

RR-1(a)



CITY OF VANCOUVER

POLICY REPORT

Date: November 18, 2003
Author: C. Sinasac
Phone No.: 6695
RTS No.: 03670
CC File No.: 5340
Meeting Date: December 2, 2003

TO: Vancouver City Council

FROM: Manager Sustainability Support Group; General Manager of Engineering Services; General Manager of Parks and Recreation; and Director of City Plans

SUBJECT: Creating a Sustainable City 2003

RECOMMENDATION

- A. *THAT Council receive this report on the City's Sustainability Program as a context for forthcoming reports on further sustainable initiatives.*
- B. *THAT the Sustainability Support Group report back on a 2004 work program and resources to continue to develop a Sustainable Action Strategy for the City Corporation and broader community.*

CITY MANAGER'S COMMENTS

The City Manager RECOMMENDS approval of the foregoing noting that Sustainability is a broad corporate initiative to maintain Vancouver's liveability, social, and economic vitality. The Sustainability Support Group is providing a key support and coordination function for a broad range of existing and anticipated actions in many City Departments which will incorporate enhanced sustainability into all the City operations as a "way of doing business".

COUNCIL POLICY

Appendix "A" contains policies and programs approved over the years to address environmental, economic, and social sustainability issues. They emerged as important City concerns through community feedback, political leadership, and interaction with other governments and agencies. Example policies include:

- *Vancouver Energy Strategy 1979*
- *Clouds of Change 1990*
- *Solid Waste Management Plan 1994*
- *Central Area Plan 1991 and CityPlan 1995*
- *City Environment Policy and Action Plan 1996*
- *Southeast False Creek Policy Statement 2000*
- *Vancouver Transportation Plan 1997 and Downtown Transportation Plan 2001*
- *2002 Creation of Sustainability Support Group and Steering Committee*
- *2003 City support for Kyoto Protocol and initiation of Cool Vancouver Task Force to reduce Greenhouse Gases*

On April 23, 2002, Council adopted a definition of, and principles for, sustainability (see Appendix "B"), and established a Sustainability Support Group to advance the City's objective of incorporating sustainable initiatives throughout the City organization and in the broader community. The full report is available at:

<http://www.city.vancouver.bc.ca/ctyclerk/cclerk/020423/rr3.htm>

PURPOSE

This report updates Council on the range of sustainability initiatives being undertaken by the City and provides a context for specific sustainability-related initiatives that will be reported over the next several months. Information is also provided on concurrent sustainability programs including the GVRD's Sustainable Region Initiative, the Federation of Canadian Municipalities/Federal Green Infrastructure Programs, Olympics, Provincial initiatives and World Urban Forum: Habitat Plus 30.

It is recommended that staff report back with further details on a 2004 work program, resources, and space needs for the Sustainability Support Group to continue to develop a Sustainable Action Strategy for the City Corporation and for the community.

BACKGROUND

The awareness that actions taken by governments must address the limits of the planet to supply resources and absorb wastes and pollution has been growing over the past three decades. This culminated in the United Nations report, *Our Common Future*, published in 1987. The report established the concept of sustainable development and since then many individuals and organizations, including cities, have begun to grapple with the challenge of becoming more sustainable.

Vancouver has a history of leadership on sustainability issues. In 1990, the City established the Special Office for the Environment (SOE). The initial emphasis on environmental concerns has broadened to integrate environmental, economic, and social considerations under the term “sustainability”.

The City has adopted many policies and programs which contain sustainability elements (see Appendix “A”). However, the City has yet to draw these initiatives together into a comprehensive strategy that embraces sustainability.

In 2001, enhancing sustainability was identified as a Better City Government Initiative and the Corporate Management Team began reviewing ways to address sustainability in a coordinated manner. These interests led to Council, in April 2002, adopting a definition of a sustainable Vancouver and Sustainability Principles for the city (see Appendix “B”). Council also approved funding for a Sustainability Support Group staff team.

The Sustainability Support Group is administered through the Office of the City Manager. Management is provided by the General Manager of Engineering Services, the General Manager of Parks and Recreation, and the Director of City Plans. Staff from Engineering, Parks and Recreation, Planning, Environmental Health, Real Estate Services, Facilities Development, Social Planning, Housing Centre, and the Library form a working group to assist the Sustainability Support Group.

