

MINUTES
SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE ACTION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Saanich Municipal Hall, 770 Vernon Avenue
Wednesday, May 17, 2023 at 4:00 p.m.

Present: Chair Nathalie Chambers, Sarah Anderson (4:05 p.m.), Jake Douglas (4:02 p.m.); Kurban Keshvani (via Teams); Leslie Miller-Brooks, Karin Nelson, Mattias Spalteholz

Regrets: Jasmindra Jawanda, Ted Sheldon

Staff: Sharon Hvozdanski, Director of Sustainability and Strategic Initiatives; Rebecca Newlove, Manager of Sustainability; Maggie Baynham, Senior Sustainability Planner; and Megan MacDonald, Senior Committee Clerk

TERRITORIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT & DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION STATEMENT

The Chair read the Territorial Acknowledgement and the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Statement.

INTRODUCTIONS

Committee members introduced themselves and spoke about their interest in sustainability and climate action. Staff also provided an introduction of the sustainability and climate action work currently being undertaken by Saanich.

REVIEW OF TERMS OF REFERENCE AND MEETING DATES

This item will be discussed at the June meeting.

CLIMATE PLAN AND 2022 REPORT CARD

The Manager of Sustainability presented the Climate Plan and 2022 Report Card (PowerPoint on file) and made the following comments:

- There is a need for staff positions dedicated to Climate Adaptation and Zero Waste.
- A Sustainability Specialist will be hired in the near future.
- Staff work collaboratively with other municipalities and utilities in the region, across the Province and Canada-wide.
- Grants and external funding is heavily relied upon.
- Saanich has won many awards for its climate action initiatives.
- The Capital Regional District provides analysis and detailed climate projections for Saanich and at the regional district level.
- Climate change does not impact residents equally; the marginalized population is at higher risk.
- Equity is a core principle in the Climate Plan.
- How development and growth is planned and encouraged has a major impact on greenhouse gas emissions and adaptation.
- The goals of the Climate Plan are to cut emissions by half by 2030 and be net zero by 2050, transition to a 100% renewable energy community, and fast track the reduction of the municipality's emissions.

- The Climate Plan will be updated in approximately 2025.
- Cities globally report out on territorial emissions; territorial emissions are all the emissions that come from energy used from cars and buildings and the waste that is generated within our boundaries.
- Ecosystems are critical for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and for adaptation for resiliency, ensuring there is shade, drainage and pollination to support agriculture.
- A Report Card has been completed every year for the past three years; the Report Card is a summary of highlights and progress to date.
- Saanich's emissions have decreased by 19% from the 2007 baseline; a 30% reduction was necessary to be on track.
- Personal vehicles continue to be the largest source of community emissions.
- More people are working from home since COVID which has resulted in a decrease in 25% in transportation emissions; building emissions have increased as a result of people working from home with gas or oil heating.
- The next updated Report Card will be presented in late 2023, early 2024.
- There is a need to have a dedicated staff member for the critical adaptation component; during the presentation to Council on the updated Report Card, staff will recommend budgeting to hire an Adaptation Specialist.

MOVED by L. Miller-Brooks and Seconded by K. Nelson: "That it be recommended that staff return to present their budget requests to the committee in late 2023."

CARRIED

BUILDING RETROFIT STRATEGY

The Senior Sustainability Planner presented the Building Retrofit Strategy (PowerPoint on file) and made the following comments:

- Buildings account for a large part of territorial emissions.
- Building retrofits could achieve an overall 18% reduction in community emissions.
- The Climate Plan identified extreme heat and poor air quality as areas of high risk for Saanich.
- There were 600+ deaths in BC in 2021 due to the heat dome; most deaths occurred indoors with residents not having access to cooling.
- A Retrofit Strategy will provide more information on how to address climate risks and achieve the greenhouse gas reduction targets.
- Key objectives of the Retrofit Strategy include improving building baseline data and modelling program and policy opportunities to understand if the targets are achievable.
- The Strategy will consider equity in terms of development and prioritization of actions.
- A funding plan for implementation will also be developed.
- The Province has committed to a 100% Clean Electricity Delivery Standard by 2030.
- Heat pumps deliver both heating and cooling.
- Affordability is an important consideration in terms of retrofits.
- 15% of Saanich residents are living in energy poverty or spending more than 6% on energy needs.
- The operating costs for heat pumps are similar or less than natural gas.
- Energy efficiency improvements such as insulation, new windows and air sealing can also help to lower costs.
- Saanich's oil to heat pump financing pilot project offered interest-free loans to households to switch out their oil heating to a heat pump.
- One of the biggest challenges for local governments is the lack of regulatory tools to require any type of standard for existing buildings.
- Incentives are also restricted in certain situations.

- The Highest Efficiency Equipment Standards will require that after 2030 all replacement space and water heating systems will have to be at least 100% efficient.
- The Provincial Government is recommending that local governments have an early adoption pathway to move ahead of provincial timelines.
- Currently, very few private sector buildings are undertaking retrofits because of the lack of incentives.
- Tailor-made incentives are needed for retrofits for multi-family buildings.
- The Strategy has 45 actions and 5 Strategy Areas that make up the framework of the plan; the five Strategy Areas are: Municipal Policy and Regulation, Advocacy for Provincial Policy and Regulation, Municipal Incentives and Support, Research, Partnerships and Collaboration and Demonstrating Leadership.
- 10 high impact actions have been identified to have the greatest impact in terms of emissions, resilience, equity and market transformation.
- There has been a shift to the installation of heat pumps.
- As part of a pilot project, when a single family dwelling is listed for sale, the energy rating will be included in posting.

Committee members made the following comments:

- There is a need for the public to be educated on the various programs available.
- Having a requirement for the seller of a home to provide information about the energy efficiency of a home prior to the sale would be beneficial.

MOVED by S. Anderson and Seconded by J. Douglas: “That it be recommended that Council support adoption of the Building Retrofit Strategy.”

CARRIED

PLANT BASED CITIES MOVEMENT

This item was postponed to the June meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion from S. Anderson the meeting adjourned at 5:59 p.m.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is scheduled for June 21, 2023 at 4:00 p.m.

Nathalie Chambers, Chair

I hereby certify these Minutes are accurate.

Committee Secretary