

Summit 2008 Awards NOMINATION FORM

Nominee Information

Public Sector Procurement Project **Sustainable Procurement Collaboration Initiative**

Team Name **Procurement Division** Team Leader **Richard MacLellan**

Organization **Halifax Regional Municipality**

Team Participants -

Category of Public Sector **Municipal**

Address **P.O. Box 1749**

City **Halifax**

Province **Nova Scotia**

Postal Code **B3J 3A5**

Telephone **(902) 490-4714**

Fax **(902) 490-6425**

Nomination Submitted by

Name **Richard MacLellan**

Title **Procurement Lead, Service Delivery**

Organization **Halifax Regional Municipality Procurement Division**

Email maclelri@halifax.ca

Address **P.O. Box 1749**

City **Halifax**

Province **Nova Scotia**

Postal Code **B3J 3A5**

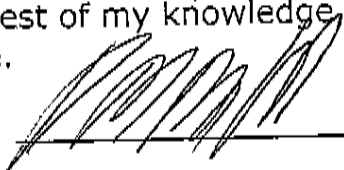
Telephone **(902) 490-4714**

Fax **(902) 490-6425**

Certification

To the best of my knowledge, I certify that the information provided is accurate and true.

Signature



Date

22-June-08



Halifax Regional Municipality – Procurement Division
Sustainable Procurement Collaboration Initiative
Summit 2008 Leadership in Green Procurement Award

Introduction

Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM) is committed to a “healthy, sustainable, vibrant community”. This commitment has seen HRM establish a world-class waste management program, a pesticide use reduction initiative, corporate and community greenhouse gas emission plans and targets, and a climate change strategy. In 2007, HRM began an innovative geothermal-sea water district cooling system for five large municipal buildings on the waterfront, launched a comprehensive Community Energy Plan, and rolled out the HRM Sustainability Transition Team – a multi-disciplinary, corporate environmental coordinating team with a mandate to green the HRM corporate culture. And, in February, 2008, HRM received national recognition for its sustainability efforts in the Corporate Knights magazine’s Second Annual Ranking of Canada’s Most Sustainable Cities. HRM ranked 2nd in the medium cities category and 5th overall in the country. Sustainability is becoming intrinsic to HRM.

One HRM department that has been particularly progressive and productive in integrating sustainability is Procurement. This department has been leading the “**Sustainable Procurement Collaboration Initiative**” which is resulting in enhanced awareness, relationship-building, collaboration and both internal (staff) and external (vendors) engagement.

1. Project Objectives

The objective of HRM’s “Sustainable Procurement Collaboration Initiative” is to make a quantum leap in the HRM organization and within the HRM community related to progress in sustainable procurement activities. This initiative was undertaken with the intent to dramatically change behaviours within HRM’s procurement department, within the HRM organization, within HRM’s vendor pool, and within the HRM community as a whole. The initiative is enabling HRM to learn best practices, efficiently and effectively adopt and implement them, and share those learnings with others and ultimately perpetuate the cycle of learning and sharing best practices. It is transferable to every corner of the HRM Corporation, as well as other municipalities and other organizations.

HRM’s “Sustainable Procurement Collaboration Initiative” also complements a renewed focus at the provincial government level on sustainable procurement and, in particular a recognition that public procurement plays an important role in contributing to the sustainable prosperity of the province. In 2007, the Province passed the Environmental Goals and Sustainable Prosperity Act. Amongst its 21 far-reaching goals was a commitment to developing and implementing a provincial sustainable procurement policy by 2009. The Province has also stated it wants to become a North American leader in sustainable procurement. As the economic driver of the province and with 42 percent of Nova Scotia’s population, HRM will be key in helping the Province become a leader in sustainable procurement, and the “Sustainable Procurement Collaboration Initiative” is proving to be a way to move towards the Province’s targets.

2. Brief Description of the Project

In 2005, following a Corporate Wide Sustainability Analysis of the operation by The Natural Step, HRM identified three major focus areas: Green Buildings, Green Procurement, and Green Corporate Culture. The three focus areas are supported by HRM Council's directed corporate operating theme of being a Healthy, Sustainable, Vibrant Community.

