

Present:

Councillor Bose, Vice-Chair
D. Jack
D. Smith
K. Purton
M. Lamont
S. Sajda

Absent:

Mayor Locke, Chairperson

Staff Present:

S. Neuman, General Manager, Engineering
Y. Yohannes, Director, Utilities
N. Aven, Director, Parks
J. Owen, District Energy Manager, Engineering
S. Lee, Administrative Assistant

A. ADOPTIONS**1. Adoption of the Agenda**

It was Moved by S. Sajda
Seconded by K. Purton
That the agenda of the Environment and
Climate Change Committee meeting of September 12, 2023, be adopted.
Carried

2. Adoption of the Minutes**a. Environment and Climate Change Committee – June 14, 2023**

It was Moved by K. Purton
Seconded by S. Sajda
That the minutes of the Environment and
Climate Change Committee meeting held on June 14, 2023, be adopted.
Carried

b. Bear Creek Improvement Project Sub-Committee - July 25, 2023

It was Moved by K. Purton
Seconded by M. Lamont
That:

1. The minutes of the July 25, 2023, Bear Creek Improvement Project Sub-Committee be amended by deleting the following sentences:

"Initial concerns about water source and potential ecosystem impact have been eased. The sub-committee now believes that the existing natural grasslands will self-sustain by drawing water from the northern park area. With this reassurance, they believe that preserving and integrating these grasslands into the broader restoration efforts, as opposed to constructing new "man made" wetlands remains a crucial endeavor."

2. The minutes be adopted as amended.
Carried

B. STAFF PRESENTATION**1. District Energy Manager, Engineering, City of Surrey**

Staff provided a presentation on the Climate Change Action Strategy (CCAS) implementation. The following information was highlighted:

- The CCAS envisions a zero-carbon climate-resilient city by 2050. It outlines the actions that the City will take, together with other levels of government and partners, to reach their adopted science-based GHG reduction targets and improve resilience to climate change impacts. These GHG targets are to reduce Surrey's community GHG emissions to net zero before 2050, reduce corporate GHG emissions to absolute zero before 2050, and reduce community GHG emissions by 45% by 2030 compared with 2010 levels. As of 2020, Surrey's total carbon emissions were about 2.4 million tonnes per year where vehicles account for 45%, buildings for 42%, and other smaller sources for 13% of the total emissions. The biggest sources of Surrey's community carbon emissions were light-duty vehicles registered in Surrey which was 38% and residential buildings which was 27%.
- The CCAS framework was shaped by the following six guiding principles: Climate Equity, Zero-Carbon Resilience, Embedment, Accountability, Collaboration, and Maximizing Co-Benefits. The CCAS is organized around a long-term vision of a zero-carbon climate-resilient city in 2050, supported by six components or critical areas of action which are Bold City Leadership, Resilient 15-Minute Neighbourhoods, Safe Zero-Carbon Transportation, Healthy Zero-Carbon Buildings, Climate-Positive Resilient Ecosystems, and Resilient Energy and Zero-Waste Systems. Each component includes a vision, goals, and shifts. Shifts are the changes needed to achieve each goal. Actions supporting each of the shifts, including quick-starts that will be initiated within two years, are included in the strategy report.
- According to the communications campaign plan, the City revised the Sustainability and Energy Services and CCAS websites, issued a media release, will issue additional social media releases between July to October 2023, and will launch a climate tracking platform in early fall 2023. Central to the messaging is the important role the CCAS will play in guiding the City to reduce GHG emissions and improve resilience to climate change impacts in the community. The new climate tracking platform will bring CCAS structure to life, communicate progress on CCAS actions, support collaboration between the City's various divisions, and monitor impact of actions through indicators. The platform will provide transparency and accountability as CCAS actions are implemented, and the progress towards targets is measured and reported.

