

Green and Sustainable Purchasing Workshop Final Report

Our Vision

Various orders of government in the Yukon are committed to reducing the environmental impact of their operations by designing and implementing customized environmental and sustainability policies, projects and programs.

Our Organization

To this end, the Yukon Intergovernmental Committee on Environmental Sustainability (YICES) was established in early 2011 to identify opportunities for collaboration to advance a collective sustainability agenda and strengthen individual programs. YICES is currently comprised of representatives from the City of Whitehorse's Environmental Services Branch; the Federal Government's Federal Council office and the Aboriginal and Northern Development Canada office; and Yukon government's Climate Change Secretariat, Procurement Services, and Department of Education. For the duration of our October 25th Green Procurement Workshop, Yukon College's Northern Climate ExChange was a member of the YICES Committee.

We are an open and inclusive committee and encourage membership from all orders of government and organizations.

Our Current Work –

Green and Sustainable Purchasing Workshop October 25, 2011

YICES hired Tim Reeve from Reeve Consulting, an industry expert in the field of ethical and sustainable purchasing to help plan, organize and facilitate a Sustainable Purchasing workshop on October 25th, 2011. The full-day workshop attracted more than 50 participants, including government staff from four orders of government (federal, territorial, municipal and First Nations) as well as participants from other major organizations in the North such as NorthwTel, Yukon Energy Corporation and Yukon College.

With a focus on increasing support and skills for green and sustainable purchasing, as well as catalyzing a network between various levels of government to strengthen sustainability initiatives, a key outcome of the event was the high degree of enthusiasm that participants demonstrated for collaboration.

The day kicked-off with a welcoming address from Mike Johnson, Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works for the Yukon Government who highlighted the importance of sustainable purchasing to the Territory's strategic objectives of reducing costs and improving services and infrastructure. Johnson contextualized his remarks with the effects of climate change on the North and

the millions being spent to repair highways and roads as a result of permafrost break-up.

Key drivers for sustainable purchasing were highlighted in the first session of the day, with a clear overview of the business case and level of support required to develop a successful sustainable purchasing program. Speakers David Knight, Manager, Procurement Services for Highways and Public Works in the Yukon and Melissa Hall, Procurement Advisor, Corporate Services for Aboriginal Affairs & Northern Development Canada, made compelling cases around how sustainable purchasing is helping to take advantage of eco-efficiencies associated with reduced packaging, product take-back and reduced greenhouse gas emissions – issues critical to northern communities where transportation costs can be at a premium.

To walk the talk, YICES then worked to have Madelaine Plouffe, Green Procurement Team Leader with Public Works Government Services Canada in Gatineau, Quebec provide a lunchtime keynote address via video conferencing technology. This creative use of technology allowed for a live and interactive presentation that highlighted how an ‘outside-the-box’ approach can reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Overall participant satisfaction with the workshop, based on participant feedback forms, was very high. Most had positive ratings on the experience overall and the relevance of the topics / speakers. The high level of interest in attending future events is a very strong indicator of a satisfied participant group. Some specific or tactical suggestions for improvements related to the design and delivery of the workshop were provided which will be useful to YICES as they plan future events:

- 22 out of 26 participants said they would plan on attending a future workshop or session
- At least 80% of participants ranked their experiences with the workshop (content, organization, networking, facility) as good or excellent
- Most participants rated the relevance of the individual sessions as a 4 or 5 out of 5; few if any participants rated any content as ‘not relevant’, indicating the organizers did a thorough job of planning the agenda
- Participants were fairly evenly split in their desire to see future initiatives on sustainable purchasing focus on a combination of training, commodity circles or workshops (see collaboration notes below).
- Participants expressed a desire for even more detailed information on local examples of sustainable purchasing including identifying suppliers, brands of green products and more end-of-life information
- From a workshop design and delivery perspective participants commented on the day being long, with few opportunities to get outside (due to working lunch); the main areas for improvement included increasing the level of interactivity, creating more opportunities for networking (e.g. not a working lunch) and ensuring that all

participants have a chance to introduce themselves at the beginning of the day. Some consideration to timing of the event to align with transit schedules was suggested.

Our Future Work

The YICES group intends to continue its collaboration work on sustainability issues in Yukon by following up on the Procurement workshop results and by looking forward to other or continuing opportunities.

1. To build on the momentum generated from the October 25th workshop, YICES intends to spend the next six months following up on ideas and opportunities that arose from the Green Procurement Workshop collaboration session. To this end, we are planning to:
 - Investigate the possibility of hiring an industry professional to:
 - Help identify a priority list of procurement items and actions that will have the highest impact on reducing government greenhouse gasses; and,
 - Help facilitate an inter-government and organization Procurement Network. This network would contribute to and participate in an ongoing dialogue on sustainable purchasing ideas and actions across different orders of government and organizations.

2. Continue to collaborate on ways to further the YICES mandate to reduce the environmental impact of our operations by identifying opportunities for collaboration to advance a collective sustainability agenda and strengthen individual programs. In Spring of 2012 we will begin planning our 2012 action which may include:
 - A more advanced procurement workshop that delves deeper into some of the issues identified in October 2011. In our interview process for the 2011 workshop, individuals identified that collaboration activities were not a priority. In the feedback from the 2011 workshop, it was clear that future opportunities for collaboration on the topic of procurement would be welcome.
 - A workshop on another sustainability topic.