



Meeting 2007 July 09

COUNCIL REPORT

TO: MEMBERS OF COUNCIL**DATE:** 2007 June 21**FROM:** MAYOR DEREK R. CORRIGAN**FILE:** PL 76500 20
*Ref: Sustainability Planning***SUBJECT: BURNABY SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGIES****PURPOSE:** To seek Council endorsement for the preparation of updated social and environmental sustainability strategies for Burnaby.**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

1. **THAT** Council endorse the preparation of updated social and environmental sustainability strategies for Burnaby, as described in this report.
2. **THAT** copies of this report be sent to the Social Issues Committee and Environment Committee.

REPORT**1.0 BACKGROUND**

Burnaby has an enviable record as being one of the most economically, environmentally and socially sustainable cities in the region – if not Canada. Earlier this year, Council adopted an Economic Development Strategy for the City. I believe it's now time that we pursue complimentary and contemporary environmental and social strategies.

It is my hope that, with the three inter-related strategies, we will be able to continue to move towards becoming a more liveable, vibrant, and sustainable Burnaby – a place which facilitates a healthy economy, strong respect for and stewardship of our natural environment and establishment of high quality services and facilities to meet the needs of an engaged and active citizenry. In this report, I'd like to elaborate on my vision and to outline an approach for making the social and environmental strategies a reality.

2.0 CONTEXT**2.1 Environmental Planning**

The City of Burnaby has a long standing reputation for environmental leadership. Indeed, Burnaby was given an award for overall sustainability by the Fraser Basin Council (FBC) in 2002. In granting the award, the FBC noted that:

To: Members of Council
From: Mayor Derek R. Corrigan
Re: Burnaby Social and Environmental Sustainability
Strategies
2007 June 21.....Page 2



“The City of Burnaby has consistently demonstrated its commitment to promoting its liveability for future generations to inherit. It has shown that environmental protection, community liveability and economic development can be successfully integrated into an urban community.”

The Official Community Plan (OCP) established the broad framework for environmental planning efforts in the city, with acknowledgment that stewardship cannot be created through regulation alone. City stewardship and creating a balance between environmental priorities and progressive development are what make the City of Burnaby a liveable, prosperous, resilient and innovative place to live.

The OCP identified a multi-pronged goal which involved:

- Preserving and enhancing the ecological systems and diversity of the City and, in turn, the Region
- Being proactive in addressing environmental issues and leading by example
- Encouraging environmental stewardship and protection of Burnaby's natural legacies, two-way sharing of environmental information with the community and active, meaningful community participation in environmental decision-making, and
- Incorporating environmental considerations as an integral part in the assessment of growth management options, land use plans, transportation plans and development proposals.

The OCP environmental framework has been supported by the 1993 State of the Environment Report (SOER). Burnaby was one of the first municipalities in Canada to develop an SOER. The SOER addressed such topics as growth management and land use planning, environmental quality, City operations, and shared stewardship. It also included broad vision statements and goals, along with a comprehensive listing of potential initiatives relating to:

- Conservation and protection of green space
- Urban structure
- Transportation
- Air quality and global warming
- Drinking water quality
- Waste management
- Shared stewardship

Through the years, the City has pursued an array of environmental programs and initiatives. Key examples include:

- *Conservation and Protection of Green Space:* Parkland acquisition and Park dedications, Invasive Species Management, Still Creek Integrated Stormwater Management Plan and Biodiversity mapping,

To: *Members of Council*
From: *Mayor Derek R. Corrigan*
Re: *Burnaby Social and Environmental Sustainability
Strategies*

2007 June 21.....Page 3

- *Transportation:* Urban Trails, Central Valley Greenway, Bikeways, linking SkyTrain with land use plans
- *Energy Management and Conservation:* Energy Performance Contract, EnergyFit Program
- *Stewardship:* Burnaby Streamkeepers Program, ongoing liaison with Stewardship Groups including clean-up and planting activities, education and public outreach programs on Chafer Beetle and Invasive Species and land and fisheries habitat improvements
- *Waste Management:* Solid Waste Collection Program, City's Recycling Depot; E-Waste Collection and Recycling and Cut the Garbage Program Curriculum for elementary schools
- *Urban Structure:* Land use intensification (e.g., Town Centre, Business Centre, and Urban Village areas)
- *Purchasing Practices:* Environmental Purchasing Practices

2.2 Social Planning

As with the environment, the City has a proud legacy for social planning. Indeed, Burnaby is widely recognized throughout the region for its progressive efforts in the social planning field. Beginning with our initial Official Community Plan in 1987, and continuing with our current 1998 OCP, the City has outlined an array of social planning goals, principles, directions, and priorities for action.

The OCP oriented the City's social planning activities around four broad areas of focus:

- Social policy and advocacy
- Physical environment
- Special needs housing
- Human services planning.

It also delineated the various roles that the City may play in responding to social needs in the community:

- *Direct Provider* – assuming responsibility for planning and provision of services and facilities (e.g., recreation centres, libraries)
- *Cooperator* – working cooperatively with other parties in the planning and delivery phases (e.g., inter-agency collaboration)
- *Funder* – providing grants to assist non-profit agencies with their service delivery
- *Advocate* – calling on senior levels of government or other appropriate parties to respond to identified community needs (e.g., advocacy regarding Income Assistance policies, child care concerns, and proposed changes to Burnaby Hospital).

