

REPORT

To: Environment and Climate Advisory
Committee

Date: July 20, 2022

From: Climate Action Division

Subject: Draft Community Energy and Emissions Plan

PURPOSE

To seek feedback on the draft Community Energy and Emissions Plan.

SUMMARY

This report presents the draft Community Energy and Emissions Plan (CEEP) update, and seeks Environment and Climate Advisory Committee feedback on the draft. The CEEP guides the City towards achieving its ambitious climate emergency greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reduction targets (45% reduction by 2030, 65% by 2040, and net zero by 2050).

The draft CEEP is based on community and industry engagement, industry best practices, the latest climate research, and emissions modelling. The CEEP includes five key action areas and 55 actions to help reduce community-wide emissions and build a more climate-resilient, energy-conscious, and low carbon community.

Staff brought the draft CEEP to Council on July 11th, 2022 and received approval to undertake a final round of consultation through the summer. Final revisions will be made to the document based on staff, community, industry, and Advisory Committee feedback. It is anticipated that the final document will be presented to Council for endorsement in fall 2022.

BACKGROUND

To continue 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, Sustainably Solutions Group (SSG), to develop the draft Community Energy and Emissions Plan (CEEP) update.

The draft CEEP update builds on the City's achievement of actions in the 2011 CEEP. Since 2011, the climate crisis has grown more urgent and there has also been a rapid evolution of low carbon technologies and climate policy options. The draft CEEP update considers this changed context in charting the path to more ambitious emissions reduction targets. It also builds on climate actions already taken by the City, and directions established in the City's Master Transportation Plan and Official Community Plan, as well as other City plans.

PLAN PROCESS & ENGAGEMENT

The draft CEEP was developed through three phases:

- Phase 1: Data Collection and Emissions Modelling
- Phase 2: Developing Low Carbon Scenario and Initial Engagement
- Phase 3: Drafting the Plan

Phase 1: Data Collection and Emissions Modelling

This phase was conducted over the summer of 2021. Emissions-related data was collected to help establish the City's current energy and emissions profile. This profile was used to forecast future emissions trends by source, fuel type, and sector. The forecast considers projected population and employment growth, land use patterns, anticipated climate trends, and other relevant parameters over the next 30 years.

Phase 2: Developing Low Carbon Scenario and Initial Engagement

The next phase involved developing the City's Low Carbon Scenario, which is the pathway of low carbon actions that the City would implement in order to achieve its ambitious emissions reduction targets. This phase also involved gathering input from community and industry representatives on specific actions and opportunities that could help reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Engagement activities included:

- online workshops with community members, industry representatives, and equity-denied community members¹ to gather input on CEEP actions and priority areas; and
- an online community survey to gather feedback on low carbon actions.

Attachment 1 provides a summary of engagement findings.

Phase 3: Drafting the Plan

In March of 2021, an initial draft CEEP update was received from the consultant. Internal review led to revisions to better convey the call to action for the community,

¹ A group of people who, because of systemic discrimination, face barriers that prevent them from having the same access to all aspects of society such as employment, education, institutions and health services.

private sector and other actors, to collaborate on climate action and help achieve the City's emissions reduction targets. Revisions also focused on more clearly identifying key action areas and opportunities that yield the greatest GHG emissions reduction impacts, and ensuring that the actions are achievable within the City's jurisdiction (leveraging partnerships and advocating to senior government where necessary) and are New Westminster specific.

As the plan was being drafted, staff updated the Environment and Climate Task Force, and the New Westminster Utility Commission.

Staff brought the completed draft to Council on July 11th, 2022 and received approval to undertake a final round of consultation through the summer.

DRAFT CEEP SUMMARY

The draft CEEP, provided as Attachment 2, conveys the urgency of taking bold climate action steps, and charts a pathway for the City, in partnership with other levels of government, the community and the private sector, to approach net zero emissions by 2050. It includes five key action areas, targets for each area, and 55 specific implementation actions. These are categorized and summarized as follows:

- Transportation – low carbon mobility and supporting active transportation;
- Buildings – retrofitting existing buildings and requiring new buildings to be built to high performance standards;
- Energy – supporting energy conservation, district energy, and renewable energy;
- Waste – reducing waste and embracing circular economy² principles; and
- Natural areas and green infrastructure – preserving and enhancing natural areas and the urban tree canopy, and increasing the use of green infrastructure.

The draft CEEP makes it clear that the most significant potential gains are in transportation – both through a mode shift and electrification – as well as building efficiency improvements and electrification. Achieving the ambitious targets in these two sectors would require particular focus and continued nimbleness as new legislative tools and technologies come online.

The CEEP is intended to be a living document that will need to be updated regularly through evaluation and monitoring. It will also need to be flexible to take advantage of emerging opportunities, technological advancements and innovation in order to ensure that the CEEP is future-proof and stands the test of time.

² A circular economy is a model of production and consumption, which involves reusing, sharing, repairing, refurbishing and recycling existing materials and products as long as possible.

REVIEW OF THE DRAFT

To finalize the draft CEEP, staff is consulting with community and industry representatives through the summer to gather input. The following consultation activities are underway:

- the draft is posted on the Be Heard New West page, and feedback is being solicited through a forum discussion and ideas board;
- the opportunity to provide feedback is being advertised through social media and CityPage;
- staff is reaching out to community and industry representatives who participated in earlier consultation activities for their feedback; and
- staff is promoting the input opportunity at pop-up engagement events through the summer.

Staff is seeking the Advisory Committee's feedback on the draft. The Committee's comments will be considered together with community feedback and interdepartmental review.

Staff anticipate bringing forward a finalized Plan for Council consideration in fall of 2022.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 – CEEP Engagement Summary

Attachment 2 – Draft Community Energy and Emissions Plan

APPROVALS

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