

November 6, 2018

SPC on Environment, Utilities & Corporate Services

Dear Committee Members:

RE: Recommendations Report for a Low Emissions Community Plan

The City of Saskatoon has and will continue to be impacted by the changing climate. Municipalities, including the City of Saskatoon, have an important role to play in reducing their contribution to global GHG emissions to reduce the effects of future climatic changes.

SEAC would like to commend Saskatoon's administration for all their work developing the Recommendations Report for a Low Emissions Community Plan (the Plan). A great deal of time and effort went into determining which actions the City should be taking to meet Corporate and Community Greenhouse Gas emissions reduction targets (GHG targets). This is a large body of work, and in order for the SEAC volunteers to craft a thoughtful response, we hired a consultant (Gorecki Climate and Energy Consulting (Gorecki)) to review the report and offer us an opinion. The contractor's report is attached. The key findings we would like to highlight along with SEAC's recommendations to Administration and Council are:

1. The Plan is quite comprehensive and includes many of the important changes that are being made, and need to be made in order to support achieving the set GHG targets. For example, Gorecki noted the current work on residential curbside organics and Pay-As-You-Throw, and the energy upgrades to City buildings. Mitigation opportunities that were missed or could be strengthened include (among others) a commercial food waste reduction plan and single occupancy vehicle disincentives. SEAC would like to see the City continue to incentivise waste reduction and consider further mechanisms to discourage single vehicle use where viable alternative options exist.
2. The current version of the Plan does not include the major Saskatoon policy and planning decisions (i.e. the Growth Plan) and the impact these will have on overall emissions. These plans should be included in future modelling to provide holistic linkage between the City's Environmental and Planning policies.
3. While much work remains on this Plan, Saskatoon can proceed with the important projects currently underway, and could undertake many of the actions shown in Appendix C (Quickest Payback and Lowest Investment per Tonne).
4. Numerous multi-faceted actions are required in order to move toward meeting the City's GHG reduction targets. Many actions are already underway to some capacity (e.g. active transportation, BRT, city-wide organics, retrofitting City buildings). SEAC, recommends that the GHG implications of such programs be considered as a paramount factor in council decisions. These City programs and

projects may have significant GHG reduction implications, and should proceed as expediently as possible.

5. The Plan notes that there are many areas where the City has limited or no control over the measures needed to meet Community targets. This highlights the need for Saskatoon to actively work with Provincial and Federal governments to ensure that they also are enacting policies, regulations, and incentives that reduce greenhouse gas emissions. In particular, these may include PACE funding for energy efficiency and renewable energy projects, improving the greenhouse gas intensity of SaskPower's electricity grid, and enacting a comprehensive community greenhouse gas mitigation program such as carbon pricing.
6. The measures listed in the Plan will require significant capital and operating dollars to enact. The City will need to assess the funding and decision-making mechanisms it has available. Please see SEAC's communication "Capital Decisions When Considering Environmental Issues" (Item 6.1.2) in regards to this matter.
7. This is an ambitious plan. Managing the public consultations process will be critical in getting a balanced view from residents and businesses. As well, senior administration needs to create a foundational culture that engages employees in changing habits, while simultaneously setting the example for other businesses and residents.
8. In order to meet Saskatoon's Greenhouse Gas emission targets, Council and Administration will need to make many difficult decisions. This will take substantive leadership, but it is worth noting that many Councillors were elected because you are visionaries for change. Council should not be discouraged that the Plan does not reach the set targets. Technology and behaviours will evolve and the best thing Council can do is act today and continue to set a vision for tomorrow.

In summary, SEAC strongly supports the work done to date, advises Council to continue to support this high priority work, and encourages Administration to consider the feedback provided by SEAC.

Sincerely,

Saskatoon Environmental Advisory Committee