

ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

*HIS WORSHIP, THE MAYOR
AND COUNCILLORS*

**SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR ENDORSEMENT
NEW ENERGY VISION FOR CANADA**

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. THAT Council endorse the call of Tides Canada for the development of A New Energy Vision for Canada, as outlined in this report.
2. THAT Council send a copy of this report to Metro Vancouver member municipalities, the Provincial Minister of Energy and Mines, Provincial Minister of the Environment, and the Federal Minister of Natural Resources.

REPORT

The Environment Committee, at its meeting held on 2011 October 11, received and adopted the *attached* report providing a review of the Tides Canada *A New Energy Vision for Canada*, and seeking Council's endorsement.

The New Energy Vision for Canada calls for development of a national energy strategy with a focus on renewable energy and a long term transition away from fossil fuels, in order to meet climate change objectives, as well as generate significant economic benefits.

Respectfully submitted,

Councillor D. Johnston
Chair

Councillor S. Dhaliwal
Vice Chair

Councillor A. Kang
Member

Copied to:	City Manager Director Planning & Building Director Engineering Director Parks, Recr. & Cult. Services
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TO: CHAIR AND MEMBERS
ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

DATE: 2011 October 4

FROM: DIRECTOR PLANNING AND BUILDING

FILE: 33200 - 02

**SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR ENDORSEMENT
NEW ENERGY VISION FOR CANADA**

PURPOSE: To respond to the Environment Committee's request to review the Tides Canada *A New Energy Vision for Canada* for consideration of City endorsement.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. **THAT** the Committee recommend that Council:
 - a. endorse the call of Tides Canada for the development of a new energy vision for Canada, as outlined in this report; and
 - b. send a copy of this report to Metro Vancouver member municipalities, the Provincial Minister of Energy and Mines, Provincial Minister of the Environment, and the Federal Minister of Natural Resources.

REPORT**1.0 BACKGROUND**

At its 2011 September 13 meeting, the Environment Committee received correspondence regarding a paper entitled, *A New Energy Vision for Canada*, prepared by Tides Canada. Arising from discussion of the correspondence, the Environment Committee requested a staff report on the merits of endorsing the call for the development of new energy vision for Canada, as proposed by Tides Canada.

The *New Energy Vision for Canada* calls for development of a national energy strategy with a focus on renewable energy and a long term transition away from fossil fuels, in order to meet climate change objectives, as well as generate significant economic benefits.

In response to the Committee's request, this report summarizes the information put forward by Tides Canada, for development of a new energy vision for Canada.

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Environment Committee
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2.0 TIDES CANADA NEW ENERGY VISION FOR CANADA

2.1 Overview

Tides Canada is a non-profit organization working in the areas of habitat protection, marine conservation, water resources, climate and energy, arctic policy, food systems and urban sustainability. A *New Energy Vision for Canada* discussion paper was developed by Tides Canada in collaboration with energy leaders across the country. The discussion paper is a proposal calling for the development of a national low-carbon energy strategy informed by dialogue with various levels of government, the private sector and citizens. The *New Energy Vision for Canada* takes a primarily economic perspective to propose a vision for Canada in 2050, in which the country has shifted to clean, renewable and low-carbon energy, through a variety of policy approaches.

2.2 Canada's Energy Policy

The discussion paper argues that Canada's energy policies currently focus too strongly on fossil fuels (coal, oil and gas), leaving the country at risk of falling behind in the rapidly developing global renewable energy sector, and failing to live up to our global responsibility to mitigate climate change. The paper notes that other countries are increasing their development of (and investment in) energy resources that, in comparison to fossil fuels, are safer, more secure, and have less impact on the climate and environment. Thus, even though the demand for "energy services" is increasing in countries, such as China, the paper indicates that the demand for Canadian fossil fuels is likely to decrease. According to *A New Energy Vision for Canada*, a low-carbon energy strategy has the potential to position Canada at the forefront of this shift to new energy sources by capitalizing on our strengths in knowledge and technology, and to contribute to greater economic prosperity, community livability, transportation efficiency and environmental protection.

