3 Corporate Sustainability Audit and Action Plan: Based on a strategic review of the Town's processes, policies and initiatives, the Corporate Sustainability Audit and Action Plan will accelerate the implementation of the Community Sustainability Strategy, deliver a long-term vision and desired outcomes for sustainability, design a practical decision-making framework for consistent decision making, and generate a practical 5-year Action Plan.

1.4 Staff Sustainability BBQ: Staff engagement and awareness are key objectives of the Staff Sustainability Team. To highlight the benefits of local food and agricultural production, in the summer of 2014, the Team held a very successful BBQ, including a workshop on Ontario's agricultural practices. About 70 staff attended.

1.5 Waste Management: Proper waste management can reduce costs and benefit the environment. Recognizing this, the Staff Sustainability Team has taken steps to support proper waste disposal. In addition to the implementation of the Town's Green Meeting and Event Policy, this has included (i) conducting a waste management audit to assess how waste is being disposed of at the Civic Centre and to identify opportunities for further reductions; and the (ii) centralization of

waste disposal containers across the Civic Centre. The latter supports proper waste disposal by making it convenient to place waste in the right place. Importantly, it also reduces the staff time required to collect individual waste containers from Civic Centre workstations, making more effective use of staff time. Thus far, the amount of garbage generated at the Civic Centre has declined by about 50%.

1.6 Staff Engagement: Engaging staff around sustainability supports continuous improvement and a great workplace, resulting in more engaged staff and efficiencies. In 2014, the Staff Sustainability Team hosted successful sessions related to the use of e-books, local agriculture and the bike share program.

1.7 Fresh Food Box: Based on an idea of an original Staff Sustainability Team member, the Halton Fresh Food Box program provides an opportunity for Town staff to access fresh produce that, especially during the Ontario growing season, is largely grown locally. Not only does this initiative support wellness, but also the viability of local agriculture. In 2014 alone, Town staff have purchased about 7,160 pounds (3,242 kg) of produce.

1.8 Town Hall Local Food Garden: Initiated several years ago, the local food garden located near the rear parking lot of the Civic Centre provides a highly visible opportunity to engage staff and visitors around the benefits of local food. It has also beautified a previously open grass space, thereby providing a more attractive outdoor space for staff and visitors to enjoy. The garden also demonstrates the ease with which staff can construct their own food garden at home. Importantly, to support the social wellbeing of our community, all food grown at the garden is donated to the local food bank.

1.9 Bike Share: The Bike Share program is part of the Town's award-winning Smart Commute program. Town staff are able to borrow one of two bicycles and use them for work-related trips and/or for personal recreation. The program is intended to promote active transportation and wellness, lower greenhouse gas emissions, and save transportation costs.

2. 2015 Workplan

To develop its workplan for 2015, the Staff Sustainability Team held a meeting to explore possible priorities. Four questions guided the process:

- What are the key desired outcomes?
- What do we want to achieve in 2015?
- What difference do we want to make in our workplace?
- What difference do we want to make in our community?

Through its efforts, the Staff Sustainability Team hopes to contribute to:

- Delivering on Strategic Plan objectives.
- Creating an innovative, vibrant and great workplace.
- Supporting employee satisfaction and engagement.

also be approached to participate. Additional work may also be done to explore alternative work arrangements for Town staff.

- Sustainability Fair and BBQ: Building on the success of the 2014 Sustainability BBQ, the event will be expanded to provide more opportunities for staff engagement and education. Possible activities include a showcase of electric/hybrid vehicles, cycling opportunities, a mini farmers' market to support local food and workshops.
- Local Food Garden: Food grown locally travels a significantly shorter distance than imported foods, reduces greenhouse gas emissions and benefits the local economy by keeping dollars locally.

In 2015, the focus will be on utilizing the Town Hall garden as an “outdoor classroom” to engage local schools, organizations and residents in learning about the benefits of local food and agriculture. Residents can use the Town Hall garden as a template to construct their own gardens. In addition:

- The social benefits of the garden in terms of staff donating fresh food to the local food bank will be communicated;
- Opportunities to further promote local food through partnerships with Halton Region, Halton Federation of Agriculture and local businesses will be explored;
- Where possible, new features will be added to the garden to promote biodiversity; and
- Information related to local food will be added to the Town's website.

3. Additional Actions

In addition to the 2015 priorities:

- Several key actions are ongoing and will continue. This includes the Team's role in the implementation of the:
 - Corporate Energy Plan
 - Corporate Sustainability Champion Award
 - Waste Management
 - Staff Engagement and Education
 - Bike Share
 - 22 Minute Makeover Earth Day Celebration
- Additional actions will be undertaken if time and resources permit, possibly into 2016 and beyond. Alternatively, some actions may be undertaken by the Office of Sustainability. These may include:
 - A video(s) regarding the Town's journey and commitment to quality of life through a focus on economic prosperity, cultural vibrancy, environmental health and social wellbeing. This video would also highlight the Town being a great place to work from a sustainability

perspective, profile the Staff Sustainability Team, and profile the actions of all Town departments.

- A forum for Town staff to share their creative ideas for further integrating sustainability into the Town's operations. Successful ideas would receive funding so that they can be implemented.

RELATIONSHIP TO STRATEGIC PLAN:

Sustainability is one of ten Council priorities identified in the Town's Strategic Action Plan, and repeatedly referenced throughout the Strategic Plan's Strategic Directions, Strategic Objectives and Strategic Actions.

The work of the Staff Sustainability continues to leverage and advance these Council objectives.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

At this time, there is no financial impact associated with this report.

COMMUNICATIONS IMPACT:

The Staff Sustainability Team's 2014 accomplishments will be highlighted via various channels, including the Town's website, Social Media, Intranet (HUB) and publications such as the forthcoming bi-annual State of Sustainability (Quality of Life) Report.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS:

The Town is committed to implementing our Community Sustainability Strategy, Imagine Halton Hills. Doing so will lead to a higher quality of life. The relationship between this report and the Strategy is summarized below.

Do the report's recommendations advance the Strategy's implementation? Yes

Which pillar(s) of sustainability does this report support?

Cultural Vibrancy

Economic Prosperity

Environmental Health

Overall, the alignment of this report with the Community Sustainability Strategy is:

Excellent

CONSULTATION:

The 2014 Staff Sustainability Team accomplishments and the 2015 workplan were presented to the Senior Management Team in December 2014.

CONCLUSION:

This report has provided Council with an overview of the 2014 accomplishments of the Staff Sustainability Team as well as the Team's 2015 workplan.

Respectfully submitted,

Damian Szybalski, M.Sc.PI, MCIP, RPP
Manager of Sustainability

John Linhardt, M.PI., MCIP, RPP
Director of Planning, Development
and Sustainability

David Smith
Chief Administrative Officer