To: *Members of Council*
From: *Mayor Derek R. Corrigan*
Re: *Burnaby Social and Environmental Sustainability Strategies*

2007 June 21..... Page 4

Some examples of social planning initiatives of which I'm particularly proud are as follows:

- *Social Policy*: Adopting policies and implementation measures regarding a range of social issues facing the community (e.g., child care, multiculturalism, adaptable housing, healthy communities, and group homes).
- *Metrotown Social Planning Program*: Through extensive community collaboraton, examining a range of social planning issues facing Metrotown which, in turn, laid the foundation for many of the social components we now see in the area (e.g., child care centres, community police station, space for non-profit agencies, youth facilities).
- *Community Asset Mapping System*: Developing this ground-breaking Geographical Information System/ web-based system to assist the planning efforts of the City and external bodies, while also enabling members of the public to search for information about population characteristics and facilities, programs, and services in their community.
- *Burnaby/ New Westminster Task Force on Sexual Exploitation of Children & Youth*: Pursuing several initiatives aimed at preventing and responding to the exploitation of children and youth in the sex trade, including provision of City-owned property at below market rates for use as a safe house for young women trying to leave the sex trade.
- *Density Bonusing*: Obtaining approximately \$28 million worth of community amenities, housing, and cash-in-lieu through density bonusing for major developments in our town centre areas.

3.0 CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL STRATEGIES

Notwithstanding our exemplary record, to carry the City's legacy of social and environmental leadership into the future, I believe we need a more contemporary, coordinated, and focused approach – one that more explicitly addresses sustainability concerns. Key trends and issues that will need to be considered in our future social and environmental planning efforts include:

- Increasing ethnic and cultural diversity amongst the population
- Aging of the population
- Rising levels and increasing visibility of homelessness and poverty in the community
- Cuts in senior government funding and programs for social and environmental programs, resulting in increasing calls for local government to “pick up the slack”
- Increasing challenges amongst the non-profit sector to “do more with less”
- Increasing need for energy conservation
- Growing awareness and concern over the implications of peak oil, climate change, and rising greenhouse gas emissions
- Increasing urbanization and density, with attendant demands on services, facilities, and the environment
- Increasing focus on establishment of sustainable purchasing practices
- Increasing awareness of the importance of waste reduction measures

To: *Members of Council*
From: *Mayor Derek R. Corrigan*
Re: *Burnaby Social and Environmental Sustainability Strategies*
2007 June 21.....Page 5

- Growing concerns regarding habitat continuity and biodiversity protection.

Given the foregoing, and to help prepare us for dealing with the challenges that lie ahead, I believe it is timely for the City to consider preparation of updated social and environmental sustainability strategies. The strategies should build on the existing goals and directions of the OCP. Their overarching purpose should be to provide a contemporary frame of reference to guide the City's decisions and resource allocations regarding social and environmental planning matters over the next 10 or so years. The strategies should, at minimum:

- Provide an inventory of key social and environmental programs, policies and achievements in Burnaby
- Identify current and emerging social and environmental planning issues facing the city
- Assess the effectiveness and appropriateness of the City's existing social and environmental planning policies and initiatives in addressing emerging needs
- Provide suggestions to Council on appropriate City responses to the identified needs.
- Provide priority suggestions for the City's consideration.

In launching the strategies, I want to emphasize that the City cannot be all things to all people and we need to focus our energies and resources appropriately if we are to effectively address the priority issues facing our community. We also need the support and involvement of partners from senior levels of government, external agencies, the business community, and our residents. Therefore, while the focus should be on what the City can do to guide our future social and environmental sustainability, the strategies should also identify roles for senior governments and other partners (e.g., Fraser Health Authority, the business sector, non-profit agencies). Also, both the preparation and implementation of the respective strategies must be pursued within the City's existing budget framework.

4.0 MOVING FORWARD

The recently adopted Economic Development Strategy engaged the community in a most meaningful way through a steering committee and associated subcommittees. I would propose that the Social Issues and Environment Committees, with staff, develop recommendations for a similar approach for preparation of the social and environmental sustainability strategies for the consideration of Council. I would request that the Committees report back to Council by year end with their recommendations, including time lines and budget requirements.

5.0 CONCLUSION

As I said at the outset, Burnaby has an enviable record of being one of the most economically, environmentally and socially sustainable cities in the region – if not Canada. Our City has reason to be proud of this record. Indeed, while commonplace now, Burnaby was one of the first municipalities in the region to clearly recognize and address the linkage amongst the environmental, economic, and social components within our overall planning framework. Nonetheless, we cannot rest on our laurels.

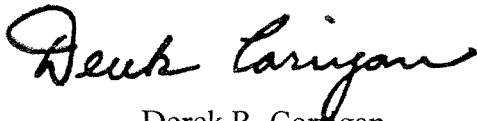
To: *Members of Council*
From: *Mayor Derek R. Corrigan*
Re: *Burnaby Social and Environmental Sustainability
Strategies*

2007 June 21.....Page 6

The City adopted an updated Economic Development Strategy earlier this year. I'm now calling for the City to pursue complimentary social and environmental sustainability strategies. With the benefit of the proposed strategies, in conjunction with the EDS, I firmly believe that Burnaby will be well poised to continue to foster an improved quality of life for our citizens, while also moving us towards a planned, sustainable future.

Therefore, I am asking that Council endorse the preparation of updated social and environmental sustainability strategies for Burnaby. Once the strategies have been completed and approved by Council, they can be incorporated together with the Economic Development Strategy into the City's updated Official Community Plan.

Respectfully submitted,



Derek R. Corrigan
MAYOR

cc: City Manager
Deputy City Manager
Director Planning & Building
Director Finance
Director Engineering
Director Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services