The initial mandate of the Sustainability Support Group was to:

- Provide a contact point and support for City sustainability initiatives;
- Prepare a comprehensive list of existing City sustainability initiatives and gaps;
- Develop a Vancouver Sustainable Action Strategy to advance sustainability for the Corporation and broader community; and
- Recommend a work program, organizational structure, and an ongoing budget for program development, training, and communications to support city-wide sustainability initiatives.

DISCUSSION

Sustainable development requires local governments to ensure that municipal services can be equitably distributed today and for future generations. This requires a strategic approach that factors long-term community, ecological, and economic concerns into the design and delivery of today’s municipal services. Local governments are major players in sustainability in four ways:

- ***Cities are large corporations*** - The City of Vancouver has many buildings, facilities, vehicles, and other assets. The City employs over 8,000 people and accounts for significant flows of resources, water, waste, and energy. Managing these operations in accordance with the principles of sustainability is an important part of becoming a sustainable city.
- ***Cities build and maintain infrastructure and deliver an array of services and programs*** - The City is responsible for building and maintaining infrastructure systems including roads, water and liquid waste systems, landfills etc. Many services and programs also include environmental elements (*e.g. water, waste management, and*

parks), economic elements (e.g. *economic development, transportation infrastructure*) and social elements (e.g. *social housing, community facilities, and public safety, literacy, youth and drug response programs*). Developing and managing these systems and programs affects the quality of life and environment of the city's residents and businesses.

- ***Cities are vested with powers of policy, regulation, and enforcement*** - The City is responsible for setting standards, regulations, taxes, and fees. It is also responsible for enforcing a range of laws, including its own and those of senior governments. Governing in a manner that supports increased sustainability is key to creating and managing a sustainable city.
- ***Cities can lead by example*** - The City can demonstrate through programs and projects the benefits of sustainable initiatives.

Sustainability Scope and Linkages

The scope of considerations associated with making Vancouver more sustainable is significant. Some key sustainability topics are summarized as follows.

- ***Core Sustainability Issues***
 - ***Environmental***
 - Energy (renewable supply and reduced and more efficient use);
 - Air quality and Greenhouse Gas emissions / climate change;
 - Water and Liquid Waste Management;
 - Resource use and Solid Waste Management (including recycling); and
 - Environmental or ecosystem health.
 - ***Social***
 - Basic needs (housing, food, healthcare, etc.);
 - Individual and community health and services; and
 - Cultural expression.
 - ***Economic***
 - Prosperous and stable local economy and businesses;
 - Green business practices; and
 - Financial accountability.
- ***City Development and Management Issues***
 - Corporate activities - Operations, facilities, fleets, procurement;
 - Service provision - water, streets, garbage;
 - Local government roles - policy, bylaw, decision-making and enforcement; and
 - Management Practices of the City - in all its roles associated with the above issues.

As illustrated in Appendix A, the City has undertaken a broad range of sustainability initiatives addressing many of the identified issues. Further initiatives are underway.

Upcoming Council Reports

The following outlines projects and reports that will be coming to Council over the next several months. The intent is to provide Council with an overview of work to advance

sustainability which is underway and a sense of the decisions and resources that may be requested.

Cool Vancouver Task Force Corporate and Community Climate Change Action Plans - With the creation of the Cool Vancouver Task Force in March 2003, the primary focus of the Sustainability Support Group's activities during the past six months has been to work with the Task Force in developing the City's Corporate and Community Climate Change Action Plans. This work has focused on energy and greenhouse gas emissions, the climate change components of sustainability.

- **Corporate Climate Change Action Plan for the City of Vancouver** - This Action Plan will be tabled by the Cool Vancouver Task Force and will be considered by Council concurrently with this report. It will describe how the City can meet the Council-approved Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions reduction target of 20% below 1990 levels. The Plan will address initiatives for the City's buildings and facilities, fleet, energy systems, waste management systems, and employee behaviour, amongst other things. Funding requests in this Plan total \$170,000 annually for staffing (Energy Project Co-ordinator, Sustainability Co-ordinator), consultation and green power purchase, and about \$140,000 for projects, communications, and related costs in the first year.
- **Community Climate Change Action Plan** - This plan will address reduced GHG emissions throughout the city primarily focussing on buildings, transportation, energy systems, waste management systems and personal and organizational behaviour. An outline of the Draft Action Plan will be reported to Council early in 2004, along with a consultation program. If approved, discussions with the community and key stakeholders would occur during early spring, with the final Plan submitted to Council for approval early next summer.