- Community Services, Corporate Services, Engineering, Finance, Fire, Investment and Intergovernmental Relations, Parks, Recreation, and Culture, and Planning and Development are the City departments and divisions that lead or support actions in the CCAS. The Sustainability and Energy Services team in the Engineering Department leads the strategy and will be working with all the divisions and departments across the City to deliver the outcomes. The team is initiating conversations about CCAS actions, providing expertise, sharing best practice examples and funding opportunities, and coordinating allocation of Local Government Climate Action Program (LGCAP) funds. They also carefully consider resource planning such as existing staff and funding resources, reprioritization of resources, new Council approvals, external grants, and LGCAP funding.
- The new LGCAP funding will help resource the City's Climate Change Action Strategy. The program supports local climate action to help BC achieve goals of the CleanBC Roadmap to 2030 and the Climate Preparedness and Adaptation Strategy. Surrey receives \$1.17 million annually from 2022 to 2024 and the funds are used for staffing, contracts, infrastructure, and engagement. LGCAP Working Group evaluates projects for alignment with CCAS objectives and prioritizes initiatives that can be enabled or expanded with LGCAP funds. LGCAP is an important source of discretionary funds the City receives for climate action because there are many other grant programs for individual projects with competitive processes that require high lead time for planning. Without any certainty in the project, this gives the City the ability to plan long-term for different programs that may be ongoing for various phases of the programs.
- The Committee could support the implementation of the CCAS by sharing its communication materials within their networks, identifying opportunities to advance CCAS objectives through projects presented to the Committee, and providing feedback on upcoming implementation of CCAS actions such as new construction standards, incorporating climate objectives into OCP and Zoning Bylaw updates, and sustainability standards and design guidelines for new civic facilities. The Committee could also participate in the Climate-Friendly Homes Tour on October 14, 2023 by recruiting homeowners to showcase their climate-friendly homes, promoting this event across their networks, and attending the tour.

In response to questions from the Committee, staff provided the following information:

- There is a need for more leading indicators in achieving high-level gas targets. The direct link between specific actions and their impact can be challenging to establish, especially when results take time to materialize. Efforts have been made to incorporate some leading indicators into the strategy, but further development is required to create a comprehensive set of fine-grained indicators that track incremental progress for all actions. This is an ongoing process, and as actions are developed and their success measurement becomes clearer, new indicators will be devised. The climate tracker platform is expected to aid in monitoring progress for each action using specific indicators. Data availability across the province is improving, with more municipalities taking similar steps to collect and manage data related to climate goals. Metro Vancouver, for instance, prioritizes data collection in their action plan and employs innovative approaches in cases where data is lacking to better understand and manage climate-related issues.

- The creation of the strategy involved public input. With the strategy now adopted, its implications are far-reaching as it encompasses numerous initiatives. One of the initial priorities is addressing emissions in new buildings, which will require consultations with the industry before taking any significant steps, along with seeking input from the public. Actions outlined in the plan will not be implemented without opportunities for engagement. Throughout the implementation process, there will be multiple chances for public input, industry collaboration, and engagement with various stakeholders.
- It was suggested that staff could connect with the City of Vancouver regarding their amplifier network for community involvement. This network extends the City of Vancouver's reach by sharing key messages and opportunities through their own distribution channels to invite greater public participation in their Climate Emergency Action Plan. They have a mandate to assist other cities in understanding the functioning of this network.
- Regarding data and leading indicators, it is recognized that for certain actions, the direct impact on megaton production may not be immediately evident due to the time it takes for such effects to manifest. However, there is potential to gauge impact by tracking metrics like the number of vehicles and kilometers traveled resulting from specific actions. These more immediate indicators can provide insights into the potential long-term effects of the actions. As this approach evolves, and additional indicators are integrated, it will become easier to grasp the impacts of each action.
- As of 2020, Surrey's total carbon emissions amounted to approximately 2.4 million tonnes per year, with corporate emissions constituting around 1% of this total. The accuracy of these figures is high, as significant effort has been invested in aligning Surrey's emission calculation and reporting practices with those of other municipalities across the province. To compile this data, Surrey relies on various sources, including information provided by entities such as BC Hydro, Fortis BC, and ICBC. Calculating emissions consistently across the province is a complex task due to the multitude of data sources involved.
- When quantifying transportation-related emissions, it is challenging to distinguish whether emissions occur on Surrey roads or are produced by Surrey residents. Translink plays a role in this by gathering data on total vehicle travel in the region, attempting to allocate emissions across different municipalities. Another methodology involves attributing emissions based on licensed vehicles in Surrey, which may not always accurately reflect the origin of emissions, especially for truck traffic that has broader regional, provincial, or federal implications.
- CCAS is a Citywide initiative involving all departments and divisions within the City, each contributing to its development and implementation. This in-depth CCAS presentation is particularly relevant to this Committee as its members are subject matter experts in environment and climate change who play a crucial role in helping shape the strategy and its programs by providing valuable recommendations staff. The presentation is typically not delivered to other committees, unless there are specific components that are pertinent to those committees. For instance, some components are shared with the Agriculture and Food Policy Committee as there is some overlap to their mandate.

