



Report to: General Committee

Date Report Authored: January 14, 2016

SUBJECT: Markham Celebrates Earth Month – 2015 Review and 2016 Plan
PREPARED BY: Jessica Yau, Community Engagement Assistant, x2658
REVIEWED BY: Graham Seaman, Director, Sustainability, x7523

RECOMMENDATION:

- 1) That the report titled “Markham Celebrates Earth Month – 2015 Review and 2016 Plan” be received; and,
- 2) That Council thank the Markham Environmental Advisory Committee (MEAC) and all volunteers for their efforts during Earth Month Celebrations 2015; and,
- 3) That Markham declare Earth Month Celebrations 2016 to be from March 19th until April 30th, consisting of the following events:
 - a. Earth Hour at Cornell Community Centre and Library on March 19th, 2016; and,
 - b. Earth Month Celebration lead by MEAC at Markville Mall on April 23rd, 2016; and,
 - c. Keep Markham Beautiful community clean up events held throughout the month of April; and,
 - d. 10,000 Trees for the Rouge annual habitat restoration event to be held on April 24th, 2016; and,
- 4) That the estimated 2016 costs of \$148,200 for the above events will be funded through sponsorships and approved capital projects “Markham Trees for Tomorrow” and “Greenprint Community Sustainability Plan” up to the amount of funding received;
- 5) That staff be authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to this resolution.

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this report is to review feedback, lessons learned, and recommended improvements to activities that occurred during Earth Month Celebrations 2015 (March 28th, 2015 to April 30th, 2015). The month-long celebrations were hosted by the City of Markham, championed by the Sustainability Office, and coordinated by the Markham Environmental Advisory Committee (MEAC), Operations, Environmental Services, and Corporate Communications and Community Engagement departments.

In addition, this report will provide the event plan and dates for Earth Month Celebrations 2016 in Markham, noting where improvements have been applied by the Sustainability Office and partners to enhance the event plans.

BACKGROUND:

Earth Day is an annual event held on April 22nd. On Earth Day, events are hosted worldwide to increase the awareness and appreciation of the Earth's natural environment. Earth Day started in the United States in 1970, was first celebrated in Canada in 1980, and by 1990 had become international with organized events in 141 countries.

In February 2015, Council endorsed the Sustainability Office's recommendation that the City of Markham transition to Earth Month Celebrations because a one-day celebration was not adequate and our separate promotion of Earth Hour and Earth Day was confusing. Corporate Communications and Community Engagement saw that by advertising all Earth Day related events, typically in the spring, under the same branding would reduce confusion for the public and promote cost efficiencies in marketing materials.

2015 saw our first Earth Month Celebrations which were well received with a variety of events held across the city. The City of Markham hosted four events from March 28th, 2015 to April 30th, 2015, that included:

Table 1: Markham Earth Month Celebrations 2015 Events

Date	Event	Location
March 28 th , 2015	Earth Hour	Cornell Community Centre and Library
April 11 th , 2015	MEAC's Earth Month Celebration	Thornhill Community Centre and Library
Month of April 2015	Keep Markham Beautiful	Throughout the City of Markham
April 26 th , 2015	10,000 Trees for the Rouge annual habitat restoration	Milne Dam Conservation Park

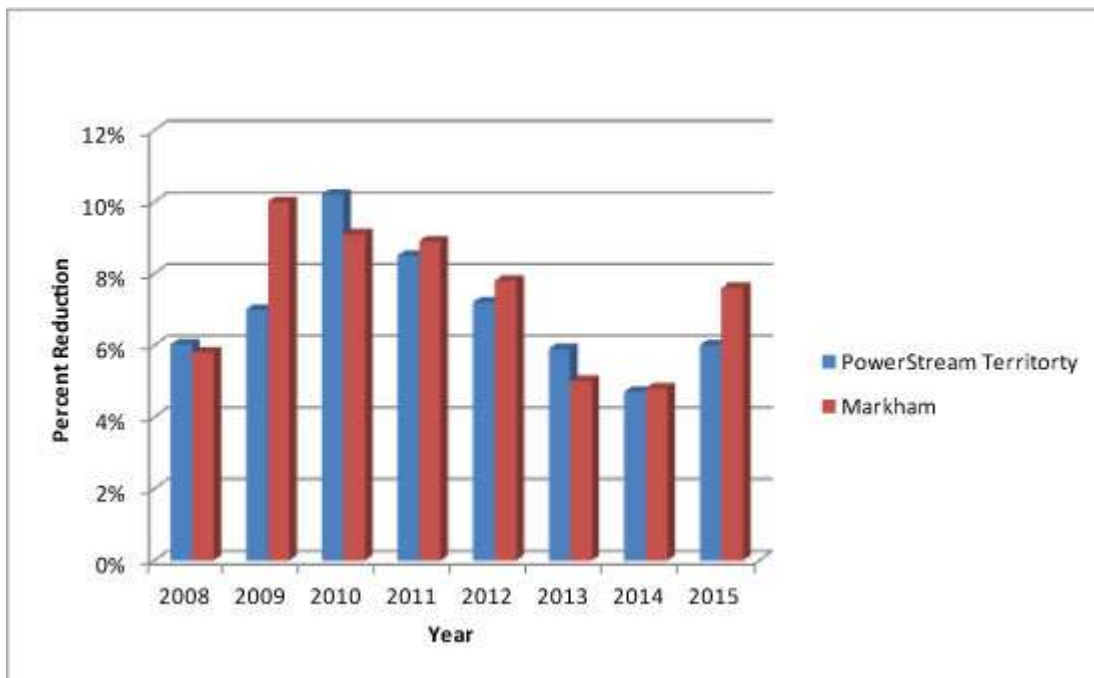
Earth Hour at Cornell Community Centre and Library - March 28th, 2015