Wastewater Quality and Green Business Strategies - In response to a Council request to review city permit fees for industrial wastewater discharge, staff is preparing a report recommending an approach to increase the quality of wastewater discharged into the sewer system. This will include public education and a workplan to develop a green business strategy for the City to assist businesses to achieve better environmental performance.

Pesticide Use on Private Property - The General Manager of Parks and Recreation will be reporting on an education program and related initiatives to reduce the use of pesticides on private property. This will address the environmental and community health aspects of sustainability. There will be additional costs for enforcement if a By-law to restrict the use of harmful pesticides is approved.

Implementing the LEED Building Rating System - The Director of Current Planning will be reporting on a proposal to use the LEED building rating system to improve the sustainability performance of buildings in the South East False Creek development and elsewhere in the city, possibly including civic facilities. This initiative will address an array of sustainability issues primarily associated with buildings. Staff is currently finalizing technical and costing aspects for the report to Council.

Food Policy - On July 8, 2003, Council supported the development of a food system for the City that fosters equitable food access, nutrition, community development and environmental health. A Food Policy Task Force has been formed to develop a plan that includes actions that can be implemented in the short term and recommendations on how these will fit into a long-term policy framework and governance model.

Social Housing Strategy - The Housing Centre, in response to Council instruction, is developing comprehensive action plans regarding housing and homelessness, and the services required to support those for whom affordability is only one issue they face. Staff will be reporting back over the next year on various components of the comprehensive action plans. The first report will be in January on changes to secondary suite policies to maintain a stock of affordable housing and encourage more efficient (sustainable) land uses.

CONCURRENT SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVES

Sustainability initiatives are being pursued elsewhere that involve the City of Vancouver. The following more notable ones include City involvement.

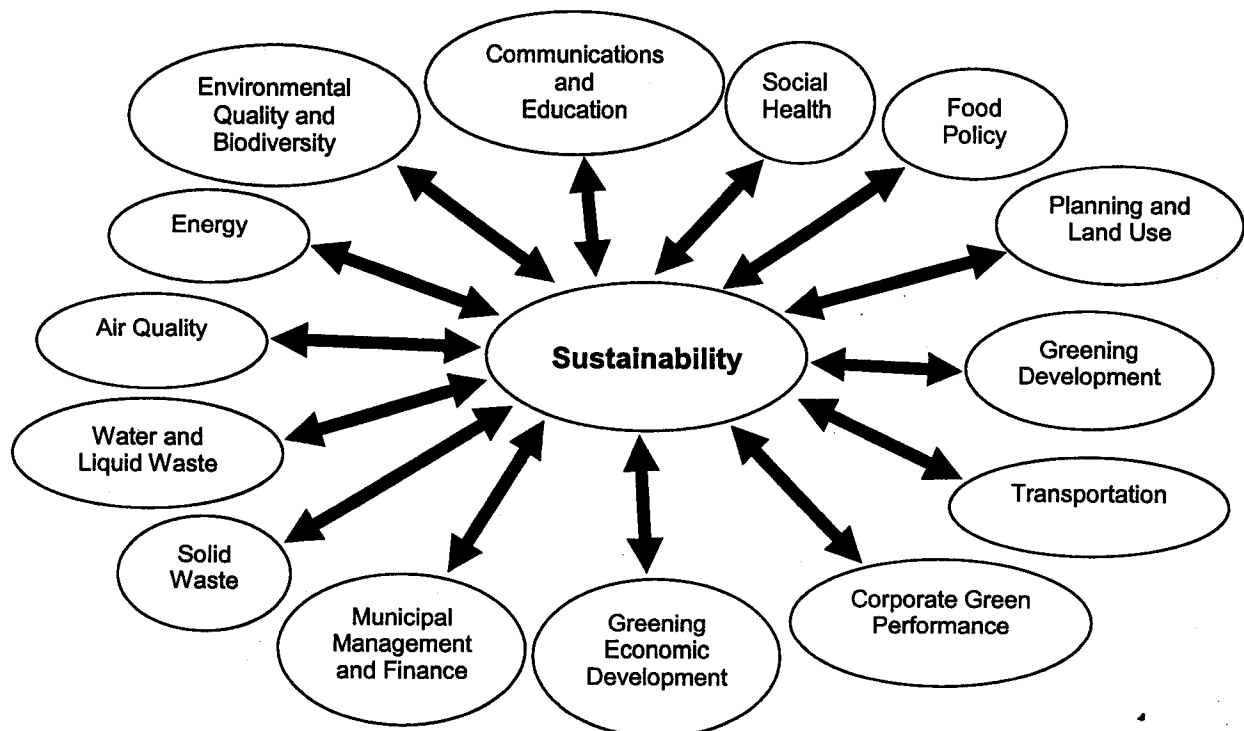
- **Federal / FCM Initiatives** - A Federal Government Action Plan provides over \$1.1 billion to address climate change initiatives. The Green Municipal Funds Program supports a wide range of transportation, water, solid waste and energy management projects. The City continues to apply for funding from the Green Funds for a range of initiatives. It is expected that the City will also play a role in encouraging residents and businesses to access federal funds and programs to reduce climate change. This role will be more clearly defined in the Cool Vancouver Task Force's Community Climate Change Action Plan.
- **Provincial Climate Change Action Plan** - The Provincial Government is developing a Climate Change Action Plan and is consulting with stakeholders regarding issues. City staff has been in discussions with the Province regarding this initiative.
- **Greater Vancouver Regional District** - A focus on sustainability is timely given broader regional initiatives. The existing Liveable Region Strategic Plan (LRSP) focuses on land use and transportation aspects of sustainability. However, it does not have specific strategies to advance social and economic sustainability. The Region is pursuing both partnership opportunities and a review of the LRSP under the Sustainable Region Initiative process. This could lead to amendments to the LRSP to broaden its emphasis on land use and transportation to include economic diversity and social equity. As changes to the LRSP are contemplated, the City will be involved. Revisions to the City's Regional Context Statement may be required.
- **2006 World Urban Forum: Habitat Plus 30** - In September 2002, Canada offered to host the 2006 World Urban Forum (WUF) in Vancouver. In May 2003, the UN formally confirmed Vancouver as the location for the 2006 WUF. Among the Canadian submissions was a letter from Mayor Campbell inviting the world's cities to Vancouver. The 2006 Vancouver Habitat +30 events and WUF will:

