City of Richmond

Report to Committee

To:	General Purpose Committee	**Date:**	January 4, 2010
From:	Cathryn Volkering Carlile, General Manager- Community Services	**File:**	01-0370-01/2009-Vol01

Re: Enhanced Sustainability Initiative – Proposed Corporate Sustainability Framework

Staff Recommendation

That Council adopt Richmond's Corporate Sustainability Framework as presented in this report dated January 4, 2010.

[signature]

Cathryn Volkering Carlile
General Manager - Community Services
(4068)

Atts: 2

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Staff Report

Origin

For several years, the City of Richmond and other organizations have undertaken a wide range of actions to advance local community sustainability. Despite these actions, local communities are experiencing increasing difficulties in meeting current needs in a manner which does not adversely impact future generational health and well-being. In response to these increasing challenges, Richmond City Council adopted an Enhanced Sustainability Initiative in 2007 to strengthen corporate efforts in advancing local community sustainability.

This report provides to Council the first phase of one of the major action priorities of the Enhanced Sustainability Initiative, namely, the development of an overarching Sustainability Framework. The Framework is anticipated to strongly support the following Council Term Goal:

> Council Term Goal #7: " Sustainability and the Environment – *Demonstrate leadership in and significant advancement of the City's agenda for sustainability through the development and implementation of a comprehensive strategy that among other objectives includes incorporating sustainability into our City policies and bylaws*".

Background

About the City's Enhanced Sustainability Initiative

Adopted in March 2007, the City's Enhanced Sustainability Initiative is aimed at achieving greater results from the City's sustainability practices. Key priorities of the Initiative are to:

- establish a coherent, systematic and well-managed approach to sustainability action, one which focuses on sustainability-based priorities, thereby achieving more meaningful results
- strengthen sustainability-based decision-making throughout the organization by increasing the application of sound triple-bottom line assessment practices (i.e., practices which take into account the full range of costs and benefits across environmental, social and economic dimensions).

City of Richmond's Sustainability Framework

<u>Purpose</u>

The development of the Sustainability Framework is one of the main projects of the City's Enhanced Sustainability Initiative. Various City policies and plans reference sustainability, and a wide range of initiatives with sustainability elements have been undertaken. Examples include the City's Affordable Housing Strategy, Environmental Sensitive Areas program, Terra Nova natural areas and park development, City Centre Area Plan, corporate High Performance Building Policy and facility developments, corporate Energy Management Program and corporate GreenFleet Program.

The City's Sustainability Framework enables the City to track progress and guide sustainability-driven action in a more systematic, strategic and complete manner. Serving as a strategic management hub, the Framework brings together the range of action initiatives across the organization and aligns action to key priorities, specified goals and performance measures. In this

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manner the Framework provides a mechanism for visualizing and reviewing the broad range of sustainability needs and actions holistically[1] and benchmarking overall sustainability progress.

By encapsulating the full suite of sustainability needs and aligning action initiatives to specific goals and performance targets, the Framework enables the City to:
- build capacity and awareness on sustainability and the City's sustainability action initiatives
- better identify interrelationships among objectives and move forward with strategic action which focuses on priorities, addresses any key gaps and amplifies results through multi-objective-based and synergistic action
- better address trade-offs among sustainability objectives and achieve an improved balance across the wide range of sustainability interests (a more complete approach)
- better review and report results
- better communicate the City's initiatives in a holistic manner, one which emphasizes the importance of the whole and interdependence among objectives, and
- better drive progress more effectively through continuous improvement.

The Framework also enables sustainability to be part of strategic discussions throughout the organization and integrates sustainability action with governance and accountability. This more systematic approach will better enable the City to make sustainable practices a more meaningful part of doing business, as opposed to an added-on element. The Framework also serves to better position the City to secure senior government funding opportunities, many of which are now conditional upon the demonstration of comprehensive sustainability planning and action.

Ultimately, the Framework provides two core functions:
1. to serve as a guiding blueprint for the corporation in its role as a local government on actions the City can take to most effectively advance local community sustainability;
2. to serve as a communication tool for sharing sustainability knowledge and progress, conveying expectations, policies and actions to the community and reporting corporate sustainability performance.

Objectives

The specific objectives of the Framework are to:
- establish common language and understanding of sustainability for the City of Richmond
- explain what "sustainability" is and why it is important
- identify sustainability priorities
- identify strategic directions, goals and targets for measuring progress
- identify City governance structure for implementing action
- collate and integrate City action programs based on plan-do-review-improve management model and align action with core priorities and resource availability to create a strategic, practical and comprehensive action program for the City
- increase awareness of relationships and interdependencies among objectives and action programs and support the advancement of action initiatives which recognize the

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[1] For example, action initiatives aimed at improving affordable housing, food security, natural resource replenishment, sustainable economic development, climate change response, sustainable community development, green corporate practices, etc.