2.3 Guiding Principles and Components

The *New Energy Vision for Canada* proposes that Canada's future energy strategy be guided by principles to ensure an equitable and sustainable approach to providing energy services and ensuring that Canada remains competitive in the global marketplace, while protecting the environment and lowering carbon emissions by 80% below 1990 levels.

On-the-ground, the vision would include new homes acting as net energy producers, communities designed around local and integrated energy systems, transportation primarily based on renewable energy and efficient public transit, improved economic productivity with innovative value-added industries in place of the bulk export of hydrocarbons, and a culture of stewardship and pride among Canadians for their energy resources and technologies. A number of examples are provided, from existing communities and technologies, to illustrate this vision.

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Tides Canada recommends that *A New Energy Vision for Canada* be founded on the following:

1. Clear targets and mechanisms to measure progress including, *as a starting point*:
 - a) Reducing national greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions according to the *Copenhagen Accord* targets (17% below 2005 levels by 2020)¹.
 - b) Limiting global average surface temperature increase to 2°C above the pre-industrial level; and
 - c) Generating 90% of Canada's electricity from zero-emitting sources;
2. Phasing out fossil-fuel subsidies, as committed by the G20².
3. Establishing biodiversity and ecosystem targets as per the UN *Convention on Biological Diversity*.
4. Ensuring regional and sectoral diversity, i.e. flexibility to allow approaches tailored to the strengths of various regions and sectors.
5. Establishing a market price on carbon, with full-cost accounting.

The above principles and components, prepared by Tides Canada, reference science-based targets and well-known international agreements. The proposed national strategy would seek to reduce our reliance on fossil fuel, the largest source of human produced GHGs (73% of Canada's 2008 GHG emissions were from fossil fuel combustion). The Tides Canada discussion paper links a call to action for climate change mitigation to address this concern, with significant economic opportunities in the 'clean tech' energy sector arising from investment in renewable and low-carbon energy.

2.4 Request for Endorsements

As part of their effort to develop support for the proposal for a new energy vision for Canada, Tides Canada has sought endorsements from other organizations. This effort is consistent with a consultative and collaborative approach, as advocated for the energy strategy itself. Thus far, about 130 organizations and businesses have formally endorsed the *New Energy Vision for Canada* discussion paper³.

¹ The Copenhagen Accord was adopted on 2009 December 18th, and to date has been ratified by 141 countries, including Canada.

² The G20 commitment referred to is the Pittsburgh Summit, held on September 25-27, 2009, at which Resolution 24 was adopted: "To phase out and rationalize over the medium term inefficient fossil fuel subsidies while providing targeted support for the poorest. Inefficient fossil fuel subsidies encourage wasteful consumption, reduce our energy security, impede investment in clean energy sources and undermine efforts to deal with the threat of climate change."

³ Local government endorsements of the *New Energy Vision for Canada* to date include the City of North Vancouver, the District of Saanich, the Resort Municipality of Whistler, the City of Dawson Creek, and Islands Trust.

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A delegation from Tides Canada presented the *New Energy Vision for Canada* and supporting material to Provincial and Federal energy Ministers at their annual meeting in Kananaskis in June 2011. The main outcome of the ministerial meeting was the announcement of a general national energy “approach” which focuses largely on increased investment in oil and gas sectors, and streamlining projects. The ministers’ response did, however, include provisions or directions for increased development of renewable energy, and “a long term transition to a lower-carbon economy.” Tides Canada indicated that these two elements may have been included in part due to the presentation made by the Tides Canada delegation to the ministers.

Tides Canada is continuing to seek additional endorsements from local governments and others, in order to further advocate for a coordinated approach to sustainable energy policy.

3.0 CLIMATE AND ENERGY POLICY INITIATIVES IN BURNABY

The City of Burnaby has recently undertaken strategic policies toward achieving greater community sustainability, including the recently completed *Social Sustainability Strategy*, and in 2007, the *Economic Development Strategy 2020*, and is now considering further process for an *Environmental Sustainability Strategy*, as well as a *Community (GHG) Emissions Reduction Strategy*.