- Attract over 1,000 delegates, international experts and government representatives to Vancouver to share information that leads to solutions to global urban issues;
 - Showcase Canadian and Vancouver achievements in building livable and sustainable cities; and
 - Motivate public and private interest in sustainable development including achieving Kyoto objectives.
- **2010 Olympic Games** - The 2010 Olympic Games has sustainability as one of its key objectives. As a host city, Vancouver can benefit from, and support the Olympics by demonstrating sustainability at the local level. Staff will be involved in preparing for the Games, and addressing the sustainability performance of venues, Olympic housing, energy supply systems, transportation, environmental impacts, social impacts, and waste management, and others.

Resourcing City Sustainability Initiatives

The City has taken two complementary approaches to advance sustainability. Most of the responsibility for implementation of sustainability programs is carried out by staff throughout the organization. For example, social sustainability is being advanced by Social Planning, Housing Centre, and Downtown East Side Revitalization Program. These and other programs including Transportation, Community Visions, Parks and Recreation, Fleet Management etc., are fully integrated into the City department responsible for the initiatives.

The Sustainability Support Group provides a coordinating and communications role drawing together the City’s many sustainability initiatives. The group largely mirrors the linkages between sustainability issues and city development and management issues. Sustainability staff are regularly drawn into a range of discussions on sustainability-related projects, issues and Council reports. Some of the primary sustainability linkages are diagrammed below.



Some of the work undertaken by the Support Group with other city staff over the past six months includes:

- Providing staff support for the Cool Vancouver Task Force (the primary focus of the Group's recent work);
- Overseeing the technical studies required to develop both Corporate and Community Climate Change Action Plans;
- Overseeing the call for proposals from consultation teams for the Community Climate Change Action Plan consultation process in the spring;
- Developing information on sustainability on the City's website;
- Preparation of a draft "Sustainability Workbook" for departments to begin auditing sustainability initiatives;
- Commencing the research and drafting of a "sustainability report" outlining City sustainability-related activities, projects, and policies;
- Advising staff and Council on city initiatives ranging from Southeast False Creek to the Olympics; and
- Representing the City on sustainability discussions including visiting delegations, presentations, and conferences.

The Sustainability Support Group resources were initially approved for a Program Manager and Assistant (Planning Analyst). To respond to staff availability and work load staffing for the Sustainability Support Group currently includes:

- Manager of Sustainability - part time contract
- Planner 1 - full time
- Planning Analyst - half-time

The Planner I and Planning Analyst positions are on loan from the City Plans Division with some funding from the sustainability program being used to backfill City Plans Greenways work.

