

C10 - Carbon Footprints-Treading Lightly: Tools & Strategies For Communities

Presentation # 1 title: Planning for Climate Change in Small Communities: Calculating your carbon footprint and what to do once you have

Presenter:

Chris Marshall - Town Of Gibsons

Abstract

A half-hour power point presentation and speech intended to aid small municipalities in tracking their carbon footprint. This practical presentation will be designed to advise municipalities with limited resources on why and how to go about emissions tracking. The presentation will attempt to demystify the process and help municipalities contemplating this work to assess their options. Some of the intricacies and challenges involved in tracking emissions will be discussed as well as pitfalls to avoid. Having briefly explained the process and options for calculating carbon footprints, the presentation will proceed by providing examples of measures small municipalities can undertake to achieve emissions reductions. These measures will be drawn from Gibsons' experience and will be tailored to smaller municipalities unable to undertake multiple large projects simultaneously. The Town of Gibsons has found that indicator data can inform other planning documents, catalyze community initiatives and aid in securing grants. As a result of conducting emissions tracking, a dialog was instigated in the Town which has led to: new land use planning initiatives; a proposed geo-thermal energy utility; increased awareness of climate change issues across departments in the Town; and increased collaboration with neighboring municipalities. The project has also served as a means of galvanizing municipal staff from different professional backgrounds around climate issues—quantifying emissions allows each manager to see their department's contribution to total emissions. The presentation will explore some of these outcomes and discuss other possible applications for leveraging carbon foot-printing. To help municipalities to see the possibilities for how planning work to reduce climate impact could unfold, there will be a discussion of best practices and how the Town of Gibsons plans to proceed. The presentation will provide practical advice for small municipalities undertaking this work, and better equip smaller municipalities to quantify their carbon impact without large expenditures or outside expertise.

Speaker Biography

Chris Marshall Chris received his MA in Urban Planning from McGill University and has worked as a land use planner for the City of Vancouver, the District of Langford and private planning firms. Chris is currently the Director of Planning for the Town of Gibsons where he has facilitated forward-thinking environmental planning initiatives. Since coming to Gibsons in 1998, Chris has worked to revise Gibsons' Official Community Plan—winning awards from PIBC and Smart Growth BC for its sustainability framework—and has implemented numerous other plans and measures to advance sustainability issues in the Town of Gibsons. Chris Marshall will act as the sole presenter.

Presentation # 2 title: Understanding Change – shifting to a 'low-carbon' economy

Presenter:

Ted Battiston - Resort Municipality of Whistler

Abstract

In 2007, The Resort Municipality of Whistler was recognized as the first community in Canada to have achieved the fifth and final milestone within the Partners for Climate Protection Program. The Partners for Climate Protection (PCP) program is based on a five-milestone framework to guide municipalities toward the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions for both municipal operations and community-wide emissions. Regarding the community's GHG performance, Mayor Ken Melamed comments that, 'Involvement with the PCP program has given us tremendous value - our emissions inventories are critical tools for understanding our level of impact, as well as evaluating the effectiveness of our community decision-making. In this sense, being the first community in Canada to be recognized by national level organizations like FCM and international organizations like ICLEI is something we are quite proud of. However, if this community really believes that the cost of inaction is going to be larger than the cost of reducing our emissions, then clearly significant, additional efforts need to be undertaken - and more overall progress achieved. At the end of the day, we simply have to do better in our efforts to achieve real emissions reductions.' This presentation will present detailed community and corporate emission patterns identifying key trends and emerging issues in emissions management. Detailed energy costs will also be presented to demonstrate the size of the energy expenditures at multiple scales and sectors across the community – the impact of rising fuel costs, carbon taxes and voluntary 'neutrality' commitments will also be demonstrated based on the most recent three years of detailed municipal energy tracking. Building on these inventories and the work of key stakeholder groups within the community, a summary of key mitigation actions (e.g. land planning policies, building performance measures, transportation initiatives, education and awareness programs) will be presented and evaluated based on overall impact on community energy use and resultant emission patterns. Finally, key lesson learned, and an open dialogue on suggestion next steps for the community will be discussed and facilitated with the intent of generating a short prioritized list of potential high-impact actions for the community to pursue over the next few years.

Speaker Biography

Ted Battiston Strategic Energy & Emissions Manager, Whistler Centre for Sustainability As the WCS' Energy & Emissions Manager, Ted is responsible for developing and managing an energy and emissions reduction program for the community of Whistler, as well as using his expertise to provide assistance to tourism-based enterprises and other municipalities in Canada and beyond. Prior to Ted's position at the WCS, Ted worked for the Resort Municipality of Whistler on issues related to sustainability, public engagement and environmental management. At the RMOW, he and his team produced and managed the award-winning Whistler2020 sustainability plan, and facilitated the associated community action planning process for the last five years. He also directed his attention toward internal municipal policies and practices. With a focus on energy and greenhouse gas emissions issues, Ted has collaborated with the Province, the Union of BC Municipalities, and the Federation of Canadian Municipalities on local government responses to the challenges of climate change generally, and to greenhouse gas inventories in particular. Ted is an avid skier and cyclist and is usually found on the mountains and trails around Whistler when not immersed in energy and emissions issues.