At the same time, organizations around the world were struggling with the question of how to embed sustainability within an organization and within society. Models like ImagineCalgary that were characterized by collaboration and wide-spread engagement, were demonstrating success. Successful community visioning projects taking place in HRM were also showing that collaboration is key.

In 2007, HRM's Procurement staff committed to an intensive collaborative effort to achieve and propel their own successes. The "Sustainable Procurement Collaboration Initiative" focused efforts with:

- The Vendor Community
- HRM Staff
 - Within Procurement
 - HRM Clients in the Organization
 - The HRM Sustainable Transition Team (a cross-departmental, corporate environmental coordinating team tasked to green HRM's corporate culture)
- Other Government Agencies
- The Community
 - Atlantic Canada Sustainability Initiative (a collaborative network of 13 sustainability partners from across Atlantic Canada - municipalities, small and large businesses, faith organizations, and environmental ngos - with a common interest in building capacity and momentum around sustainability in Atlantic Canada using The Natural Step framework as a guide. It is the only regional, multi-sector sustainability project in North America, bringing together partners who would not normally be working together to share ideas and support each other in their journeys towards sustainability.)
 - Other interested stakeholders

These collaborations led to success in the following areas in 2007/08:

- Purchase of environmentally preferable office supplies
- Anti-idling policy in price agreements
- Reduction of packaging in specifications
- Use of EcoLogo certified products (cleaning supplies, paint etc.)
- Recyclable Battery Initiative and purchase
- Janitorial Services specifications
- Environmental considerations in vendor performance evaluations
- Refurbishment/disposal of products in an environmentally sensitive manner
- Dedicated training for both procurement and client business unit staff
- Discussions with commodity suppliers to explore opportunities

2008/09 will see a number of completed sustainable procurement initiatives, a strengthening and formalization of process, and further integration into the operation of HRM Procurement.

3. Summary of Project Experience

Collaborating with others on sustainability has been a positive and energizing experience, and the results of the “Sustainable Procurement Collaboration Initiative” has built momentum in all areas of the HRM community and empowered those committed to sustainability. Sustainability is becoming a positive rallying point that enables HRM staff to cross traditional departmental boundaries and work together with the Procurement division. Procurement staff is also finding that vendors are meeting the challenge of climate change in a very responsible and supportive manner.

Collaboration with the Vendor Community: Through meetings and other educational efforts, vendors clearly understand HRM’s commitment to sustainability. Discussing sustainability has become a normal part of the procurement process and a normal component of vendor/staff meetings. Procurement staff is taking advantage of all current sustainability possibilities within existing contracts and communicating opportunities that will be expected in future contracts. Nova Scotian vendors are noted as leaders in contributing to their communities, and have always shown their agility and capability at making things happen. By recognizing their environmental impacts and taking action to lessen their own environmental footprint, vendors are now very quickly making large impacts on HRM’s operation’s environmental impacts. Environmental Performance is one of eight key measureables in HRM’s standardized vendor evaluation programme. A key example of how collaboration with vendors is improving HRM’s performance is a fall 2007 regular vendor meeting with a road construction vendor which included HRM’s Solid Waste Manager, Manager of Sustainability, the Road Construction Supervisor, the Street Repair Superintendent and a variety of Procurement Staff. At this meeting, the vendor updated HRM on their success in utilizing a technology where they are able to re-use old roofing shingles in their asphalt mix. An opportunity was identified to substitute a current standing agreement for asphalt for street repair with the new product and the change was quickly implemented. This vendor meeting enabled HRM to make an effective and efficient change in their operations which theoretically could result in approximately 100 tonnes less of roof shingles being sent to the solid waste management streams.

In addition to reviewing environmental products based on environmental performance, services are also being reviewed through the sustainability ‘lens’. Our Janitorial contract specifications include eco-labeling, waste diversion criteria, and specification of preferable cleaning methods.

Collaboration with HRM Staff: Sustainability Training using the Natural Step framework began rolling out to HRM staff in 2007/08. This is providing a common sustainability language and building awareness of sustainability across the HRM corporate community which numbers over 3700 people. In addition to an E-Learning course, capacity building workshop and “idea-to-action” workshops, an intranet site on sustainability has been created for HRM staff. Procurement staff is contributing a large section on sustainable procurement to the website – providing information on progress, and sustainable procurement resources and tools. This is providing a base for procurement staff to better communicate/speak a common language with its internal clients, and share their successes and experiences with peers, to build awareness.