The Sustainability Support Group is already experiencing a high work load and increasing demands including preparation of both Corporate and Community Climate Change Action Plans and research and development of City sustainability initiatives as outlined previously.

Staff will be reporting on the implications of this additional work for staffing levels and space needs as part of a report on a 2004 work program for the Sustainability Support Group.

Work to date suggests that for the City to move in more sustainable directions additional permanent positions may be required, possibly including: an Energy Projects Co-ordinator, a Corporate Sustainability Coordinator, a Green Development Planner, an Environmental Planner, and a Green Business Development Coordinator. It should be noted that funding for the first two positions is being requested in a companion report on the Corporate Climate Change Action Plan.

Initial estimates suggest this is the level of staff resources needed to undertake and manage the new work that sustainability will bring to the City. New positions are not being requested now. They will be the subject of forthcoming reports as previously described. These positions

could be new funding or a reassignment of staff from lower priority work. They would be integrated into the City departments responsible for respective issues (e.g. the Green Development Planner would likely be located in the Planning Department or Development Services to review applications and assist in advising on green building opportunities). These positions would work closely with the Sustainability Support Group.

CONCLUSION

This report provides an overview of the exciting projects and movement toward sustainability happening through the City and in neighbouring jurisdictions, and provides information on upcoming initiatives which advance the city's sustainability agenda that will be reported to Council over the next few months.

The Sustainability Support Group will also be reporting on a 2004 program outlining a strategy to pursue sustainability across the corporation and the community with resources required to advance these initiatives.

* * * * *

CITY OF VANCOUVER SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVES

A comprehensive report on policies and programs addressing sustainability issues approved by various Councils over the years is being prepared by the Sustainability staff team. The following outlines some of the higher profile projects that have emerged as important City concerns through community feedback, political leadership, and interaction with other governments and agencies. Implementation includes consultation with citizens, local organizations, and other levels of government.

Environment

Special Office for the Environment - In 1990, a Special Office of the Environment (SOE) was established to coordinate environmental policy. Responsibilities include: producing state of the environment reports; developing environmental policy and an environmental agenda for the City; completing environmental audits of City operations; developing climate protection initiatives; and administering the City's Environmental Grants Program. Today, SOE does not appear as an entity on the City's organization charts. Rather, it is a "virtual office" which involves staff in the City's Environmental Protection Branch and staff in Environmental Health (provided through a service contract with the Vancouver-Coastal Health Authority) closely coordinating their efforts.

The City Environment Policy and Environmental Action Plan (1996) - this plan commits the City to:

- Ensuring environmental considerations are integrated into all City of Vancouver decisions respecting planning, growth, service delivery, finance, and operations;
- Initiating and promoting compliance with City by-laws protective of the environment;
- Advocating for appropriate environmental protection actions by other levels of government and the private sector;
- Ensuring that the City's own operations comply with environmental legislation;
- Involving and communicating with citizens and businesses in the establishment and attainment of the City's environmental objectives;
- Encouraging and demonstrating the wise use of natural and fiscal resources; and
- Adopting and updating an environmental agenda and action plan to achieve the City's environmental objectives.

Clouds of Change - Recommendations from the "Clouds of Change" report (1990), lead to a number of air quality and climate protection initiatives including traffic reduction, energy-efficient land use policies, and a demonstration community in South East False Creek meeting economic, social, and ecological sustainability principles.

Urban Forestry - In 1990 Council endorsed the Park Board's Street Tree Management Plan to improve tree maintenance and provide for sustained replanting. The Board looks after some 1.5 million trees in parks and 128,000 on the City's streets. As part of this plan, 3400 street trees are planted annually. In 1991, Council adopted a bylaw to regulate removal and planting of trees on private property.

Integrated Pest Management - In 1987 the Park Board adopted an Integrated Pest Management Policy (IPM), which has resulted in significant reductions in the use of chemicals. For the past decade no pesticides have been used on any Vancouver playground, sports field, or turf area. Biological control and other practises have greatly reduced the need for chemical pesticides at the Sunset greenhouses, Bloedel Conservatory, and VanDusen Gardens. While significant progress has been made, further IPM initiatives on public lands and extension of IPM to include private property could result in significant reductions in the use of chemicals in the city.

Biofiltration - The Park Board and Engineering Services have cooperated on the creation of two biofiltration systems to cleanse storm water. The Hastings pond collects storm water from a 300 acre residential area south of Hastings Park, cleans it, and discharges it into Burrard Inlet. Previously this storm water ended up in the sanitary sewage system and was treated at the Iona plant. The Lost Lagoon facility collects runoff from the causeway, cleans it, and discharges it into Lost Lagoon. The water previously ran, untreated, into Beaver Lake and Lost Lagoon. Both facilities offer aesthetic as well as environmental benefits. This approach can be applied to other locations such as South East False Creek.

