Hit the Green Button.

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A MEAC RECOMMENDATION

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Approved by Consensus: March 22nd, 2010

Recommendation

Whereas youth are creative, caring, and intelligent citizens of Winnipeg;

and whereas the Call to Action for Our Winnipeg identifies two areas requiring an external grant to develop public education, awareness and outreach tools that engage Winnipeggers in environmental issues: " Green Living Campaign: Through the support of an external grant, institute a public education and awareness campaign focused on urban sustainability . . .Online Sustainability Tools for Citizens - Develop and implement tools to support sustainable choices, such as a personal carbon footprint calculator." (Page 39 - Section: Actions for Sustainability: City Green Building Standards, a Community Greenhouse Gas Reduction Strategy and More.);

and whereas the MEAC strategic planning session held on October 17th, 2009 identified both "Green Education" and "Green Club" as top priorities (see appendix 'a');

and whereas youth are under-represented on committees dealing with civic issues;

and whereas it requires a concerted effort to engage youth in the decision-making processes that ultimately affect them;

and whereas youth exhibit a strong morale sense when it comes to the environment;

and whereas youth exert a considerable influence over the behaviour, ideals and decisions of their parents and caregivers;

and whereas youth, especially teenagers, expect to be treated with the same level of respect given their elders;

and whereas engaging youth requires a specialized aesthetic and a tailored language that appeals to their culture and sensibilities;

and whereas individual actions on the environment lead to tangible benefits for the community as a whole and the City of Winnipeg as an organization;

Therefore be it resolved that the Mayor's Environmental Advisory Committee (MEAC) recommend to the Mayor that the City of Winnipeg Public Service be asked to explore:

The creation of an interactive online tool that combines aspects of social networking, skill building and a "points" reward program that:

- is extremely easy to use
- targets children, teenagers and adults separately, but equally, and *according to their typical area of interest*
- encourages information sharing amongst family members
- makes the translation from individual action to collective results simply and intuitively
- links children's desire to save the environment to actions that their parents can take on their behalf
- is positive in tone and look
- focuses on the simple steps that individuals and families can take to reduce their ecological footprint
- integrates new and ongoing city environmental initiatives
- creates healthy competition amongst families striving to reduce their ecological footprint
- is hosted at winnipeg.ca under an interesting domain name (suggestion "winnipeg.ca/HitTheGreenButton.ca")
- allows households to choose to implement various "upgrades", log them and see updated results of tangible benefits like time or money saved, pollution reduction, etc..
- contributes valuable data back to the Winnipeg Public service on community-wide GHG reduction activities
- automatically generates metrics that are communicated graphically back to the user
- is supported by a marketing plan that cosiders new media forums and technology types, alongside web banners, logos, and teaser ads, which could be used by various city departments looking to get young people interested in the environmental aspects of their work
- IMPORTANT: offers exciting rewards appropriate to each demographic, concentrating on rewards that can either be offered at minimal to no cost by the City of Winnipeg; prizes for kids and teens could included swimming pool passes, gift certificates to programming through the leisure guides, skateboards, - for parents it could include one-time rebates on gas/water bills, family bus passes, Moose tickets, Fort Whyte Alive passes, dinner at the Amici's or the Oval room, etc..

Graphic Design and Interface Best Practices:

kids:
(look) http://treehousetv.com/ , http://www.tamagotchi.com/
(usability) http://www.webkinz.com/us_en/

teens:
(look) http://www.surlybikes.com/

adults:
(ease of use): http://freerice.com/;
(prize system): http://hockeypool.cbc.ca/cbc/hnic09/portfolio.cgi