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interconnected system of which they are a part (i.e., a system with overlapping interests conflicts and synergies)
- establish appropriate performance measures and a system for tracking results and benchmarking progress holistically
- communicate sustainability performance.

Development Process

The Sustainability Framework is being developed through use of web-based on-line software tool called See-IT (social, environmental, economic integration tool). The software provides a graphical depiction of the entire sustainability landscape in an easy and engaging manner. The use of an on-line tool also enables the Framework to be made widely accessible and positions the Framework as a truly "living tool", one that continually evolves. An overview of the Framework is provided in Attachment 1.

Content in the Framework is being developed in phases through the efforts of interdepartmental teams (Attachment 2). The team-based approach increases corporate engagement in the sustainability agenda, strengthening corporate capacity while at the same time, increasing implementation success through the development of a shared action agenda.

It is noted that the Framework serves as a centralizing tool. Any specific action or other measure which may result in costs to the City would be brought forward to Council separately for approval. It is anticipated that over the long-term the Framework will serve to reduce costs to the City by identifying strategic action to reduce long-term impacts and opportunities for pursuing multiple-objectives simultaneously. It is anticipated that the Framework will be developed December 2011.

Progress To-Date

The first phase of a proposed working Sustainability Framework using the See-It platform has been completed. It has resulting in the
- development of a proposed working description of sustainability and corporate commitment statement
- consolidation of important aspects of sustainability for the organization and nine proposed sustainability goal areas (Attachment 1)
- demonstration of a proposed strategic management program for one of the core goal areas – Leadership in Climate Change[2]. The development of the Sustainability Framework provides a one-stop shop, for communicating and managing the City's climate change activities, consolidating existing information and incorporating new material to result in a complete program. The working content includes the following:
  - an issue synopsis articulating the need for corporate action
  - a proposed goal and Council adopted core strategies
  - a consolidation of key action programs and initiatives
  - an inventory information on current corporate and community greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions
  - a schedule for establishing GHG reduction performance targets a
  - a management structure and proposed 5-year interdepartmental action agenda to support long-term systematic effort.

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[2] Leadership in Climate Change was selected as one of the first goal areas to be developed in order to assist the City in effectively meeting new policy and legislative requirements from the Province.
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An overview of the specific content developed to-date is provided in Attachment 1. This content serves as a demonstration of the utility of See-IT. A proposed workplan for Sustainability Framework development is provided in Attachment 2. This workplan identifies five development phases and outlines when sustainability goals, strategies and targets will be provided to Council for consideration.

Community Engagement

The Framework serves as a unifying management tool, consolidating and integrating Council decisions. It consolidates the City's key sustainability policies and actions, many of which have been developed in strategic planning processes which incorporate community input (e.g., City Centre Area plan, Transportation Plan, etc.). The Framework also provides a centralizing hub for reporting out on the wide variety of community engagement action such as the Climate Change Showdown Initiative which inspires Richmond school children and their families to take action on climate change.

Next Steps

Staff recommend that Council adopt the Sustainability Framework as presented in this report.

Upon Council endorsement, staff will continuing populating the Framework in accordance with Attachment 2. Feedback will be sought from the community groups and organizations and the City's advisory committees, including but not limited to Advisory Committee on the Environment, Agricultural Advisory Committee, Economic Advisory Committee and Intercultural Advisory Committee.

The Framework will made accessible through the City's web-site following the completion of Milestone 2 (i.e., Council adoption of Sustainability Foundations and Climate Change strategies and targets). A news release and newspaper bulletin will be prepared to advise the community of the launch of the city's Sustainability Framework. Staff will ensure that communication pertaining to the Framework is on-going, seeking new media and taking advantages of future opportunities as they become available.