City Noise Management - the 1997 Report of the Urban Noise Task Force, led to the establishment of maximum noise levels for certain land uses.

Solid Waste Management

Waste Reduction - In 1989, Council approved a solid waste reduction goal of 50 percent. The Solid Waste Management Plan (1994) commits the City to increasing the re-use and recycling of products. In so doing, the City is committed to ensuring that the next 40-50 years of landfill development will occur in the existing landfill footprint. Other initiatives include a yard trimmings composting facility, wildlife habitat creation at the landfill, and recovery of landfill gas for reuse.

Adopting a goal of reducing solid waste disposal by 50 percent, along with the implementation of numerous waste reducing programs, supports the principles of using both renewable and non-renewable resources in cycles. Recycling, yard trimmings collection, and user pay garbage programs reduce disposal allowing future generations to have access to resources, enhance accountability for waste, and encourage the use of renewable resources. There are opportunities to improve on these programs as significant amounts of recyclables and renewable resources continue to be sent to landfills.

Water and Liquid Waste Management

City Farmer - Waterwise Garden - City Farmer's garden has been open continuously since 1982 at 2150 Maple Street demonstrating urban agriculture and various "green" technologies, all of which can be practiced by residents in the City. Waterwise gardening means gardening with as little water as possible. The water we use outdoors accounts for about 40 percent of residential summer water use. Waterwise gardening is one way we can conserve our water resource. The boulevard gardens demonstrates plantings that can survive dry summers and wet winters in the Lower Mainland and includes an alpine garden. It contains native plants and other drought resistant varieties.

School Plays - The City of Vancouver has been presenting the school play, "The A2Z of H2O" to Vancouver elementary schools since 1994. This play combines song, dance, puppetry and narrative to educate children about the importance of water conservation. It is presented to Kindergarten to Grade 5 students.

Rain Barrels - Outdoor summer water use accounts for about 40 percent of residential summer water use. The City of Vancouver offers a unique half-barrel design that sits flush against a wall and can be hidden by shrubs and other plants. The rain barrel is made from dark forest green recycled plastic and is childproof. Rainwater collected in the rain barrel is non-chlorinated and is stored at outdoor temperatures. This rainwater is ideal for watering plants and it does not shock plants like colder water from the tap.

Grow Natural - Natural Yard care is caring for your yard with nature in mind: mowing without catching the clippings or raking and bagging them; using biological pest control methods rather than synthetic pesticides and herbicides; and reducing water use.

Sprinkling Regulations - The importance of water conservation in Vancouver was emphasized when the City experienced water shortages in the summers of 1990 and 1992, and again this year. The average household water demand can more than double during the summer with approximately 40 percent of the total water being used for the outdoors. Summer sprinkling regulations have been in place since 1993. These restrictions help reduce the rate of water consumption and lower the risk of reservoir levels being depleted.

Liquid Waste Management Plan - In 2002, the Province approved the LWMP for the GVRD and all regional municipalities. This plan is the culmination of more than a decade of planning and discussion with all levels of government and the public. It provides the Region with an integrated long term strategy to manage all liquid waste. Commitments made as part of the Plan include installation of secondary sewage treatment facilities, elimination of combined sewer overflows, various storm water initiatives and on-going environmental assessments.

Combined Sewer Separation - The City has committed to continuing the ongoing 1% per year Sewer main replacement and separation program to target reductions and the ultimate elimination of combined sewer overflows by 2050.

Stream Enhancement - Storm water is a resource and stream day lighting and enhancements are supported through special zoning such as the Still Creek CD-1. Another example is the development of the existing lake and future creek system at Hastings Park.

Percolation Policy - In 2000, an amendment to single family zoning (RS By-law), which covers about 70 percent of the city, limited impervious surface coverage to 60 percent of the site. Previously there were no limits on the amount of paved area a site could have. This by-law change was introduced in order to increase and/or maintain trees and vegetation, maintain aesthetics, and to limit storm water runoff.

Still Creek ISMP - The City of Vancouver and Burnaby and the GVRD are presently developing an Integrated Storm Water Management Plan for the Still Creek watershed. When complete, this Plan will include recommendations for private property (residential, commercial and industrial) best management practices, educational programs, flood reduction initiatives and integrating people with the stream (recreational and aesthetic).

