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POLICY REPORT ENVIRONMENT

Report Date: April 9, 2010
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Meeting Date: April 20, 2010

TO: Vancouver City Council

FROM: Manager of Sustainability and Director of Planning

SUBJECT: Proposed Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Development Plan,
Referencing Existing City Greenhouse Gas Reduction Targets and Policies
as Required by the Vancouver Charter

RECOMMENDATION

- A. THAT the Greenhouse Gas Emission Reduction Development Plan, attached as Appendix A, setting out existing Council targets and policies in regards to reduction of greenhouse gas emissions be adopted;
- B. THAT a by-law to adopt the Greenhouse Gas Emission Reduction Development Plan (referred to in Recommendation A), generally as set out in Appendix A, as an Official Development Plan be referred to Public Hearing;

FURTHER THAT the Director of Legal Services be instructed to prepare the necessary by-law generally in accordance with Appendix A for consideration at Public Hearing;

CITY MANAGER'S COMMENTS

The City Manager RECOMMENDS approval of A and B.

COUNCIL POLICY

In March 2005, Council approved the Community Climate Change Action Plan that included a city-wide greenhouse gas (GHG) emission reduction target of 6% below 1990 levels by 2012.

In June 2007, Council adopted targets to reduce city GHG emissions to 33% below 2007 levels by 2020 and to have all new construction in Vancouver be carbon neutral by 2030.

In January 2008, Council adopted the World Mayors and Local Governments Climate Protection Agreement that established a city GHG emission reduction target of 80% below 1990 levels by 2050.

In June 2008, Council adopted the EcoDensity Charter which makes environmental sustainability a primary goal in all city-building decisions - in ways that also foster and support affordability and livability; and which promotes strategic, well-managed density, design, and land use as primary tools in achieving this goal.

In February 2010 Council adopted the aspirational goal contained in "Vancouver 2020 A Bright Green Future" to eliminate dependence on fossil fuels and directed staff to work with experts and the public to develop an implementation plan as part of Greenest City 2020.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to incorporate existing City GHG emission reduction targets, policies and actions into a Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emission Reduction Development Plan, attached as Appendix A, and to refer it to Public Hearing for consideration for adoption by by-law as the GHG Emission Reduction Official Development Plan, for the purpose of compliance with Vancouver Charter section 562.01.

BACKGROUND

In 2008, the Province amended the Local Government Act and the Vancouver Charter (section 562.01), to require that all municipalities include targets for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, and policies and actions with respect to achieving those targets, as part of an official development plan. That legislative requirement is to be achieved by all municipalities by May 31, 2010.

The City already has established GHG emission reduction targets, policies, and actions; however, as Vancouver does not have a citywide ODP to amend, staff is proposing the creation of a new ODP containing these existing GHG reduction targets, policies and actions specifically to comply with this new Vancouver Charter requirement.

Section 561 of the Vancouver Charter provides that Council may have development plans prepared from time to time. Section 562 of the Vancouver Charter provides that Council may, by by-law, adopt any development plan prepared under section 561 as part of the Official Development Plan (ODP).

In order to proceed, Council would adopt the proposed Greenhouse Gas Emission Reduction Development Plan. Council may do so by resolution, without a Public Hearing. To adopt an Official Development Plan, Council refers a Development Plan to Public Hearing for consideration as an Official Development Plan.

DISCUSSION

The City of Vancouver has shown significant leadership on the issue of climate change in the past 20 years, both through City policies and initiatives as well as advocating and organizing at the provincial and federal levels.

Council has approved several GHG emission reduction targets which are listed below and which this report recommends be incorporated into the ODP.

- Target: 6% below 1990 levels by 2012, Approved by Council: March 2005;
- Target: 33% below 2007 by 2020, Approved by Council: June 2007
- All new construction in Vancouver carbon neutral by 2030, Approved by Council: June 2007
- Target: 80% below 1990 levels by 2050, Approved by Council: January 2008

The City's fundamental approach to land use and transportation planning - to create compact, mixed-use, walkable neighbourhoods well served by transit and to support these neighbourhoods with walking and cycling infrastructure - is a major component of creating lower GHG emissions. The City's first report that addressed GHG emissions and pulled together GHG emission reduction strategies in a comprehensive way and that included significant public and stakeholder input was "The Climate Friendly City; A Community Climate Change Action Plan for the City of Vancouver" (2005). This Plan identified a range of new policies and actions for GHG emission reduction.

In summary, the Community Climate Change Action Plan identified and supported the following strategies to meet GHG emission reduction targets:

- Smart growth land-use planning
- Building energy retrofit programs and policies
- New building energy performance requirements
- Neighbourhood-scale renewable district energy systems
- Programs and infrastructure to support sustainable transportation
- Infrastructure and initiatives to support a shift toward lower carbon vehicles and fuels
- Expansion of Landfill Gas Recovery project

Staff have been implementing the strategies within the Plan, working with stakeholders and public. As of 2008, greenhouse gas emissions were reduced to 1990 levels and Vancouver is on track to meeting the Kyoto target (6% below 1990 levels by 2012) despite a population increase of 27%. Vancouver's per capita greenhouse gas emissions are the lowest of any major city in North America. The City continues to work towards the ambitious longer term reduction targets.

The next major planning effort will be, as part of the Greenest City 2020 program, to create a new Climate Change Action Plan to meet the 2020 GHG reduction target. This will include further public and stakeholder involvement.

