

**Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee**  
**February 6, 2012**

**TO:** Chair and Members of Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee

**SUBMITTED BY:**   
Phillip Townsend, Director, Planning & Infrastructure

**DATE:** December 13, 2011

**SUBJECT:** Municipal Incubation of Solar Energy

**INFORMATION REPORT**

**ORIGIN**

Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee (ESSC), July 7, 2011.

**BACKGROUND**

7.2.1 Councillor Watts – Request for Report re: Best Management Practices, Plans, Regulations and Policy to incubate Solar Energy.

MOVED by Councillor Watts, seconded by Councillor Barkhouse, that the Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee request a staff report outlining the best management practices, plans, regulations and policy to incubate Solar Energy. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

## **DISCUSSION**

There are basically three ways that a municipality can help a community transition to high uptake of solar hot water systems:

1. Streamlining regulations/administration;
2. Incorporating in Policy/Planning framework; and
3. Providing incentives and leadership.

### **Streamlining regulations/administration**

In Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM), installations of solar hot water systems require a building permit. Currently, Staff is working with industry on a streamlined permit process for the installation of solar installations. This will keep installation costs low and ensure sound quality assurance.

### **Incorporating in Policy/Planning framework**

A potential menu of opportunities that a municipality has within its policy and planning framework include:

- Solar Orientation By-Laws both for buildings or in subdivisions;
- By-Laws for renewable energy content;
- Solar Obligation for new development (i.e. the Barcelona Model);
- Solar Access (a very complex issue); and
- Building Code By-Law: Rough In kits requirement for all new construction.

### **Providing incentives and leadership**

#### **Grants/Incentives**

- Solar City

#### **Leadership/Demonstration**

- Usage in Municipal Projects; and
- Demonstration/Signage.

HRM has demonstrated substantial leadership in encouraging solar energy solutions by:

- purchasing a SolarTron solar energy system for Knightsbridge Fire Station;
- installing SolarSheat space heating panels at approximately ten community facilities;
- installing both evacuated tube and flat plate solar at approximately ten recreation facilities and/or fire stations;
- installing large projects at Canada Games Centre (which includes hot water and ducting) and Centennial Pool/David Mackinnon Police Headquarters; and
- installing flat panel solar collectors at the Bedford Lions Pool.

All these installations, using multiple technologies and multiple vendors, work well and are saving the taxpayers money. Following these installations, Corporate Communications worked with staff for the installation of signage for the benefit of residents.

References:

1. European Solar Thermal Industry Federation:  
[http://www.estif.org/policies/solar\\_ordinances/](http://www.estif.org/policies/solar_ordinances/);
2. Solar America Cities: [http://www.estif.org/policies/solar\\_ordinances/](http://www.estif.org/policies/solar_ordinances/)
3. Barcelona Ordinance: <http://www.barcelonaenergia.cat/>
4. FCM, Energy By-Laws: <http://www.fcm.ca/home/programs/green-municipal-fund/program-resources/green-municipal-bylaws/energy-bylaws.htm>;
5. California Utilities:  
[http://www.energy.ca.gov/title24/2013standards/prerulemaking/documents/2011-05-24\\_workshop/review/2013\\_CASE\\_ResSolarReady\\_SolarOrientedDevelopments\\_052011.pdf](http://www.energy.ca.gov/title24/2013standards/prerulemaking/documents/2011-05-24_workshop/review/2013_CASE_ResSolarReady_SolarOrientedDevelopments_052011.pdf); and
6. Ministry of Ontario, Planning by Design (Solar Orientation):  
<http://www.mah.gov.on.ca/Page6737.aspx>.

**BUDGET IMPLICATIONS**

There are no budget implications from this report to the 2011/2012 Operating or Capital Budget.

**FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICIES / BUSINESS PLAN**

This report complies with the Municipality's Multi-Year Financial Strategy, the approved Operating, Project and Reserve budgets, policies and procedures regarding withdrawals from the utilization of Project and Operating reserves, as well as any relevant legislation.

**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

Staff has had ongoing consultations with the Solar Industry.

**ATTACHMENTS**

None

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A copy of this report can be obtained online at <http://www.halifax.ca/commcoun/cc.html> then choose the appropriate Community Council and meeting date, or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 490-4210, or Fax 490-4208.

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