Industry Source Controls - In 2000, a pricing mechanism was introduced to charge permitted industries direct user fees based on the quantity of waste discharged. Since these fees have been introduced, industry has made significant investments in on-site control technology and process changes. This has resulted in about a 50% loading reduction from the businesses targeted.

Country Lanes - The City has developed alternatives to straight right of way wide paving for lane improvements and renewals. The country lane approach provides for two paved driving strips and natural edges including drainage swales. This results in reduced runoff, improved water quality, and greater green space in the community.

Ex-filtrating Drains - City staff are experimenting with modifications to existing street drainage systems to encourage infiltration of runoff into the ground. One concept being tried is the use of vertically drilled wells lined with perforated pipe to allow runoff to infiltrate into permeable soil structures.

Land use

Key City land use and transportation policies - Many city plans including the Central Area Plan, CityPlan, the Industrial Lands Strategy, and Vancouver Transportation Plan incorporate sustainability principles. Mixing uses by locating housing near jobs and services in the Central Area and by locating more jobs and services in Neighbourhood Centres provides sufficient ridership to support public transit services, minimize congestion and pollution, and offer broader accessibility and housing choice.

Central Area Plan (1991) - This influential plan minimizes the social, economic, and environmental impacts of commuting by promoting a better balance of jobs and housing within the Central Area by pursuing a "Living First" strategy. Implementation of this Plan is well underway in the Central Area where 78,000 people now live within walking distance of 150,000 jobs.

CityPlan (1995) - This plan provides economic, social, and environmental directions including supporting a diverse economy and providing for a mix of housing, jobs, and community services throughout the city to increase accessibility, affordability, and minimize the environmental impacts of travel. CityPlan also contains policies to reduce waste and water use, and to reuse and recycle waste. Outside the Central Area, the concept of Neighbourhood Centres is not yet fully realized. There are opportunities to improve sustainability in the use of land and the provision of services in the city's lower density neighbourhoods through the adoption of community energy plans and making more efficient use of existing services.

High Tech Zones - New high-technology areas (False Creek Flats and Grandview-Boundary) are located on transit and are planned with sufficient density to support pedestrian activity and with enough amenities within the public realm to encourage it.

The South East False Creek Sustainable Urban Neighbourhood (SEFC) - this neighbourhood planning process emerged as an initiative recommended by the Clouds of Change Report in 1990. In the mid-1990s Council approved planning for a “model sustainable urban neighbourhood” for an 80 acre site along the southeast shore of False Creek. Considering research and invention of the idea of a sustainable urban neighbourhood is being done to achieve several key goals:

- Promote a healthy social community;
- Provide economic viability and vitality without subsidy;
- Improve the ecological health of the False Creek Basin;
- Reduce the consumption of non-renewable energy and resources; and
- Reduce waste and pollution.

In 1999 Council approved the SEFC Policy Statement to develop a complete community where people can live, work, play and learn within walking, cycling or convenient transit distance. Buildings will be resource efficient green buildings. Open spaces offer recreation, urban forest, surface water management, and community gardens. Neighbourhood design will reduce energy, water, liquid and solid waste, and air pollution and increase food production. Objectives are to achieve a 25 percent reduction in energy use, up to 40 percent reduction in per capita greenhouse gas emissions, and 50 percent reduction per capita water consumption compared to typical neighbourhoods. The City is also pursuing incorporation of the LEED certification program for green buildings into the area’s development.

Transportation

The Vancouver Transportation Plan (1997) - This plan provides mode split targets and actions to increase opportunities for walking, biking, transit, and goods movement to reduce the demand for new automobile related services. The Plan is being implemented through such measures as bikeways, greenways (Greenways Plan 1995), traffic calming, and transit improvements. The Vancouver Transit Strategy (2002) and the Downtown Transportation Plan (2001) - both to encourage walking, biking, and transit.

Area Transit Planning - The City is working with TransLink, the regional transportation agency, to improve transit service in Vancouver through area transit plans and the expansion of rapid transit lines in the region.

Energy

Energy Strategy - The Framework for a Vancouver Energy Strategy (1979) identified energy conservation ideas to be investigated for their feasibility and cost effectiveness. Since then, the City has initiated conserving measures in its buildings through new design and retrofits. Recent approvals for new civic buildings have been to LEED Silver standards.

