

Attachment 1
Staff Memo

MEMORANDUM

Climate Action, Planning and Development

To: Emilie K Adin, MCIP
Director, Climate Action, Planning and Development **Date:** June 27, 2022

From: John Stark, Supervisor of Community Planning **File:**

Subject: **Att 1 - eMobility Strategy Staff Memo.docx**

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Director forward this memo and the following resolutions to Council for consideration:

1. **THAT** Council adopt the eMobility Strategy;
 2. **THAT** staff be directed to identify and advance actions in the eMobility Strategy that can be implemented within the existing staffing capacity and budget resources; and
 3. **THAT** staff be directed to bring forward eMobility Strategy funding requests for consideration in the 2023 budget process, including the recommendation to create a new staff position to oversee the implementation of the eMobility Strategy.
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PURPOSE

To seek Council adoption of the eMobility Strategy.

SUMMARY

A 2016 inventory found that transportation is responsible for nearly half of New Westminster's community greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. The City aims to reduce these emissions and improve quality of life for residents with its two transportation-related Climate Action Bold Steps: moving towards a car-light community and pollution-free vehicles.

To that end, in the summer of 2021, the City engaged Dunsky Energy + Climate Advisors to guide the development of an eMobility Strategy. Electric mobility (eMobility) has significant potential to reduce transportation-related GHG emissions, both through the adoption of eMicromobility devices like e-bikes, and through the transition from emitting to electric vehicles (EVs).

The attached eMobility Strategy was built with extensive community input, as well as industry best practices and emissions modelling. The Strategy includes ten objectives and 36 actions to overcome barriers to eMobility and enable adoption across New Westminster.

Staff recommends the Strategy be adopted, and that the City move into the implementation stage.

BACKGROUND

To support the objectives established by Council's 2019 Climate Emergency Declaration and the 'Seven Bold Steps for Climate Action', the City worked with a consultant to explore the issue of electric mobility (eMobility), and develop an eMobility framework. Three workshops were held in the fall of 2020, including one with Council, one with staff, and one with industry and community representatives. A community survey was open through November of 2020, gathering input on interest in eMobility, and interest in the City taking a stronger role on this issue. The survey found significant interest in eMobility. Key barriers to adoption were lack of access to EV charging at home, and limited access to secure e-bike parking. 74% of respondents felt it was very important for the City to support the transition towards eMobility, and the primary motivations for that support were to reduce emissions, followed closely by mitigating air pollution.

Building on the momentum of this framework, Council directed staff on March 29, 2021 to develop an eMobility Strategy. The Strategy is intended to provide guidance as to how the City can support the community's transition to eMobility, a transition that presents significant potential to reduce transportation-related emissions, both through the adoption of eMicromobility devices like e-bikes, and through the transition from emitting to electric vehicles (EVs). The City engaged Dunsky Energy + Climate Advisors to guide the development of the eMobility Strategy.

Council was engaged in an eMobility workshop at their regular meeting on August 30, 2021, to provide feedback on potential actions and areas of focus for the Strategy. The Environment and Climate Task Force and Advisory Committee have been engaged throughout the Strategy development.

STRATEGY SUMMARY

The eMobility Strategy, provided as Attachment 2, includes 10 objectives and 36 actions. These are categorized as follows:

- Supporting eMicromobility adoption: actions are focused around overcoming the key barriers to eMicromobility adoption. Actions include developing clear guidelines and regulations for how different types of eMicromobility, regular bikes, pedestrians and other road users can safely share the road; enhancing e-bike parking; and exploring piloting a shared e-bike system to increase accessibility to e-bikes.
- Supporting EV adoption: actions are focused around improving access to charging in public, at home and at work, as well as supporting the affordability of EVs through incentives provided by senior levels of government.
- Proactively managing electricity grid impacts of EV charging, through actions like exploring networked or “smart” charging technologies, and planning for the future development of an EV load management program.
- Successfully implementing the Strategy: actions include creating a new staff position to oversee implementation, ensuring that equity-denied groups are engaged in implementation and the benefits of eMobility are distributed equitably, and following a rigorous monitoring and evaluation process.

