

January 23, 2023

City Council

Dear Mayor and Councillors:

**Re: 8.1.3 – Carbon/Climate Budget – Analysis and Next Steps [EUCS2023-0105]  
Saskatoon Environmental Advisory Committee (SEAC)**

On January 20, 2023, SEAC received the report “Carbon/Climate Budget - Analysis and Next Steps” from the Standing Policy Committee on Environment, Utilities & Corporate Services and resolved, in part, to provide feedback to City Council.

SEAC has followed the development of the LEC Plan and related strategies for several years and supports the work of Council and Administration in expanding and implementing climate action programs. In order for these projects to be implemented on time and to fully contribute to reaching the Corporate and community targets, integrating these plans and actions into the budget cycle is critical. Further, quantifying the carbon offset and other environmental benefits of each project can help ensure that the City’s resources are being used efficiently.

While the Carbon Budget is a more comprehensive reporting tool, which has the advantage of directly comparing actual emissions to the proposed and ongoing reduction projects, SEAC recognizes that this will require more time to implement. Rather than wait potentially multiple budget cycles to reach full implementation, beginning with the Climate Budget will provide City Council with more information in an earlier phase of the LEC and associated plans.

**As such, SEAC supports the Climate Budget option. However, City Council should consider the following:**

- **Transition towards the Carbon Budget model:** Although the Climate Budget is faster to implement, this does not mean that Council should not ever adopt the Carbon Budget model. Rather, the Budget development process should be periodically reviewed and enhanced to approach the Carbon Budget model. This may include considering the work of other municipalities in this area. This transition can begin with quantifying the impacts from select major capital projects, as proposed at SPC-EUCS.
- **Establish a concrete plan to expand the Climate Budget:** in order to ensure that the City eventually does reach the Carbon Budget “standard”, developing a clear timeframe to review and expand the Climate Budget should be considered.

Areas that should especially be quantified include heavy industry and construction and managed natural areas; transitioning to including Scope 3 emissions. There should be an expectation that the Climate Budget is only a starting point.

- **Involve as many departments as possible:** buy-in from all City departments is key to reaching the Carbon Budget. Therefore, identifying the role each department can play in the budget, actively recruiting managers and providing information to employees is important. Again, a timeframe or plan for how more departments will progressively be included in the budget should be considered.
- **Reporting actual reductions for previous projects, especially those requesting funding renewal:** the Climate Budget should consider the efficacy of previous actions, especially if additional or renewal of funding is being requested. This will provide transparency to the public and help Administration to better model the reductions from new actions. As the City expands the Climate Budget, reporting how the previous cycle performed in terms of carbon reduction “surplus” or “deficit”, much like a financial budget, can assist City Council in effective decision making.

SEAC supports the efforts of City Council and Administration to make the carbon reduction targets realizable through concrete quantification and budget integration of specific actions set out in the Low Emissions Community Plan. The Climate Budget is an excellent starting point for these goals.

Sincerely,



**John Paul Wasan**  
Chair, Saskatoon Environmental Advisory Committee

JPW:hj

cc: Angela Gardiner, General Manager, Utilities and Environment