Conservation Measures - In 1978, commencing with Council's adoption of a "Framework for a Vancouver Energy Strategy", the City began instituting energy conserving measures in its buildings through new design and retrofits incorporating computerized energy management control systems. As a result of these energy initiatives, the City was awarded the BC Hydro Power Smart Excellence award in 1998 for outstanding achievement in energy efficiency. Currently, the City is participating in BC Hydro's Time-of-Use pilot projects whereby electrical loads are shifted during peak periods thus achieving substantial energy cost avoidance. In the fall of 2001, the City joined BC Hydro's E-Point Program to promote energy conservation in City facilities. There are, however, further opportunities to improve sustainability in facilities by incorporating a Green Building design policy in projects being considered in the next Capital Plan.

Economic Sustainability

Economic Diversity - CityPlan (1995) establishes a "diverse economy" as a city direction. CityPlan, the Central Area Plan (1991), and the City's Regional Context Statement (2000) maintain Vancouver's Downtown as the region's Central Business District and Central Broadway as a significant regional medical-business area.

The Industrial Lands Strategy (1995) - This strategy preserves land for industrial, service, and port related uses. The adoption of I-3 High Technology zoning (1999) established the False Creek Flats and Grandview-Boundary as locations for new technology uses.

Social Sustainability & Public Participation

Affordable Housing - Social equity is a key to sustainability, and affordable housing is a key to social equity. Safe, secure, and affordable housing provides the basis for this generation and future generations to prosper both economically and socially. The City's long standing commitment to the provision of social, and other forms of affordable housing and the integration of affordable housing in new and existing neighbourhoods, is one reason the City of Vancouver is as sustainable as it is. The current fiscal situation presents challenges to the City's affordable housing initiatives. The Housing Centre will need to work closely with senior governments to balance the need for economical capital construction costs and long term operational benefits which are achieved utilizing sustainable building and site approaches.

Affordable Housing Policies - These policies adopted through the 1970s - 1990s, ensure a portion of the housing stock continues to serve lower income needs by making provision for lease of City-owned land for non-market housing, requiring major projects to include a component of social housing, and through regulations to minimize demolition and conversion of market rental housing.

Youth - Example policies and programs supporting social sustainability include Civic Youth Strategy (1995) and the Childcare Action Plan (1990). The City is committed to creating opportunities for youth to be partners in determining the future of the City. The Civic Youth Strategy includes the following objectives: ensuring that youth have a "place" in the city; ensuring a strong youth voice in decision-making; promoting youth as a resource to the city; and strengthening the support base for youth in the city. As the City works towards ensuring that today's decisions do not compromise the choices of future generations, partnerships with our youth are a way of achieving this goal.

Community Policing - Community policing initiatives have been implemented throughout the city to get local citizens more closely involved in maintaining safety in their neighbourhoods.

Literacy - The City has promoted literacy programs for disadvantaged families and children throughout the city.

Downtown Eastside - The Framework for Action in the Downtown East Side (2000), combines social and economic actions to develop a more secure and sustainable community.

Public Participation - The Public Involvement Strategy (2001) provides principles for public participation in civic affairs.

Definition of a Sustainable Vancouver Adopted by Council April 2002

"A sustainable Vancouver is a community that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

It is a place where people live, work, and prosper in a vibrant community of communities.

In such a community, sustainability is achieved through community participation and the reconciliation of short and long term economic, social, and ecological well-being".

Vancouver Sustainability Principles Adopted by Council April 2002

"Sustainability is a direction rather than a destination. A sustainable city is one that protects and enhances the immediate and long-term well being of a city and its citizens, while providing the highest quality of life possible. Sustainability requires integrated decision-making that takes into account economic, ecological, and social impacts as a whole".

A Sustainable Vancouver embraces the following principles:

- Today's decisions must not compromise the choices of our children and future generations.
- We are all accountable for our individual and collective actions.
- Resources must be used fairly and efficiently without compromising the sustainability of one community for another.
- Using renewable resources is encouraged and supported, while the use of non-renewable resources should be minimized.
- Renewable resource consumption should not exceed the rate of regeneration.
- Strong collaboration and open communication between the public, the business sector, and all levels of government are important.
- We value cultural, economic, and environmental diversity.
- A community should provide a safe, healthy, and viable setting for human interaction, education, employment, recreation, and cultural development.
- A sustainable Vancouver contributes to, and provides leadership towards, regional, provincial, national, and global sustainability.
- The Vancouver economy should move from its dependence on non-renewable carbon-based fuels, particularly for transportation, which are likely to fluctuate dramatically in price and supply.