The proposed GHG Emission Reduction Development Plan is attached to this report as Appendix A. The proposed Development Plan incorporates existing GHG emission reduction

targets and related policy initiatives and actions, as required by Section 562.01 of the Vancouver Charter. The proposed Development Plan also acknowledges that new GHG emission reduction plans are being developed as part of the Greenest City 2020 program.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications.

CONCLUSION

Council approval of the Recommendations in this report will result in adoption of the proposed Greenhouse Gas Emission Reduction Development Plan and referral of that plan to Public Hearing for consideration as an Official Development Plan. These steps are necessary to meet the legislative requirement of Section 562.01 of the Vancouver Charter to include targets, policies, and actions for GHG emission reduction in an ODP. This will incorporate existing GHG emission reduction targets and strategies in an ODP format.

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APPENDIX A

CITY OF VANCOUVER

OFFICIAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN REGARDING REDUCTION OF GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

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OFFICIAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN REGARDING
REDUCTION OF GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

SECTION 1
INTERPRETATION

Definitions

1.1 In this instrument:

“GHG” means greenhouse gas;

“carbon neutral” means a combination of greenhouse gas reductions and offset strategies which results in achieving net zero carbon emissions;

“greenhouse gas” has the meaning attributed to it in section 559 of the Vancouver Charter; and

“ODP” means this instrument, being the official development plan regarding the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

Incorporation by reference

1.2 This ODP incorporates by reference all policies and guidelines referred to herein.

Table of contents and headings

1.3 The table of contents and headings in this ODP are for convenient reference only, and are not for use in interpreting or enforcing this ODP.

Severability

1.4 A decision by a court that any part of this By-law is illegal, void, or unenforceable severs that part from this By-law, and is not to affect the balance of this By-law.

Application

1.5 This ODP applies to all lands in the City of Vancouver.

Intent

1.6 The intent of this ODP is to incorporate existing greenhouse gas emission reduction targets established by Council and policies and actions approved by Council to achieve those targets into an ODP, as required by section 562.01 of the Vancouver Charter.

SECTION 2

Targets for reduction of GHG emissions

2.1 Council targets are:

- (a) to reduce GHG emissions:
 - (i) to 6% below 1990 GHG levels by 2012,
 - (ii) to 33% below 2007 GHG levels by 2020, and
 - (iii) to 80% below 1990 GHG levels by 2050; and
- (b) to require that all new construction be carbon neutral by 2030.

Policies for reduction of GHG emissions

2.2 In February 2010, Vancouver City Council received the Greenest City Action Team Report outlining strategies to make Vancouver the greenest city in the world by 2020, adopted the goal to eliminate Vancouver's dependence on fossil fuels and directed staff to develop an implementation plan to meet our 2020 reduction target.

The City's land use and transportation planning promotes the reduction of GHG emissions, by creating compact, mixed-use, walkable neighbourhoods, supported with transit and with walking and cycling infrastructure.

In March 2005 City Council approved "The Climate Friendly City: A Community Climate Change Action Plan for the City Of Vancouver". The Community Climate Change Action Plan identifies policies to meet GHG emission reduction targets, including:

- (a) smart growth land use planning;
- (b) building energy retrofit programs and policies;
- (c) regulation of new building energy performance;
- (d) neighbourhood scale renewable district energy systems;
- (e) programs and infrastructure to support sustainable transportation;
- (f) programs and infrastructure to support the use of lower carbon vehicles and fuel; and
- (g) expansion of the Landfill Gas Recovery project.

The Vancouver City Council has recently completed or initiated numerous programs and policies to reduce GHG emissions, including:

- **Residential Food Waste Collection & Composting** - implementation of Phase 1 (inclusion of fruit and vegetable scraps in current yard trimming collection program) and development of implementation plan for phase 2 (all food waste). Approved March 4, 2010.
- **Green Rezoning Policy** - requiring LEED™ Gold registration for all rezoning applications as of July 30, 2010. Approved February 4, 2010.
- **Solar Homes Strategy** - support uptake of solar technology through education and incentives. Approved December 1, 2009
- **Laneway Housing Policy** - changes to zoning to allow laneway housing in most single-family neighbourhoods. Approved July 28, 2009.
- **Cambie Corridor Planning Program** - development of a land-use plan to integrate development with the Canada Line rapid transit system and the City's goals of environmental sustainability, livability, and affordability. Program started July 28, 2009.
- **Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure** - bylaw amendments requiring electric vehicle charging infrastructure in new multi-family buildings. Approved July 9, 2009.
- **Physically Separated Bike Lanes** - implementation of the Burrard Bridge separated bike lane trial (approved May 7, 2009) and the Dunsmuir Viaduct separated lane trial (approved February 4, 2010), and approval in principle for separated lanes connecting these facilities to the central business district (approved February 4, 2010).
- **Passive Design Toolkits** - development of Vancouver-specific guides on passive design. Endorsed by Council as official City of Vancouver publications on May 7, 2009.
- **Green Homes Program** - bylaw amendments for new one and two family dwellings to reduce the environmental impact of new buildings through increased energy performance, water conservation, air quality, and support for electric vehicle charging and roof-mounted solar systems. Approved June 26, 2008.

Actions for reduction of GHG emissions

2.3 The City's proposed actions for reduction of GHG emissions include:

- (a) to continue to pursue and implement the policies outlined in the Community Climate Change Action Plan; and
- (b) to develop a new climate change action plan to meet the 2020 GHG emission reduction target as part of the Greenest City 2020 implementation planning program.

Affordable, rental and special needs housing policies

2.4 The city promotes the supply of affordable housing, rental housing and special needs housing through a number of initiatives and does not intend to promote, permit or provide for such housing in this ODP.