The first event to kick off Earth Month Celebrations 2015 was Earth Hour held at Cornell Community Centre and Library. The event consisted of a Sustainability Fair with vendors and information showcases from various organizations, community groups, and corporations such as PowerStream.

The event would not have been made possible without our student volunteers who greeted guests, set up and took down materials, and even donned mascot costumes. Markham District High School's Jazz Band provided entertainment, performing for event-goers. The event featured speeches by Mayor Scarpitti, members of Council and a lantern walk at 8:30pm following the shutdown of lights to raise awareness and with a call to action on climate change. Overall, the event ran successfully thanks to the planning and coordination between Councillor Campbell's office, the Sustainability Office, Recreation, and Corporate Communications and Community Engagement.

Earth Hour 2015 attracted over 300 attendees throughout the evening. This event has gained an increase in popularity as 200 attendees were reported at Earth Hour 2014. Based on the City of Markham's April 2015 media release, PowerStream reported that Markham had a reduction in energy consumption of 7.6% (21.7 megawatts) during this year's event, higher than compared to PowerStream's service territory average of 6.0%. Table 2 is a graph to compare energy reduction rates during Earth Hour since 2008. As seen below, there is an uptick in 2015, just as overall participating trends looked to be decreasing. This slight improvement over PowerStream's territory in 2014 and marked increase in 2015 is likely a result of our Earth Hour events and promotion.

Table 2: Energy Reduction Comparison Between PowerStream Service Territory and City of Markham



MEAC's Earth Month Celebration at Thornhill Community Centre and Library – April 11th, 2015

Markham Environmental Advisory Committee (MEAC) organized an Earth Month Celebration at the Thornhill Community Centre and Library, with the support of the Sustainability Office and Corporate Communications and Community Engagement. Local businesses, organizations, the Regional Municipality of York, and various City of Markham departments participated in the day, showcasing their initiatives to the public.

In addition to the display of booths, MEAC also organized a full day event with workshops ranging from gardening to textile recycling to Milk Bag weaving. Members of Council, and senior staff were also present for the day's festivities and the Mayor and Thornhill MP Peter Kent provided a welcome to attendees. The turnout was less than

expected with approximately 100 people attending throughout the day. Also, at the event, MEAC partnered with Environmental Services and incorporated an e-Waste drop-off initiative, successfully collecting over 12,000 lbs of unwanted electronics for recycling.

Keep Markham Beautiful – throughout the month of April 2015

The Environmental Services department organized Keep Markham Beautiful community clean up events throughout the city, with over 13,000 participating residents.

10,000 Trees for the Rouge Annual Habitat Restoration – April 26th, 2015

10,000 Trees for the Rouge's 26th annual habitat restoration tree planting was held on April 26th, 2015. This is the largest tree planting event of its kind in Canada with over 2,500 participants helping to plant more than 5,700 trees in one day. The weather was favourable and Councillors and staff alike were pleased to see engagement from the community and local businesses.

OPTIONS/ DISCUSSION:

This section will provide an overview of the planned events for Earth Month Celebrations 2016. This will also include improvements made to the events based on feedback from last year's celebrations.

Markham's Earth Month Celebrations 2016 will be from March 19th, 2016 until April 30th, 2016, consisting of the following:

Table 3: Markham Earth Month Celebrations 2016 Events

Date	Event	Location
March 19 th , 2016	Earth Hour	Cornell Community Centre and Library
April 23 rd , 2016	MEAC's Earth Month Celebration	Cadillac Fairview Markville Mall
Month of April 2016	Keep Markham Beautiful	Throughout the City of Markham
April 24 th , 2016	10,000 Trees for the Rouge annual habitat restoration	Milne Dam Conservation Park

Promoting the events under the same branding is recommended to continue. Staff representatives from Operations, Environmental Services, Recreation, Corporate Communications and Community Engagement, and lead by the Sustainability Office will work together to create an effective marketing and promotion plan for Earth Month Celebrations 2016. This will include engaging more departments and Markham's advisory committees for participation.

