

# THE TOWN HALL CHALLENGE

Demonstrating Municipal Leadership through Better Building Performance

November 2011

## 2010 Energy Performance Benchmarking

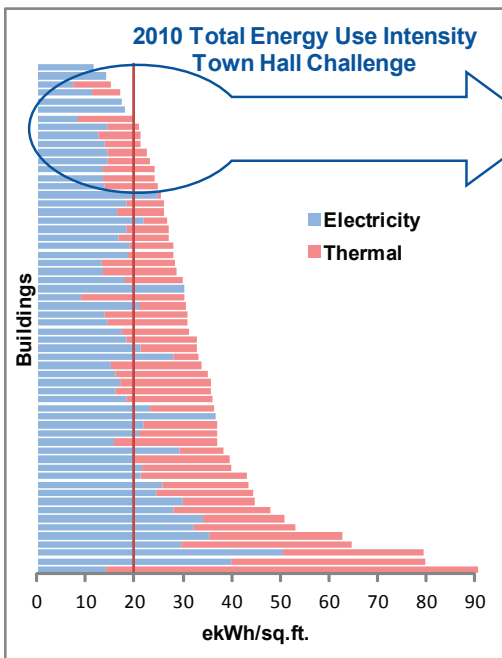
When the City of Fredericton learned that their city hall was one of the most energy efficient town halls in the country, they were delighted, but not overly surprised. "I am happy to see that our City Hall performed so well in this challenge. The recognition is a testament to our commitment to reducing our corporate environmental footprint and being financially sustainable" said Fredericton Mayor Brad Woodside.

The Town Hall Challenge is an initiative of the Mayors' Megawatt Challenge, a program managed since 2003 by Toronto and Region Conservation Authority. Earlier this year it called on all municipalities across Canada to submit their utility data on their town halls to identify those town and city halls that are the top performers in energy use.

There were 60 municipal buildings that were included from practically every region in the country. The top 15 (top 25%) performers are identified and each participating municipality received their own report on how their town hall ranked, its energy intensity per square foot and how much could be saved if it met a target of 20 ekWh per sq.ft.

### Real Savings

If all buildings using over 20 ekWh per sq.ft. were to achieve the target of 20, they would each save on average \$118,000 per year in utility costs and associated GHG emissions.



## Leadership Revealed

"We were very pleased to perform so well in the Town Hall Challenge. We asked that our community find ways to become more sustainable in their businesses and homes and it's essential that we as a municipality lead by example," said Doug Dickerson, Deputy Mayor and Chair of the Sustainable Pickering Advisory Committee.



Pickering City Hall

One of the most iconic symbols of a municipality is its town or city hall. The municipalities which had top performing buildings had the engagement of their council and senior management. Their energy managers stressed the importance of having this group lead the charge.

One of the earliest leadership steps taken for many of these municipalities was their participation in the Federation of Canadian Municipalities' (FCM) Partners for Climate Protection (PCP) which provided the initial focus to reduce consumption and GHG emissions. Several of the top municipalities put together action plans and targets for their building portfolios for PCP. These efforts are bearing fruit as indicated by the results of the Town Hall Challenge.

## 2010 Top 15 Town/City Halls

	Municipality	Province	Building	Built	Sq. Ft.	ekWh/sq.ft.
1	Town of Ladysmith	BC	City Hall	1950s	10,800	11.5
2	Town of Rothesay	NB	Town Hall	1991	22,248	14.1
3	City of Pickering	ON	Civic Complex	1988	140,000	15.0
4	City of Vancouver <sup>1</sup>	BC	City Hall Annex - VanCity	1935	123,495	17.2
5	City of Fredericton	NB	City Hall	1876/1977	47,082	17.3
6	City of Castlegar	BC	City Hall	2007	12,653	18.0
7	City of Hamilton	ON	City Hall	1950s	167,995	19.9
8	Niagara Region <sup>2</sup>	ON	Niagara Region Headquarters	2007	206,292	20.9
9	City of Toronto	ON	Metro Hall	1992	908,525	21.2
10	City of St. Catharines	ON	City Hall	1936/1981	70,084	21.3
11	City of Richmond <sup>3</sup>	BC	City Hall	2000	190,006	22.5
12	City of Dieppe	NB	City Hall	2006	61,417	23.3
13	Resort Municipality of Whistler	BC	Municipal Hall	1970s	17,373	24.0
14	City of Mississauga	ON	Civic Centre	1987	465,185	24.2
15	York Region	ON	Administrative Centre	1993	447,333	24.9

<sup>1</sup> 2007 data <sup>2</sup> 2009 data <sup>3</sup> 2008 data



Dieppe City Hall

For some, all activity needs to be integrated - council buy-in, documentation, tracking and reporting consumption, savings targets and paybacks. “ Make relevant links to key programs like PCP” stated Chantal Whitaker, Coordinator, Sustainability at the City of Pickering.

For others, achieving LEED certification was a priority. Several of the buildings in the group of 60 have or are in the process of certification as new buildings. The City of Dieppe was happy to see the placement with their LEED building but was particularly encouraged now that they have an actual number to shoot for through the Challenge.

Some provinces have taken leadership positions as well, further motivating municipalities to focus on reductions through the initial critical step of reporting. BC requires carbon reporting for the public sector and Ontario will require energy reporting in 2013.

### What’s Age Got To Do With It?

When it comes to energy efficiency of a building, not much as it turns out. The city of Fredericton’s city hall was built in 1876. Hamilton’s was built in the 1950’s and while both have had much done to them and extensions added, the structures are not new. St. Catharines city hall was built in 1936 and an extension added in 1981 while the town of Ladysmith has a 1950s building and it ranked on top.

Of the top 15, only 4 buildings were built in this century while 5 were built before the 1970s. The performance of these buildings was more a factor of good management practices, including consistent monitoring and reporting, and ongoing attention than when it was built in the first place.

### Characteristics of the Top 15

- Average building energy use 19.7 ekWh/sq.ft.
- Top performers had installed, upgraded or better managed BAS controls
- About half had energy management plans
- Most do not have established energy targets, though some are incorporating them into plans, particularly those with FCM’s Partners for Climate Protection
- Most have green teams or committees to help with occupant awareness and better behaviour practices
- Many work with their local hydro utility companies
- Size of the municipality isn’t important: some of the largest and smallest municipalities have buildings in the top



St. Catharines City Hall

While much work has already been done, there is much more to do - a comment reinforced by several municipalities. Ron Roberts, Facilities Manager at the City of Rothesay, concluded his advice to others looking to take action “Always present the ramifications of the do nothing scenario.”