- During the process of modeling to understand the current emissions inventory and pathways to achieving zero emissions, staff made educated estimates regarding the expected reductions in different sectors. It was determined that with meaningful policy and action they could potentially achieve emissions reductions to within 10% of zero emissions. To fully offset the remaining emissions and reach net-zero emissions, sources of negative emissions are required, mainly coming from Surrey's forests. The GHG production was not quantified at the 10%, but part of that. Some of this offsetting might involve other mechanisms. While specific numbers were not provided during the presentation, staff mentioned they did quantify these aspects as part of their assessment and planning process.
- Retrofitting existing homes to reduce emissions is a crucial task, especially given that existing buildings pose significant challenges in meeting emissions reduction targets. This endeavor is resource-intensive, making support from senior levels of government essential due to its high cost. Private sector financing will also be pivotal in accelerating the transition toward more sustainable building practices. While the City is actively engaged in partnerships to address these challenges, the primary focus currently lies on leveraging existing funding opportunities for energy efficiency retrofits which encompass measures such as insulation, window replacements, and heat pump installations. Several funding programs and incentives are accessible through BC Hydro and Fortis BC rebate programs; however, support from the federal government is limited.
- To monitor progress, staff plans to provide regular reports to Council, offering updates on the implementation of the climate action plan. These updates will be made available on the progress tracker website, allowing residents access to information on the progress of various actions and their impacts. It was suggested that the Committee should receive regular presentations on the platform, which will delve into progress updates and provide in-depth discussions on action items such as transitioning to electric heating over natural gas furnaces, adopting electric hot water heaters, and exploring district energy solutions. There was also a suggestion to conduct independent audits every two years to assess whether the City is on track to meet its climate goals. Staff could consider various audit options and can present these choices to the Council for consideration.

C. NEW BUSINESS**1. Climate Change Action Strategy Adoption**

File: 01512-02

In response to questions from the Committee, staff provided the following information:

- To ensure the implementation of guidelines and strategies, staff are actively engaged in ongoing work to implement the strategies outlined in this plan. The strategy serves as a roadmap to identify directions and priorities in various areas and maintain a balance between different priorities and considerations. The document is designed to signal the City's focus on these issues and the need for ongoing efforts. Staff will continue their efforts to make progress in each area and advance various initiatives. The intent is to demonstrate that while progress may be more advanced in some areas, there is still work to be done in others.
- The climate test serves as a tool to evaluate the City's performance in terms of climate impact when developing new city assets. It helps assess whether there are any barriers preventing the City from achieving its long-term climate goals and whether adjustments are needed. The climate test initially primarily focuses on emissions rather than green assets. The approach begins with a few pilot projects and intends to expand its scope to include natural assets once the protocols and philosophy are well-established throughout the organization. Tangible examples of where the climate test is being applied include civic facilities, transitioning the City's fleet to more sustainable options, and capital projects.
- The quick-starts are significant and impactful initiatives that are prioritized for immediate actions because they are important, impactful, and implementable, and within the City's control in terms of timing.
- The BC Zero Carbon Step Code is a new regulation introduced as part of the BC Building Code updates that limits GHG emissions from new construction. It forms part of the 2022 BC Building Code update that came into effect in May 2023. Similar to the BC Energy Step Code, the Zero Carbon Step Code will be available for municipalities to opt into and for them to adopt an accelerated implementation timeline. Staff are engaged in a comprehensive review process, examining various approaches taken by other municipalities. The objective is to identify potential solutions and options to address specific challenges. The review process aims to provide a detailed understanding of what is happening in other places, explore available alternatives, and assess their potential impacts.

