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May 29, 2019

Standing Policy Committee on Environment, Utilities and Corporate Services

Dear Committee Members:

Re: Development of a Triple Bottom Line (TBL) Policy Framework to Address Corporate Sustainability - SEAC Feedback [File No. CK. 421-1]

On April 1, 2019 the Standing Policy Committee on Environment, Utilities & Corporate Services resolved that the *Development of a Triple Bottom Line (TBL) Policy Framework to Address Corporate Sustainability* ("the Report") be forwarded to the Saskatoon Environmental Advisory Committee (SEAC) for feedback. On April 11, 2019 SEAC received a presentation from the Administration, discussed the report, and resolved to have the SEAC Greenhouse Gas Subcommittee draft feedback to City council.

SEAC appreciates that the TBL framework currently is in its infancy. We have reviewed the Report and conclude that the efforts are consistent with the City of Saskatoon's

2015-2020 strategic plan, and that it specifically has great potential to be useful in implementing some of the current programs underway, such as the Climate Strategy. Thus, SEAC is encouraged to see the efforts on this challenging front and look forward to continuing to contribute as the policy develops.

To date, City Administration has:

- Prepared a preliminary review of the TBL concept, including definitions and high-level principles;
- Provided two options which need further elaboration and development into policy; and,
- Identified an approach to integrate the TBL policy into the Quality Management System.

SEAC has the following recommendations for City Council to consider as this policy moves forward:

- 1) **Identify the desired outcome of TBL policy first** – identify that outcome Council is hoping to achieve with such a policy. As per SEAC's letter in November, 2018, we hope it is, in part, balanced capital investment that goes beyond purely financial metrics.

- 2) **Account for the full life cycle cost and positive social and environmental benefits for ALL decisionsⁱ** – a TBL policy should not just apply to “environmental” or “social” decisions, but rather it needs to apply to ALL decisions (both by Administration and Council), in order to weigh the full “cradle to grave” impact of options.
- 3) **Consider how you will measure success** – Council will need to develop and communicate KPI measuresⁱⁱ (e.g. GHG emission reduction targets) and tools (e.g. marginal abatement curve) that can be used to measure success of the policy and assist in decision-making.
- 4) **Balance quantitative, qualitative, intuitive and context (cultural and bias) in decisions** – decisions cannot be made purely from a quantitative lens. Historical decision-making has focused less on the long-term benefits of sustainable development, which in some cases, can be less quantitative. Economic prosperity of communities can be amplified when environmental and social value is part of the bottom line, and therefore, a blended model will be required – one that considers qualitative measures; intuitive understanding of issues; and the context in which decisions are made, both societal context and any personal biases that exist.
- 5) **Implementation and embedment will be critical** – the current proposal is theoretical in nature and at this time is not clear how it would be applied in practice (which is valid given its early stage). In order to be successful, a policy such as this will need to become part of the fabric of both Administration and Council. SEAC supports the approach, and in particular thinks that integrating it into the Quality Management System will be critical. The cities of Port Coquitlam,ⁱⁱⁱ Calgary,^{iv} Cornwall,^v and many others not listed here demonstrate that implementing a policy such as this takes leadership, patience, and time to ensure it is effective.
- 6) **Investigate integration with existing projects and programs** – several sustainable development programs are already underway with considerable funding and important decisions pending, such as the Low Emission Community plan, Waste Diversion Program, Bus Rapid Transit, and Active Transportation programs. SEAC strongly believes that the development of a TBL policy framework could be leveraged (or could even be required) to fully assess these programs. SEAC recommends considering interim ways to embed TBL thinking in these decisions while the policy itself is under development.

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Kind Regards,



for

Sara Harrison, Chair
Saskatoon Environmental Advisory Committee

ⁱ <https://www.omicsonline.org/open-access/sustainable-procurement-concept-and-practical-implications-for-the-procurement-process-.php?aid=17181>

ⁱⁱ <https://www.mdpi.com/2071-1050/8/3/206>

ⁱⁱⁱ https://www.civicinfo.bc.ca/practices_innovations/port_coquitlam_sustainability.pdf

^{iv} <https://www.calgary.ca/CA/cmo/Documents/TBL%20Framework.pdf>

^v <http://mail.cornwall.ca/Active/Development/egenda.nsf/965d04e85bb82eb4852573ae007b4532/c240e887aae6b1f68525764700731b95?OpenDocument>