

Environmental Advisory Committee Motion – March 8, 2012

MOTION: Home and Small Business Energy Retrofit Program

Whereas the City's Green Building Promotion Program should have a greater emphasis to promote residential and small business building energy efficiency and renewable energy retrofits; and

whereas such a program has been successfully adopted in 20 US States and the UK and Vancouver, Halifax, Windsor, King City and other municipalities across Canada are considering such a financing program; and

whereas such a program has the unique advantage of attaching financing to the property itself through a modified form of a local improvement charge (LIC) which has the benefit of protecting the City in event of default and providing attractive financing to citizens; and

whereas such a program can recover all costs of administering and financing and therefore be revenue neutral for the City; and

whereas City planning staff is considering in the Green Building Promotion Program that a feasibility study be undertaken.

Therefore Be It Resolved that the Environmental Advisory Committee recommends to Council through the Planning Committee that staff be directed to conduct a feasibility study to determine the legal, financial, operational and administrative viability of the proposed program, and to report back before September 2012.

Annex: suggested content for feasibility study by the City of Ottawa on a Home & Small Business Energy Retrofit Program

The feasibility study should focus on programs which rely either on the property tax or Hydro Ottawa bill for repayment. The study should include the following topics:

1. Program elements and design including recommendations for property and project eligibility, protocols and evaluation criteria and qualifying contractors and installers;
2. Market definition and assessment including residential retrofits and building upgrades.
3. Legal requirements and potential risks and barriers including the identification of required changes to provincial and municipal regulations;

4. Proposed processes and procedures for application, energy analysis, evaluation, fund disbursement, quality assurance, savings tracking, and repayment and collection;
5. Roles and responsibilities for City departments and contracted out services for each market and process;
6. Potential sources of financing including municipal and social finance resources and the advantages and disadvantage of each;
7. Anticipated administrative costs for start-up and ongoing operations including loan loss reserves, potential sources for these requirements and any suggested fees for participants;
8. Projected 3-year cash flow;
9. If deemed feasible, recommendations and projected timeline for implementation.

The study should involve consultation with the green building and real estate industries and other stakeholders in Ottawa. The cost of this feasibility study should be covered from budget allocations already included in the 2012 Budget.