

# Approval of Triple Bottom Line City Council Policy

## ISSUE

The City of Saskatoon is committed to developing a sustainable community for current and future generations. City Council has expressed interest in having a City Council Policy to support this commitment. This report seeks approval of the draft Triple Bottom Line (TBL) City Council Policy.

## RECOMMENDATION

That the Governance and Priorities Committee recommend to City Council that the draft Triple Bottom Line City Council Policy, contained in Appendix 1 of this report, be approved.

## BACKGROUND

At its November 19, 2018, meeting, City Council considered a report titled “Workplace Transformation Journey: Corporate Reorganization” from the Governance and Priorities Committee. At that meeting, City Council resolved, in part: “That the Administration report back on the development of a sustainability-lens into all areas of the corporation.”

At its December 17, 2018, meeting, City Council considered a report from the Governance and Priorities Committee and resolved “That the Administration develop a Triple Bottom Line Policy Framework”. Subsequent to this direction, the Administration established an internal cross-departmental project team to consider ways in which to implement this resolution of City Council.

At its April 1, 2019, meeting, the Standing Policy Committee on Environment, Utilities and Corporate Services resolved “That the Triple Bottom Line report be sent to the Saskatoon Environmental Advisory Committee (SEAC) for feedback including a presentation from the Administration that was provided previously”. Following this direction, the Administration appeared before SEAC at its April 11, 2019, meeting.

Subsequently, SEAC provided written feedback for consideration on the proposed policy to the June 10, 2019, Standing Policy Committee on Environment, Utilities and Corporate Services meeting. SEAC’s feedback is contained in Appendix 2.

## DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS

The draft TBL City Council Policy intends to outline the City of Saskatoon’s general position with respect to the concept of sustainability. As written in Appendix 1, it begins with a preamble or policy statement, and addresses several elements that policies of this nature should attempt to do.

For example, it outlines the general purpose of the policy, provides key definitions of the policy, and addresses the scope and exceptions to the policy. On that point, it applies

to City Council and the Administration, but not to controlled corporations or statutory boards as they have their own governance structures and policies. However, future applicability to these bodies may be contemplated.

More importantly, the policy lays out the responsibilities of City Council and the City Manager (meaning the Administration, more generally). These provisions of the policy are not meant to be prescriptive. Rather, they have been drafted so as to confer general responsibilities on each and to distinguish between them.

The draft policy was a collaborative effort. It was developed by a cross-departmental project team, led by Public Policy and Government Relations and representatives from the Sustainability Division. It also included valuable input from subject matter experts representing several civic departments.

Moreover, the policy attempts to address the feedback provided by SEAC, as expressed in Appendix 2. The preamble, principles, responsibilities, and reporting requirements contained in the draft policy attempt to address most of SEAC's recommendations. On the other hand, some of SEAC's recommendations focus more squarely on the implementation or operation of the policy. These comments are better addressed by the draft TBL Decision Making Tool.

As described in Appendix 3, the TBL Decision Making Tool has been designed as complementary, yet important, piece to the TBL Policy. In other words, it attempts to "operationalize" the policy, by assisting City employees and decisions makers when planning new initiatives or re-evaluating existing initiatives. The objective is to consider how to integrate as many TBL indicators as possible into the City's work, while avoiding trade-offs, negative impacts, and significant adverse effects.

Appendix 3 describes the benefits and mechanics of the tool in more detail. This report is not asking for City Council or Committee approval of the tool, but rather it is provided for information to show how the policy will be implemented.

### **FINANCIAL IMPLCATIONS**

To truly implement the TBL Policy requires a fundamental shift to the way the Administration and City Council approach reports, Strategic Planning, project development and prioritization, and most likely the budget process. In order to achieve this fundamental shift, a comprehensive change strategy is required. The strategy will include development and implementation of a toolkit using Quality Management System templates; train-the-trainer packages; communications materials; technical support and project oversight. The capital budget prioritization process City Council is currently completing includes an estimated \$130,000 in 2020, and an additional \$130,000 in 2021 to operationalize the TBL Policy. Alternatively, the Policy could be approved and no specific budget allocated for implementation. In that case, implementation could be conducted slowly over time as internal resources are available.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

The adoption and subsequent implementation of the policy will result in more quantitative and qualitative measures of the environmental implications of various policy, program, project, and service delivery options that City Council is considering.

## **NEXT STEPS**

- The Administration will continue work on developing and refining the TBL Decision Making Tool.
- Beginning in 2020, where applicable, reports to City Council will identify the economic, environmental and social implications of various options that City Council is considering.

## **APPENDICES**

1. Draft Triple Bottom Line City Council Policy.
2. May 29, 2019, SEAC letter to the Standing Policy Committee on Environment, Utilities and Corporate Services.
3. An Overview of the Triple Bottom Line Decision Making Tool.

### Report Approval

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