Virtually every capital purchase now being made is getting the full review of sustainability – this includes recent building construction projects meeting LEED standards.

Another highlight has been Procurement staff's positive collaboration with the HRM Solid Waste Resources team which is directly resulting in reduced waste generated within HRM operations. The two units have worked together to review specifications to help meet HRM and Nova Scotia's challenging waste diversion targets. Discussions have covered battery specifications, usage and disposal, which has led to a progressive solicitation that meets environmental and waste diversion targets. This alliance between Procurement and the Solid Waste Resource team is exemplified by stricter specifications requiring vendors take back product at the end of their lifecycle and that they ensure that products are refurbished or appropriately recycled.

Collaboration with HRM Procurement Staff: This has been a rewarding and important component in the Project's success at furthering sustainable procurement objectives. Within the Procurement Department, staff meets on a regular basis to discuss sustainable initiatives - it is now a standing agenda item at weekly team meetings. The Procurement division has committed to training and educating their own staff on issues of why sustainability is important to them and to HRM; and, how to make more sustainable purchases. Procurement staff has been active participants in HRM's Corporate Sustainability Training: many completed the one-hour Natural Step E-Learning course, and at least 80% of senior Procurement staff (including buyers and procurement representatives) has attended half day workshops (the largest percentage of any HRM department to-date). Training has also included opportunities for Procurement staff to take part in National Institute of Governmental Purchasing (NIGP) webinars (Green Labels, Life Cycle Costing, and Sustainable Procurement) and Canadian Green Building Council workshops to further educate and empower. Further, Procurement staff has participated in a series of "lunch and learn" sessions which were co-ordinated with Clean Nova Scotia – a local environmental non-government organization.

Collaboration with Government Agencies: The Procurement Division has learned a lot by sharing initiatives with other government agencies. Particularly with the Province of Nova Scotia, they have collaborated on some consistent, aggressive and progressive sustainable market solicitations in several areas, including office equipment and supplies, janitorial services, and fleet procurement. These solicitations have changed the way HRM operates and will make a great impact in reducing HRM's environmental footprint. Two telltale examples of sustainable procurement collaboration are fleet life cycle costing and janitorial services. Both organizations had been trialing a variety of life cycle costing templates for fleet purchases, with the Province arriving at the current template. In order to be consistent to market with expectations, and utilize this best version, HRM Procurement envisions standardizing on the methodology of the Province of Nova Scotia. Additionally, as both organizations have been increasing their Janitorial Specifications related to environmental conditions, the revision Nova Scotia Environment developed, in collaboration with the Nova Scotia Department of Economic Development, met all of HRM's interests and objectives. With the revised specifications being a change to the traditional contracts seen in this market, the consistent approach between Province and Municipality ensures a higher success rate with implementation and acceptance in the market.

HRM's Procurement Division is also reaching out to partner with other Nova Scotia municipalities, delivering a session on sustainable procurement at the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities' recent Spring Workshop.

Collaboration with the Atlantic Canada Sustainability Initiative: HRM's Procurement staff has also played an important role in the Atlantic Canada Sustainability Initiative (ACSI). As a member of the HRM Transition Team, Procurement staff attended the three workshops held around the Atlantic Region during 2007-2008, engaging in training, sharing lessons learned, encouraging progress, and opportunities to collaborate. The ACSI project has resulted in the creation of a network that is able to learn from and support each other through the process of making their organizations more sustainable. With leadership from the HRM representatives, ACSI hosted a successful webinar on sustainable procurement in early 2008. As a further outcome from the ACSI, HRM has been speaking to other organizations and municipalities in the Atlantic Region looking for opportunities to more formally collaborate on purchasing initiatives.