STRATEGY PROCESS & ENGAGEMENT

The eMobility Strategy built on this framework engagement, and was developed through various phases:

- Phase 1: Initial Engagement & Modelling
- Phase 2: Review of the Draft
- Phase 3: Finalizing the Strategy

Phase 1 Initial Engagement and Modelling

The eMobility Strategy was informed by Dunsky’s modelling of action options, as well as a number of engagement activities:

- An online workshop with community and industry representatives to develop a shared vision of eMobility and brainstorm action opportunities;
- An online survey seeking input on prioritizing actions; and
- A second online workshop to solicit input on the draft actions and implementation.

Attachment 3 provides a summary of engagement findings.

Phase 2 Review of the Draft

In November of 2021, a draft Strategy was received. Staff consulted extensively with:

- Utility Commission;
- Environment & Climate Task Force;
- Environment & Climate Advisory Committee; and
- Interdepartmental staff.

In response to the feedback received from these groups, significant revisions were made to the draft, to ensure a better narrative flow. Action wording was also made more precise, to express the City's firm commitment to specific actions. In other cases, the word "explore" was used to describe actions where the City should undertake further analysis before implementation. The implementation roadmap was also strengthened with approximate budget implications and timelines.

Phase 3 Finalizing the Strategy

Staff brought the revised draft to the Environment and Climate Task Force on April 14, 2022. The Task Force reviewed the draft and provided constructive comments, including:

- Support for the streamlined and clear draft, and the dual approach of supporting eMicromobility as well as EVs;
- An interest in being strategic in implementation, to ensure limited resources are put to best use, and
- Support for creating a new staff project manager position to ensure implementation and interdepartmental collaboration.

Following the Task Force meeting, the revised draft was posted on Be Heard New West, and the community was invited to comment, from April 7 to April 29, 2022. Predominantly supportive comments were received, and are summarized in Attachment 3.

On May 18, the Environment and Climate Advisory Committee reviewed the draft and similarly had constructive comments, including:

- The importance of eMicromobility guidelines and regulations being regionally-consistent; and
- The importance of considering eMicromobility adoption by delivery services and other businesses in crafting guidelines.

The Advisory Committee then made a motion recommending the finalized Strategy be brought forward to Council for consideration of adoption.

Comments on the revised draft were overwhelmingly positive, and focused on the "how" and "when", rather than whether to move forward with actions. Discussion at the Task Force and Advisory Committee meetings, as well as comments received online and via

email from workshop participants resulted in several improvements to the Strategy, including bringing an accessibility lens to developing eMicromobility guidelines and regulations.

On June 21, the Utility Commission reviewed the revised Strategy. Commissioners emphasized the need for the City to remain nimble and adapt as the eMobility industry and technologies change, such as through the potential development of a public charging network. Commissioners also encouraged the creation of more detailed costing. The final Strategy assigns actions orders of magnitude costing, recognizing that costing will also continue to change as the industry evolves. Staff anticipate undertaking more detailed costing and business case development during implementation. Implementation will also include reviewing and prioritizing actions to ensure investment of resources is as impactful as possible.

NEXT STEPS

The eMobility Strategy includes an implementation roadmap, for rolling out actions over the next five years. Staff anticipate moving into implementation in the fall of 2022.

Staff would prioritize the actions outlined in this Strategy and other climate plans, to refine implementation scheduling. Prioritization would consider financial implications, GHG emission reductions and internal carbon pricing, current and future capital and infrastructure planning processes, and project lead times. As discussed in the Strategy, an equity lens will also be needed.

For implementation to be successful, the Strategy calls for the creation of an eMobility specialist project manager position. This position will be especially important given the interdepartmental collaboration required on eMobility.

INTERDEPARTMENTAL LIAISON

The Environment and Climate Task Force were engaged during this plan development, including senior staff from Engineering Services and Parks and Recreation.

OPTIONS

The following options are provided for Council's consideration:

1. That Council adopt the eMobility Strategy;
2. That staff be directed to identify and advance actions in the eMobility Strategy that can be implemented within the existing staffing capacity and budget resources;

3. That staff be directed to bring forward eMobility Strategy funding requests for consideration in the 2023 budget process, including the recommendation to create a new staff position to oversee the implementation of the eMobility Strategy; or
4. That Council provide staff with alternative direction.

Staff recommends Options 1 to 3.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 2 – eMobility Strategy

Attachment 3 – eMobility Strategy Engagement Summary

APPROVALS

This memo was prepared by:

Meredith Seeton, Policy Planner

This memo was reviewed by:

Lynn Roxburgh, Supervisor of Land Use Planning and Climate Action

This memo was approved by:

John Stark, Supervisor of Community Planning