The Committee noted the following comments:

- On Page 43 of the report under 'Strengths to Build On', it was suggested to include Biodiversity Design Guidelines.

- On Page 43 of the report under 'Shifts – What is needed to reach this Goal?', it was suggested to include residential private lands and explore possibilities to allow land to manage these ecosystems and restore houses from private and residential lands.
- It was suggested that the City consider implementing mitigation measures or offsets when converting green areas of City lands into commercial lands, such as the sale of 54 acres of land in South Campbell Heights for commercial purposes. This approach would involve compensatory actions that help counterbalance the environmental impact of converting green spaces into commercial developments, and contribute to the overall CCAS by maintaining or enhancing ecological balance and sustainability in the city, aligning with broader climate and environmental goals.
- The Committee will focus on two topics from this report at the next meeting: Healthy Zero-Carbon Buildings and Climate-Positive Resilient Ecosystems. Staff will present the goals, strategies, and associated quick-start actions within these pillars for discussion. The Committee will also have the opportunity to provide recommendations, including which quick-start actions within each pillar should be prioritized.

It was

Moved by S. Sajda

Seconded by D. Jack

That the Environment and Climate Change

Committee receive the report dated September 8, 2023 regarding the Climate Change Action Strategy Adoption for information.

Carried

D. CORRESPONDENCE

1. **South Campbell Heights** Little Campbell Watershed Society

It was

Moved by S. Sajda

Seconded by K. Purton

That the Environment and Climate Change

Committee receive the correspondence dated April 17, 2023 from the Little Campbell Watershed Society regarding South Campbell Heights for information.

Carried

E. OTHER BUSINESS**1. Delegation Request**

- (a) Myles Lamont, Principal Wildlife Biologist, TerraFauna Wildlife Consulting, Inc.

Requesting to appear before the Committee to provide a presentation on the loophole in the City of Surrey tree bylaw and how it affects the environment.

It was suggested that the Manager of Trees and Landscapes and the General Manager of Planning and Development Department attend the next meeting for this presentation.

It was

Moved by D. Jack

Seconded by S. Sajda

That Myles Lamont, Principal Wildlife Biologist, TerraFauna Wildlife Consulting, Inc. be heard as a delegation at the next Environment and Climate Change Committee meeting.

Carried

2. Roundtable

A round table discussion ensued as follows:

- The City should consider evaluating all the lands it owns and converting them into park reserves.
- It was suggested that staff provide a presentation at the next meeting on the South Campbell Heights area and discuss the status of the Neighborhood Concept Plan and the work done with the Semiahmoo First Nation.
- Staff will complete the Integrated Storm Management Plan study for South Campbell Heights by November 2023 and subsequently deliver a presentation to the stakeholders, which will include a summary of their consultations with the First Nations.
- The City is purchasing 9714 – 192 Street in Port Kells for the future expansion of the adjacent City Biofuel Facility, concurrent with the owner of 9714 – 192 street acquiring from the City the northerly 19,385 square metres portion of the property located at 19085 – 16 Avenue in the South Campbell Heights area.
- The sub-committee minutes presented thoughtful recommendations and ideas that would bring value to both the community and the park. The level of thought, deliberation, and care demonstrated in the discussions were commendable.

F. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Environment and Climate Change Committee is scheduled for Wednesday, October 11, 2023.

G. ADJOURNMENT

It was

Moved by K. Purton

Seconded by S. Sajda

That the Environment and Climate Change

Committee meeting be adjourned.

Carried

The Environment and Climate Change Committee meeting adjourned at 6:56 p.m..

Jennifer Ficocelli, City Clerk

Mayor Locke, Chairperson