



The Corporation of Delta
COUNCIL REPORT
Regular Meeting

To: **Mayor and Council**

File No.: **1090-20/AWARD;
1240-20/FCM**

From: **Engineering Department**

Date: **August 10, 2011**

**Federation of Canadian Municipalities Sustainable Communities Award
Application: School Rain Garden Program**

The following report has been reviewed and endorsed by the Chief Administrative Officer.

▪ **RECOMMENDATION:**

THAT Delta staff submit an application (Attachment A) to the Federation of Canadian Municipalities Sustainable Communities Award Program as described in this report.

▪ **PURPOSE:**

The Federation of Canadian Municipalities has created an award for sustainable community initiatives. The purpose of this report is to recommend that staff apply for the Federation of Canadian Municipalities Sustainable Communities Award for Delta's school rain garden program.

▪ **BACKGROUND:**

Since 2005, Delta's Engineering Department has become a regional leader in green infrastructure by installing porous parking lots, swales, infiltration galleries, a daylighted ditch, rain gardens, and thousands of trees.

To engage the community, Delta has developed a rain garden program with local elementary schools, whereby staff design and construct rain gardens at schools and then coordinate a community planting day with local streamkeepers, school children, teachers, and neighbourhood volunteers. The purpose of constructing rain gardens is to improve fish habitat in Delta's waterways by promoting infiltration of stormwater into rain gardens instead of storm sewers.

A "Rain Gardeners" education program for Grade 4 & 5 students accompanies the rain garden construction. These "rain gardeners" connect to their local watershed and learn how everyday actions may impact their environment. The rain garden allows students to experience caring for nature by planting and maintaining the garden.

- **DISCUSSION:**

The rain garden program has several environmental benefits, including reduction of peak stormwater flows and associated streambank erosion, cooling and cleansing of stormwater through infiltration, and habitat creation in an urban environment. This program has proven to be an excellent educational tool in the community. School children learn about the purpose and function of their own rain garden. In addition, the outdoor presence of students and streamkeepers during planting days and routine garden maintenance engages and educates the local residents.

The Federation of Canadian Municipalities has created a Sustainable Communities Award for a number of categories. Delta's rain garden program is a good candidate for an award in the "water" category. Staff have completed an application form for this award (Attachment A), the deadline for which is September 8, 2011.

Implications:

Financial Implications – There are no financial implications at this time.

- **CONCLUSION:**

Delta's rain garden program is a good candidate for a Federation of Canadian Municipalities Sustainable Communities Award. It is recommended that Delta apply for this award.

Steven Lan, P.Eng.
Director of Engineering

Department submission prepared by: Sarah Howie, Urban Environmental Designer
SH/hf/ll

- **ATTACHMENT:**

A. Application for Federation of Canadian Municipalities Sustainable Communities Award

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