

REPORT

Energy and Climate Action

To: Mayor Johnstone and Members of Council
Date: July 7, 2025

From: Dave Bains
Director, Energy and Climate Action
File: Doc#2719935

Item #: 2025-198

Subject: **Proposed Climate Action Priorities for Submission to the CleanBC Review Process**

RECOMMENDATION

1. *THAT the proposed climate action priorities for submission to the CleanBC review process as attached to the report titled "Proposed Climate Action Priorities for Submission to the CleanBC Review Process" dated July 7, 2025 be endorsed and submitted through the CleanBC review process.*
 2. *THAT staff continue to participate and engage in opportunities to provide feedback through the CleanBC review process.*
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PURPOSE

To seek Council's endorsement of the proposed climate action priorities for submission and approval of staff participation in the CleanBC review process.

BACKGROUND

CleanBC is Province of British Columbia's road map for cutting carbon pollution and building a cleaner, more sustainable future. For local governments, CleanBC plays a vital role in shaping the policy and funding landscape for climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts. Commitments, programs and initiatives under CleanBC influence building energy efficiency, building emission reductions, transportation emission

reductions, land use planning, and waste management, many of which fall within municipal jurisdiction or are supported by local policy and program implementation.

In May 2025, the Province launched an [independent review of CleanBC programs](#)¹ to ensure they are effectively reducing emissions, while making life more affordable and supporting a strong economy. The review is being led by independent climate policy experts Merran Smith and Dan Woynillowicz (CleanBC review panel). Under the [Terms of Reference](#)², the climate policy experts will assess how well existing programs and policies are working, examine B.C.'s climate targets and recommend improvements. As part of their work, they will engage with Indigenous Peoples, local governments, the Climate Solutions Council, industry and stakeholders throughout B.C.

The review is being undertaken one year ahead of schedule, as outlined in the 2024 Cooperation and Responsible Government Accord between the B.C. government and the BC Green caucus. The final CleanBC review report is expected to be released publicly in November 2025.

DISCUSSION

CleanBC has provided a strong foundation for shaping and advancing the City of New Westminster's key climate action strategies including the climate emergency response and Seven Bold Steps for Climate Action, the Community Energy and Emissions Plan 2050, and the e-Mobility Strategy. CleanBC directly impacts and enables program offerings through Energy Save New West such as community rebates and incentives, and access to funding through the Local Government Climate Action Program. These programs are directly linked to local implementation of initiatives that align with objectives in the CleanBC Roadmap to 2030.

As the Province undertakes a review of CleanBC, this is a key opportunity for municipalities to contribute to shaping a stronger framework. By advocating for clearer roles, enhanced support and deeper collaboration to meet shared climate action goals, we can ensure the updated strategy reflects local priorities, advances the City's progress towards emission reduction targets, and strengthens long-term community resilience.

The Climate Action Team reviewed the existing CleanBC strategies and programs and identified priorities to reflect the City's climate action commitments. The priorities have been shaped through coordination with local and regional governments to align and amplify shared objectives. The priorities also suggest improvements to current implementation gaps and opportunities identified through staff experiences with CleanBC-related programs and initiatives. Recommended key climate action priorities for submission to the CleanBC review process are summarized in Attachment 1.

¹ CleanBC Review Media Release: <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2025ECS0019-000423>

² CleanBC Review Terms of Reference: <http://news.gov.bc.ca/files/CleanBCTermsofReference.pdf>

There are several opportunities for staff and Council to participate in the CleanBC review process, including:

- Submitting written feedback directly to the CleanBC review panel;
- Participating in a CleanBC review roundtable discussion with the CleanBC review panel;
- Participating in CleanBC review engagement sessions at staff peer networks; and
- Collaborating through elected official networks, such as the BC Municipal Climate Leadership Council, Climate Caucus, and Local Government Association.

The CleanBC review panel will review feedback received and present preliminary recommendations to caucuses in September 2025, followed by final recommendations to the Province in October 2025. A public release of the review is anticipated in November 2025.

NEXT STEPS

Pending Council approval, staff will submit the proposed climate action priorities through the available CleanBC review engagement channels, including those outlined above. Staff will also continue to coordinate with municipal and regional partners to ensure alignment and will engage in future CleanBC engagement opportunities as they arise.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Actively participating in the CleanBC review process directly supports the City's climate emergency response and aligns with all of the Seven Bold Steps for Climate Action. Participating in the CleanBC review process enables New Westminster to help shape provincial climate policy in a way that reflects our local priorities, challenges, and opportunities. By providing input, the City can advocate for strengthened provincial support, improved alignment with local climate goals, and enhanced access to funding and programs. This engagement supports the long-term sustainability of the community by ensuring that provincial strategies better enable effective local climate action, resilience, and low-carbon communities.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct financial implications associated with this report. However, the outcomes of the CleanBC review may have future financial impacts for local governments, including potential changes to the availability and structure of funding programs like the Local Government Climate Action Program (LGCAP), as well as incentives, and rebates. Anticipated resources required to participate in the CleanBC review from July through to fall 2025 include up to three staff participating in approximately three or four one-hour meetings, with associated preparation time. There is no anticipated impact to existing staff workload; staff time required to participate in

advocacy initiatives is embedded annually into the Climate Action Team work plan. Continued engagement in the review process helps ensure municipal interests are considered in the development of future program frameworks

OPTIONS

Three options are provided for Council's consideration:

1. THAT the proposed climate action priorities for submission to the CleanBC review process as attached to the report titled "Proposed Climate Action Priorities for Submission to the CleanBC Review Process" dated July 7, 2025 be endorsed and submitted through the CleanBC review process.
2. THAT staff continue to participate and engage in opportunities to provide feedback through the CleanBC review process.
3. Provide staff with alternate direction.

Options 1 and 2 are recommended.

CONCLUSION

The approval of the proposed key climate action priorities for submission to the CleanBC review process will support staff in ensuring our community's priorities are reflected in the updated framework and that it supports both our climate objectives and long-term community resilience.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 – Proposed Climate Action Priorities for Submission to the CleanBC Review Process

APPROVALS

This report was prepared by:
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This report was reviewed by:
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This report was approved by:
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