Earth Hour at Cornell Community Centre and Library – March 19th, 2016

Earth Hour 2016 will occur on March 19th, 2016 from 5:30pm to 9:00pm at Cornell Community Centre and Library. This year's event is held a week earlier than its normal scheduled date, which is usually the last Saturday of March, due to the Easter Holiday weekend. Feedback received on Earth Hour 2015 included reserving more of the facility for a more effective light shut-down and to provide more programming space. In response, the gymnasiums at Cornell Community Centre and Library has been set aside for the 2016 event by Recreation, ensuring no major disruptions to regular functions at the facility.

The evening will consist of a Sustainability Fair, similar to the interactive display of booths at last year's event. The additional programming space will be used for an expanded children's zone and to accommodate an expected increase in attendance.

This annual lights-out initiative in the City of Markham is supported by Councillor Campbell's Office, the Sustainability Office, and Corporate Communications and Community Engagement.

MEAC's Earth Month Celebration at Thornhill Community Centre and Library – April 23rd, 2016

Learning from previous Earth Month events, MEAC and the Sustainability Office continue to strive for improvement to execute successful public engagement initiatives. As a result, MEAC has reserved an event space at Cadillac Fairview Markville Mall for the 2016 Earth Month Celebration on Saturday, April 23rd, 2016. The day will consist of an array of activities, including a display of booths showcasing local environmental initiatives, as well as hands-on activities for children such as Milk Bag weaving to encourage and provide education on waste diversion. By hosting the event at one of Markham's busiest shopping centres, the celebration should expect busy foot traffic and high public engagement with residents and visitors alike.

Keep Markham Beautiful – throughout the month of April 2016

Markham will hold the same community clean up events for Keep Markham Beautiful throughout April 2016 and will continue to expect a high level of participation from residents.

10,000 Trees for the Rouge Annual Habitat Restoration – April 24th, 2016

This year, Markham will host the same habitat restoration tree planting day on April 24th, 2016 at Milne Park. High expectations for community engagement will continue for this year's event.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS AND TEMPLATE:
Table 4: Total Spent for Earth Month Celebrations 2015 Events

Event	Costs
Earth Hour	\$1,801.40
Earth Month Celebration	\$1,220.31
10,000 Trees for the Rouge Annual Habitat Restoration	\$146,085.76
Grand Total	\$149,107.47

\$127,085.76 was funded through private and public sponsorships, and the remaining balance of \$22,021.71 was funded through approved capital projects “Markham Trees for Tomorrow” (Project 14214), “Greenprint Community Sustainability Plan” (Project 9345) and Markham Environmental Advisory Committee (MEAC) Trust Fund (016-5999011). In-kind donations were provided by The Glad Product Company for the Keep Markham Beautiful initiative.

Table 5: Total Expected Operating Costs for 2016 Earth Month Celebrations Events

The 2016 estimated costs of \$148,200.00 will be funded from the same sources as 2015 as outlined in the table below:

Event	Costs	Approved 2016 Budget Account	Name of Account
Earth Hour	\$2,000.00	230-101-5399-9345	Greenprint Community Sustainability Plan
Earth Month Celebration	\$1,200.00	016-5999011	MEAC Trust Fund
10,000 Trees for the Rouge Annual Habitat Restoration	\$145,000.00	\$19,000 from 700-101-5399-16171 \$126,000	Trees for Tomorrow 2016 Capital Project Sponsorships
Grand Total	\$148,200.00		

The 2016 Trees for Tomorrow capital project has an approved budget of \$120,000, and \$19,000 will be utilized to partially support the 10,000 Trees for the Rouge Annual Habitat Restoration. The remaining balance of \$101,000 will be allocated upon receipt and evaluation of the applications. Staff will bring forward a report to the Environmental Issues Committee in March with a recommendation on the funding allocation of the remaining \$101,000. In the past, Trees for Tomorrow funds were allocated to various groups/events such as the Trees for the Rouge, Evergreen, LEAF (Local Enhancement and Appreciation of Forests) and Friends of the Rouge Watershed.

To date, funding from sponsorships total \$110,000. Total costs for the 2016 events will be expended up to the funds received.

HUMAN RESOURCES CONSIDERATIONS

Not applicable.

ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:


Earth Month aligns directly with Markham's strategic goals, Safe and Sustainable Community, and Engaged, Diverse and Thriving City, and the Greenprint—the City's 50-100 year Community Sustainability Plan.

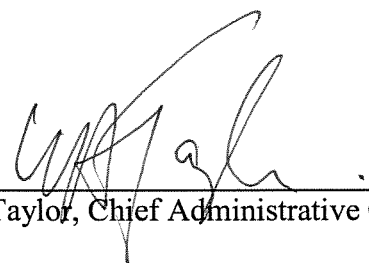
To achieve the Greenprint's goals, ongoing community engagement is critical. Earth Month Celebrations provide an avenue to inform and educate the community about the Greenprint, including its overall strategy and priorities.

BUSINESS UNITS CONSULTED AND AFFECTED:

Corporate Communications and Community Engagement, Operations, Finance, Environmental Services, and Recreation.

RECOMMENDED BY:



Graham Seaman, Director, Sustainability

Andy Taylor, Chief Administrative Officer