4. Contribution of Project to Key Criteria:

Innovation

By empowering the various collaborative partners in this initiative, HRM Procurement has unleashed the collective power to take advantage of current opportunities, position everyone for future possibilities, and identify actions and alternatives in a very effective and efficient manner. Collaboration has enabled HRM to make a quantum leap in sustainable procurement initiatives to the current point where sustainable considerations are made on virtually every purchase and staff will simply perpetuate at getting better and better at making sustainable choices in future procurement decisions. The degree of both individual and collective participation of the entire Procurement team is unique.

Measurable and Significant Benefit

This initiative is enabling HRM Procurement to make great changes to procurement activities. By understanding why sustainability is important and how staff can participate lessening environmental impacts, sustainability has taken on equal importance to the traditional procurement elements of Quality, Price, Safety and Delivery. Both the staff and vendor community understand the commitment of the municipality and the value put on improving actions, as opposed to being a challenge which is occasionally assigned as important on particular identified purchases.

The momentum of this project is continuing into 2008/09 with a variety of initiatives coming forward, including a roll-out of a vendor evaluation programme; creation of a sustainable procurement webpage on HRM's external website; business case reviews of a variety of products and services including playground equipment, bottled water consumption and tire purchases; and strengthening and formalizing the process in which sustainability is incorporated into the procurement process.

Transferability

Collaboration is not a new idea, and HRM's Procurement adopted this as a result of the demonstrated success other organizations have had related to collaborating. Exemplified by a variety of visioning projects at home and across the country, the "Sustainable Procurement Collaboration Initiative" emphasizes that the best work a municipality does is when collaboration is at the heart of it. It is easily transferable across municipalities and across other organizations and institutions.

Contribution of Project to Advancing Professionalism within our Community

In a 2006 McAllister Opinion Research poll, 45% of Canadians list the main reason they do not behave sustainably is lack of government leadership. For sustainability to gain momentum and reach critical mass, there must be leadership demonstrated by government. By clearly embedding sustainability within its day-to-day activities and decision-making, the HRM Procurement Division is showing tremendous leadership on the sustainability file across the municipality, across Nova Scotia, and as a leader across Canada. The "Sustainable Procurement Collaboration Initiative" is making visible strides in a relatively short time period - the types of activities and policies being put forth that are engaging staff, vendors and the wider community are able to be used by purchasing units in other organizations and institutions, and likewise allow them to bring leadership on sustainability to their communities. This new image that is being developed is well-founded - based on forward-thinking, responsible policies, and solid training and educational opportunities that are wide-scale across the Procurement unit.



P.O. Box 1749
Halifax, Nova Scotia
B3J 3A5 Canada

June 23, 2008

Summit Magazine on Public Sector Purchasing
and the Canadian Public Procurement Council

Dear Summit Award Committee:

Re: 2008 Summit Award Nomination - Halifax Regional Municipality

My name is Stephen King and I am Halifax Regional Municipality's (HRM) corporate lead on sustainable environment policy and strategy. I am pleased to nominate the Procurement Division of HRM for a 2008 Summit Award in the municipal government category, for their project entitled, "Sustainable Procurement Collaboration Initiative".

HRM is committed to being a healthy, sustainable, vibrant community, and a corporate wide Sustainability Transition Team was established to help green the corporate culture of over 4000 employees.

Our three key focus areas flowing from a corporate wide Sustainability Analysis include:

- Green Buildings
- Green Corporate Culture
- Green Procurement

The Procurement Division of the HRM Finance Department has been an internal corporate wide leader in all of these areas and in particular Green, or Sustainable Procurement.

The Summit Award nomination for 2008 provides an overview of a number of initiatives being led by our Procurement staff.

Every single Procurement staff member throughout the entire organization has enthusiastically participated in sustainability training workshops and contributed to our overall green procurement efforts.

INFRASTRUCTURE AND ASSET MANAGEMENT, SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT MANAGEMENT OFFICE

Tel: (902) 490-6188 Fax: (902) 490-5862
E-mail: kings@halifax.ca Web Site: www.halifax.ca

They have been an inspiration to all of us and we are all so proud of their commitment and accomplishments to date.

I am honoured to be able to provide a letter of reference to this 2008 Summit Award Nomination.

Yours Sincerely,



Stephen King, Manager
Sustainable Environment Management Office

SAK/ ctf

cc:

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