



City of Richmond

Report to Committee

To: Public Works and Transportation Committee

Date: May 20, 2015

From: John Irving, P.Eng. MPA
Director, Engineering

File: 10-6125-07-02/2015-
Vol 01

Re: BC Climate Leadership Plan

Staff Recommendation

That a letter under the Mayor's signature be sent to the Premier's office, with copies to the Minister of Environment, the Chair of the BC Climate Leadership Team, the provincial Climate Action Secretariat, and Richmond MLAs, requesting that the comment period for the draft "Framework for the Climate Leadership Plan" be extended to September 30, 2015, to provide sufficient time for local government review.

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REPORT CONCURRENCE		
ROUTED TO:	CONCURRENCE	CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER
Intergovernmental Relations & Protocol Unit	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
REVIEWED BY STAFF REPORT / AGENDA REVIEW SUBCOMMITTEE	INITIALS: 	APPROVED BY CAO

Staff Report

Origin

In 2010, Council adopted targets in Richmond's Official Community Plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions 33 percent below 2007 levels by 2020 and 80 percent by 2050, noting Council's understanding that actions by the province to effect emissions reductions within provincial jurisdiction are necessary to achieve these targets. This report provides information on the process to develop the BC Climate Leadership Plan, and recommends steps for the City to inform the content of the plan.

This report supports Council's 2014-2018 Term Goal #4 Leadership in Sustainability:

Continue advancement of the City's sustainability framework and initiatives to improve the short and long term livability of our City, and that maintain Richmond's position as a leader in sustainable programs, practices and innovations.

4.1. *Continued implementation of the sustainability framework.*

4.2. *Innovative projects and initiatives to advance sustainability.*

This report supports Council's 2014-2018 Term Goal #5 Partnerships and Collaboration:

Continue development and utilization of collaborative approaches and partnerships with intergovernmental and other agencies to help meet the needs of the Richmond community.

5.1. *Advancement of City priorities through strong intergovernmental relationships.*

Analysis

Background

In 2008, the province of British Columbia released a Climate Action Plan, which outlined an array of climate action commitments. Key pillars of the 2008 Climate Action Plan include:

- Legislated targets to reduce greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) 33 percent below 2007 levels by 2020, and 80 percent by 2050;
- The revenue-neutral carbon tax, and commitments to work as part of the Western Climate Initiative to develop a cap-and-trade system for industrial sector emissions;
- A commitment to a carbon-neutral provincial public sector, and encouragement of local governments' carbon neutral commitments as part of the Climate Action Charter.
- A variety of strategies, policies and programs serving a range of different sectors, including transportation, residential and commercial buildings, industry, waste management, agriculture, forestry, and the energy sector. This includes amendments to the Local Government Act (Bill 27, 2008), requiring local governments to include greenhouse gas emission targets, policies and actions in their Official Community Plans and Regional Growth Strategies.

Correspondingly, in 2010, Council adopted targets in Richmond's OCP to reduce community GHG emissions 33 percent below 2007 levels by 2020, and 80 percent below 2007 levels by 2050. Council specified that these targets are "subject to the understanding that senior levels of government undertake necessary GHG reduction improvements within their jurisdictions with the necessary assistance being provided to the City."

Richmond's subsequent 2014 Community Energy and Emissions Plan (CEEP) outlines an array of strategies that the City is taking to pursue its energy and emissions goals. Importantly, the CEEP recognizes that City emissions reduction targets will only be achieved with "Big Breakthroughs," including widespread uptake of zero GHG transportation systems and new buildings, and deep energy retrofits of existing buildings. The CEEP recognizes that these reductions are not achievable by the City alone; rather, they require provincial and federal regulatory changes, market innovation, increasing carbon pricing, and coordinated efforts between all levels of government and industry. Moreover, the CEEP includes the following strategy:

Strategy 12: Encourage Sustained Action by Senior Levels of Government.

Provincial Climate Leadership Plan

On May 12, 2015, the province announced the formation of a Climate Leadership Team, which is tasked with providing recommendations to inform the province's development of its second Climate Action Plan. As described in the government's news release announcing the initiative, the mandate of the Climate Leadership Team is to provide advice and recommendations on:

- How to maintain B.C.'s climate leadership;
- Updates to the current Climate Action Plan as well as new programs and policies required to meet B.C.'s greenhouse gas reduction targets while maintaining strong economic growth and successfully implementing the BC Jobs Plan, including the liquefied natural gas strategy;
- Actions to achieve GHG reductions required across the industrial sector, transportation sector and built environment;
- How to further the Province's government-to-government relationships with First Nations while constructively finding climate solutions; and
- How to further the Province's collaboration with local governments within the context of mutually-beneficial climate actions.

The Climate Leadership Team is scheduled to release a draft "Framework for the Climate Leadership Plan" in July, and to complete their work on a revised plan by October 2015. This document will provide input for a new provincial government Climate Leadership Plan. A draft version of the Climate Leadership Plan is scheduled for release in December 2015, and the final Plan is scheduled for release in March 2016.

City Input into the Climate Leadership Plan

The development of the Climate Leadership Plan is a key opportunity for the City to provide input and comments on how the province might best support climate action by local government. There are a variety of changes in provincial regulations or policy that could facilitate action to reduce emissions at the local scale. There is an opportunity to communicate to the Province the City’s perspectives on key opportunities for climate leadership, both during the initial development of the Climate Leadership Plan, as well as during comment periods for both the “Framework for the Climate Leadership Plan” and the Province’s draft Plan. However, the proposed 30-day consultation period for the Draft Framework for the Climate Leadership Plan makes it difficult for stakeholders to respond meaningfully. In order to provide comment, staff recommend that:

- A request be made to extend the comment period for the Draft Framework for the Climate Leadership Plan. Currently, the Province plans for a 30 day comment period sometime in July and August. This limited comment period may preclude Council from reviewing the Draft Framework at a scheduled Council meeting. Therefore, staff recommend that a letter be sent to the Premier’s office, copying the Minister of Environment, the Chair of the BC Climate Leadership Team, the provincial Climate Action Secretariat, and Richmond MLAs, requesting that the comment period for the draft “Framework for the Climate Leadership Plan” be extended to September 30, 2015, to provide sufficient time for review.

Staff will continue to monitor the process and provide updates as developments occur.

Financial Impact

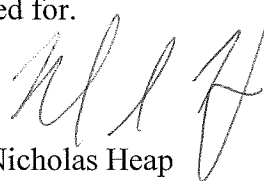
None.

Conclusion

The Province has announced a process to develop a Climate Leadership Plan. This report recommends how the City can provide comment on the Plan, to ensure that local government perspectives on climate action opportunities are best accounted for.



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