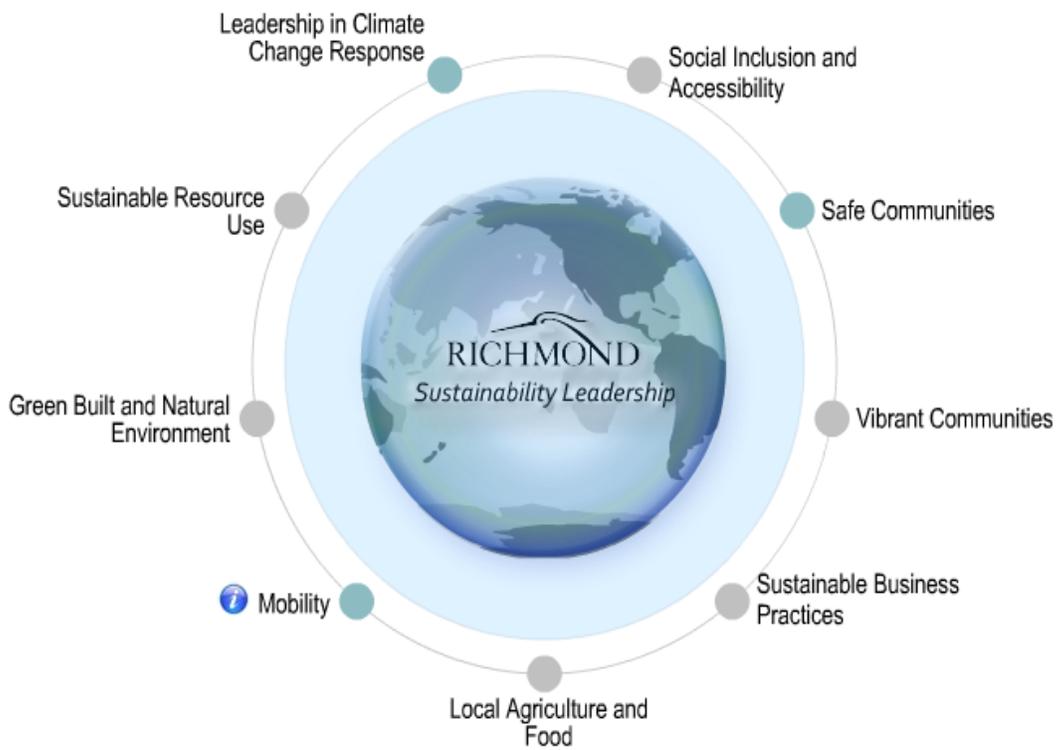## Financial Impact

None.

Conclusion

A key challenge in corporate sustainability is the alignment and integration of diverse plans, civic functions, organizational structures and individuals into an inspirational yet achievable vision and action plan. To effectively bring all the diverse pieces together and provide a clear and systematic approach to action, the City is currently developing an overarching Sustainability Framework. The Framework provides an on-line roadmap to better enable the City to "see" a sustainability pathway holistically, setting out for the first time a comprehensive set of sustainability goals, action programs and targets for the City. The Framework is being developed using a web-based software tool, enabling the Framework to be widely accessible and in a truly "living" form, evolving and being updated to reflect new knowledge and changing conditions.

Margot Daykin, M.R.M.
Sustainability Manager
MD:md (4130)
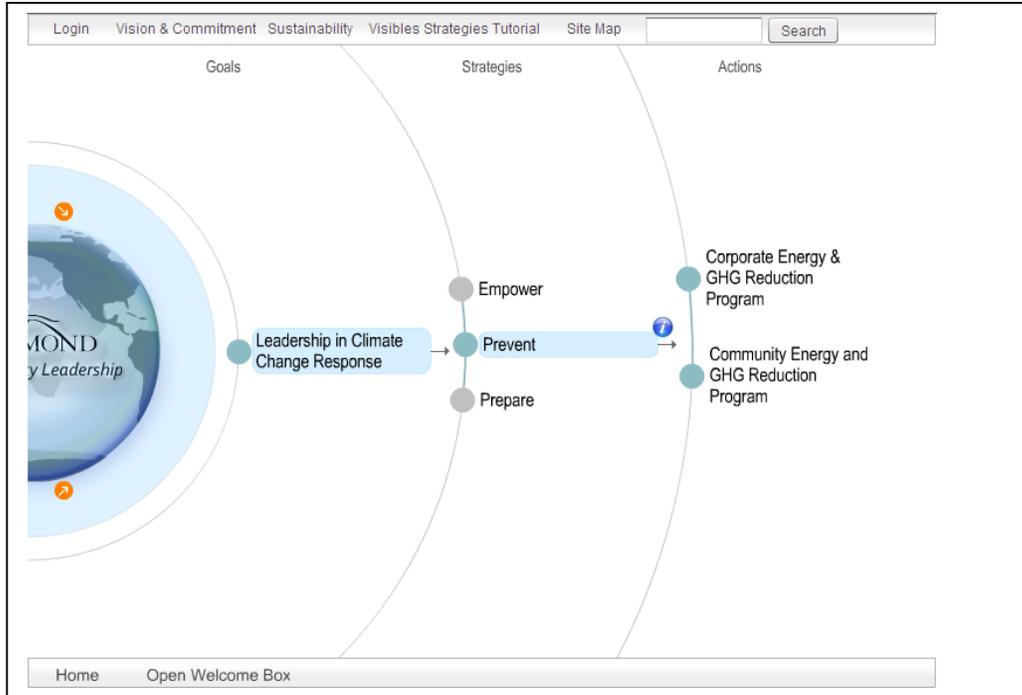2794511