Burnaby is a member of the Partners for Climate Protection, a collaborative initiative of local governments under the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, and the City participates in regional climate initiatives, such as Metro Vancouver’s *Integrated Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Management Plan*.

A range of initiatives to address sustainability have been implemented in the past and are ongoing in the City, including protection of green space, innovations in green building practices, and corporate energy reduction programs. The need to reduce GHG emissions to mitigate global warming is recognized in the City of Burnaby *Official Community Plan* (in the Environmental Policy Framework, and through the adoption of a GHG target).

Various planning and land development initiatives and operations demonstrate the City’s ongoing commitment to decreasing GHG emissions and enhancing sustainability including:

- Land use planning has resulted in higher density town centres located near light rail transit (SkyTrain) stations, offering a range of accessible amenities and services.
- In collaboration with developers, the City supports the development of a future Neighbourhood Energy Utility and other existing sustainability features at the award-winning UniverCity development, that substantially decrease GHG emissions.
- The City, in line with the Region, has a progressive waste diversion and recycling program.

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As such, Burnaby already exhibits some of the attributes of community sustainability described in the *New Energy Vision for Canada*.

Burnaby City Council has approved several policy reports and resolutions relating to energy policy and climate change including:

- Council Report (*Official Community Plan Amendment, Greenhouse Gas Reduction Target*), including adoption of an interim GHG target to meet Provincial Bill 27, in advance of a comprehensive *Community Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Strategy* (2010 April 22).
- Council Resolution urging the Federal Government to contribute to a global climate agreement in Copenhagen based on global equity and scientifically established emissions reduction targets, and an accompanying Council Resolution advocating for the role of local governments to be addressed in the *Copenhagen Accord* (2009 December 7).
- Council Report regarding Peak Oil, outlining the concern of the global peak in oil resources, and general policy needs for shifting to alternative energy sources (2006 January 16).
- Council Report regarding the Provincial Task Force on Energy Policy, in which Council resolved to oppose the Task Force for reasons including an emphasis on exploiting oil and gas resources at the expense of sustainability and environmental protection, and the exclusion of climate change considerations from the policy approach (2001 March 12).

The call for the collaborative development of a new energy vision for Canada, and further action by Federal and Provincial governments in this area, would serve to further support current City initiatives, ranging from strategic plans (including an upcoming *Environmental Sustainability Strategy* and *Community GHG Emissions Reduction Strategy*) to specific programs and opportunities. For example, as illustrated in the *Economic Development Strategy 2020*, Burnaby has a great deal of opportunity to benefit from and contribute to the rapidly developing ‘clean tech’ business sector, with numerous alternative energy companies already located in the city, as well as two post-secondary institutions with programs linking sustainability and technology. Should the Federal and Provincial Governments pursue the development of a common energy vision for Canada, this direction would further support actions and decisions at the local level related to sustainability.

On this basis, it is proposed that the Committee request that Council endorse the call of Tides Canada for the development of a new energy vision for Canada, as outlined in this report.

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4.0 CONCLUSION

This report responds to the request from the Environment Committee to review the discussion paper, *A New Energy Vision for Canada*, prepared by Tides Canada, for consideration of endorsement. The new energy vision calls for development of a national energy strategy with a focus on renewable energy and a long term transition away from fossil fuels, in order to meet climate change objectives, as well as generate significant economic benefits.

The collaborative development of a new energy vision for Canada, and subsequent action by Federal and Provincial governments in this area, would support current City initiatives and guide future development and implementation of the Environmental, Social and Economic Strategies, Community Plans, and other initiatives.

As such, it is recommended that the City endorse the call for the development of a common vision for Canada, to signal the City's ongoing interests in ensuring that we are collectively, at a local, provincial and national level, prepared to respond to the challenges and opportunities that will face our citizens in the future.

It is also recommended that a copy of this report be sent to Metro Vancouver member municipalities, the Provincial Minister of Energy and Mines, Provincial Minister of the Environment, and the Federal Minister of Natural Resources.



B. Luksun, Director
PLANNING AND BUILDING

LT/jc

cc: City Manager
Director Engineering
Director Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services