

REPORT

Climate Action, Planning and Development

To: Mayor Cote and Members of Council **Date:** December 13, 2021

From: Emilie K Adin, MCIP **File:** 09.1742.02
Director, Climate Action, Planning and
Development

Item #: 2021-624

Subject: Climate Action Key Performance Indicators: 2020 Baseline Data

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council receive this report for information.

PURPOSE

To present the baseline data for the Climate Action Key Performance Indicators which will be used to generate the annual Climate Action KPI Report Card.

BACKGROUND

The City of New Westminster declared a Climate Emergency in November 2019 which set an overarching greenhouse gas emission reduction target for the City and community. Towards this, Council adopted the Seven Bold Steps for Climate Action, accompanied by ten-year targets (see Attachment 1), and endorsed a Strategic Plan that identified Environment and Climate as a key priority.

With the objective of measuring progress towards the City's climate action and environment goals, an interdepartmental staff team collaborated to develop the Climate Action Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), which include indicators and metrics for each of the Seven Bold Steps plus additional environmental goals related to water and waste reduction. Indicators and metrics were selected based on factors such as whether they could easily be tracked, and whether they could be measured and monitored over time. Some resulting KPIs and metrics provide a direct measure of progress, e.g. corporate greenhouse gas emissions for Bold Step 1: Carbon Free Corporation. Others provide a proxy measurement, e.g. bus service hours, SkyTrain boardings for Bold Step 2: Car

Light Community. The approach to developing the KPIs is outlined in Attachment 2, and the Climate Action Key Performance Indicators and related metrics are listed in Attachment 3.

The draft KPIs were reviewed by the Environment and Climate Task Force (ECTF) on April 12, 2021. On July 12, 2021 Council endorsed the Climate Action Key Performance Indicators and directed staff to launch the process to gather the data, develop a draft report card, and report back to the Environment and Climate Task Force (ECTF) with updates regarding data collection challenges and learnings.

An update was delivered to the ECTF on November 1, 2021. Feedback received will be incorporated in the report card which is currently under development.

DISCUSSION

Summary of Baseline Data

The baseline data for most of the KPI metrics has now been collected and is included in Attachment 3. The baseline data will serve as a benchmark to measure performance and establish trends, and identify deficiencies and opportunities for improvement. In most cases 2020 is the baseline year, though where measurement relies on Statistics Canada data the baseline is 2016.

Where available, historic data for up to three previous years has also been provided for information. For example, historic data for indicator/metric 1.A City's Corporate Greenhouse Gases (one of the seven KPIs that directly track energy use and greenhouse gas emissions, Attachment 3: 1.A, 3.A, 3.B, 3.C, 3.D and 5.A), indicates a steady decline in greenhouse gas emissions from 2017 to 2020 (21.3% total reduction from 2017; 7.1%/year average reduction for each of the last 3 years). The data for this metric combines: new City buildings, major renovations in existing City buildings, replacement of vehicle fleet, indoor and outdoor lighting, water consumption, natural gas usage and use of lower carbon intensive fuels such as propane. This trend is expected to continue as the City actively applies a climate lens to all projects, accelerates the use of clean energy, and transitions away from fossil fuels.

Data Collection Challenges

Some baseline data was not available as of this date, as follows:

- Data for indicator/metric 2.B Bus Service Hours and 2.C SkyTrain Boardings (two of four indicators/metrics measuring alternative transportation/fuel usage: 2.A, 2.B, 2.C, and 4.B) is yet to be provided by TransLink.
- Data for 7.E Road Space Re-allocation (one of six measuring new infrastructure projects: 2.D, 4.A, 7.C, 7.D, 7.E, En.3) will not be available until 2022.
- Data for indicator/metric for 6.B Tree Canopy Cover (one of four measuring natural coverage: 6.A, 6.B, 7.A, 7.B) will only be available every five years.

The indicator/metric for 2.A Sustainable Transportation Mode Share measuring use of alternative transportation and 7.A Natural Areas measuring total land area will also be measured every five years and their baseline data is available.

Collection of the baseline data brought to light a potential issue related to Indicator/metric 5.A Electrical Infrastructure, which measures the amount of electricity consumed in the community and by the City's operations using billing for electricity consumption. The historic data available does not yet show a consistent trend, and it is possible one may not emerge as this metric is being impacted by extreme weather events that affect consumption patterns and by recent changes to the methodology the Province uses for population growth forecast. Staff will continue to monitor this issue as additional data is available over future reporting periods.

NEXT STEPS

As a next step, staff will create the Climate Action KPI Report Card template. The report card would be published annually and would showcase efforts and progress towards the City's climate and environment goals. In addition it is anticipated that the report card will help inform future decision making, such as allocation of resources and ensuring a climate lens is applied to projects.

Staff is in the process of exploring what other information would be useful to include in future report cards; for example, it is anticipated that in the future the report card would include the rationale behind trends and a summary of the progress towards each target. It is anticipated that the Climate Action Report Card will continue to evolve in the next few years as new external data sources are made available, new internal data collection processes are put in place, new Climate Action priorities emerge, and public input is collected on what data is most meaningful to present. Additionally, staff will investigate data tracking systems and/or reporting tools (e.g. an online dashboard). The opportunities identified will be brought forward to the Environment and Climate Task Force (ECTF) and forwarded to Council for endorsement.

For 2020 the report card will communicate the baseline information contained in the attached spreadsheet in a clear and transparent manner. Once prepared, the 2020 draft report card would be presented to ECTF for review. The final version would then be presented to Council for endorsement and published on the City's website. This work is intended to be complete in Spring 2022.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The KPI Program has been accounted for in the Climate Action, Planning and Development Department work plan and budget. As staff explores the potential for dashboard production it is anticipated that additional costs may be identified.

INTERDEPARTMENTAL LIAISON

The Climate Action Division has consulted with the Electrical Utility, Engineering Operations, Parks and Recreation, Transportation, and Finance Department in drafting this report.

OPTIONS

The following options are presented for Council's consideration:

1. That Council receive this report for information.
2. That Council provide staff with alternative direction.

Staff recommends option 1.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 – Seven Bold Steps and Associated 10-Year Targets

Attachment 2 – Approach to Developing KPIs

Attachment 3 – Climate Action KPI Spreadsheet

APPROVALS

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