City of Richmond: Sustainability Framework
(*Draft*)

Overview

Development Goal 1: Leadership in Climate Change Response *(working draft)*

Goal: Climate change and its impacts are minimized to protect the community, environment and the economy.

Corporate Strategies:

- **Empower** - increase corporate and community capacity for addressing climate change;

- **Prevent** - reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emission (corporately and in the community);

- **Prepare** - implement strategies for adapting to unavoidable changes.

Actions

- Climate Change Knowledge initiative
- Corporate Energy and Emissions Reduction program
- Community Energy and Emissions Reduction program
- Early Adaptation Planning and Action Initiative

Targets

- To develop a Climate Change training module for the City by 2010
- To have 100% of students engaged in Climate Change Showdown by elementary school graduation
- To be carbon neutral in City operations by 2010
- To establish community energy and GHG reduction targets by 2010

Example Action: Corporate Energy & GHG Reduction Program

Corporate Energy & GHG Reduction Program

Scorecard | Action Plan | Description | Feedback

Target Statement

The City's target is to be carbon neutral in City operations by 2012.

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Overview

The City of Richmond has undertaken a wide range of initiatives to better use energy and reduce its corporate GHG emissions. Key initiatives include the City's High Performance Building Policy and the City's GreenFleet Policy.

In 2008, the City of Richmond signed the BC Climate Action Charter, a volunteer commitment to be carbon neutral in its corporate operations by 2012. The City is currently working on developing a strategy for meeting this commitment.

Corporate Energy & GHG Reduction Program

Scorecard | Action Plan | Description | Feedback

Corporately, the City generates greenhouse gases from two main sources - energy consumption in municipal facilities and the city's fleet. Other sources include energy use by the City's pump systems which transport drinking water, stormwater and sewage, and energy used by traffic and other outdoor lighting. Greenhouse gases are also emitted from the decomposition of waste generated by the City.

2007 Corporate GHG Emissions by Sector

Solid Waste 8%
Vehicle Fleet 31%
Water & Wastewater 1%
Lighting
Buildings 58%

The first PowerSmart municipality in BC, the City has undertaken a wide range of energy efficiency programs and projects. In 2009, the City established an integrated Corporate Energy and GHG Reduction program. This program will continue to advance the City's leadership in reducing corporate energy consumption and realizing significant operational cost savings, while at the same time, undertake leadership action to reduce corporate GHG emissions and meet the City's carbon neutral commitment. The Corporate Energy and GHG Reduction program has also been expanded to include consideration of long-term energy security considerations and reduce overall corporate reliance on non-renewable energy sources.

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Sustainability Framework – Proposed Development Timeline

Development Phase		Timeframe
Phase 1: Conceptual Framework developed	*Milestone 1*: Council adoption of Conceptual Framework	January 2010
Phase 2 : Sustainability Foundations and 3 Goal Areas developed	*Milestone 2*: Council adoption of sustainability foundations and Climate Change strategies and targets	April 2010
	Milestone 3: Council adoption of Mobility strategies and targets	May 2010
	Milestone 4: Council adoption of Safe Communities strategies and targets	June 2010
Phase 3: 2 Goal Areas developed	*Milestone 5*: Council adoption of Local Agriculture and Food strategies and targets	November 2010
	Milestone 6: Council adoption of Sustainable Resource Use strategies and targets	December 2010
Phase 4: 2 Goal Areas developed	*Milestone 7*: Council adoption of Green Built & Natural Environment strategies and targets	May 2011
	Milestone 8: Council adoption of Social Inclusion & Accessibility strategies and targets Goal Area: Social Inclusion & Accessibility	June 2011
Phase 5: 2 Goal Areas developed	*Milestone 9*: Council adoption of Vibrant Communities strategies and targets Goal Area: Vibrant Communities	November 2011
	Milestone 10: Council adoption of Sustainable Business Practices strategies and targets	December 2011

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