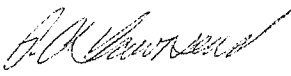


Environment and Sustainability Committee
March 3, 2011

TO: Chair and Members of Environment and Sustainability Committee

SUBMITTED BY: 
Phillip Townsend, Director, Infrastructure and Asset Management

DATE: February 2, 2011

SUBJECT: Corporate Sustainability Filter

ORIGIN

Regional Council, July 8, 2008: Item 11.1.9 Corporate Sustainability Filter – Pilot Project

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Environment and Sustainability Committee recommend to the Administrative Committee to adopt Environmental Implications as a standard requirement in Council and Committee Reports.

BACKGROUND

In 2004, the Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM) partnered with The Natural Step (TNS) to conduct a Corporate Sustainability Analysis. The final summary identified three priorities:

- Green Procurement
- Green Buildings
- Green Corporate Culture

As part of Greening the Corporate Culture, staff have worked at mainstreaming a Corporate Sustainability Filter into the decision making process. As per the July 8, 2008 report, the initial template was demonstrated. Following this, HRM staff worked with coaches from Acadia University to develop a more comprehensive filter (Attachment One). Following development of this filter, and efforts to implement, Sustainable Environment Management Office (SEMO) staff worked with a variety of departments within Infrastructure and Asset Management (IAM) to review and gauge the optimal manner to capture the original objective of ensuring that Sustainability is considered during the decision making process.

Additionally, in 2010, staff completed a 2010 Corporate Sustainability Analysis:
http://www.halifax.ca/environment/documents/2010_CSA_final.pdf

DISCUSSION

During fiscal 2010, SEMO interviewed IAM managers on implementation of sustainability filters in their decision making process. Results were impressive, but also clearly demonstrated that a flexible and encouraging approach needs to be taken.

Summarily observations were as follows:

- **Infrastructure Planning:** Capital Planning processes included environmental criteria in the ranking process for proposed projects. Infrastructure Planning staff has a variety of criteria that steers Capital requests through a variety of environmental considerations.
- **Design and Construction:** Planning for new sidewalks and streets includes significant environmental criteria (such as proximity to schools, walking to stores, etc.). Their objective selection criteria are particularly strong around the environment. Further, Design and Construction staff demonstrated strong efforts to looking at environmental alternatives such as asphalt recycling and using more recycled content in the materials.
- **Real Property Planning:** Environmental Sustainability is engrained with the training and professions within this department, and is fundamentally core to the design thought and planning process. I could not identify a precise point where inserting a filter would fit as the entire planning process is fundamentally a comprehensive filter.
- **Facility Development:** Using LEED certification criteria, and other tangible professional environmental programs, the opportunities are examined for every re-capitalization or new building project that happens. Additionally, Facility Development has created some of the most innovative energy concepts in the country.

Very clearly, the work that the municipality has put into Greening the Corporate Culture is paying off. Sustainability is becoming mainstream and staff are taking it and making it their own. It was extremely rewarding seeing this and having confidence in the thought processes behind the decisions and recommendations.

Further to the look into decision making, experience of the filter for the past couple years can be summarized as follows:

- Utilizing the terminology of three Pillars (Social, Environmental, and Economic) is much easier for adoption from all ranges of staff than using the four systems conditions of The Natural Step (Attachment Two). Usage of TNS seemed to slow down the decision process.
- A “one size fits all” filter seems too rigid to meet the needs of different types of decision makers or staff support. Engineers, Planners, Accountants, etc., have diversely trained ways of thinking. As such, a filter that meets the needs of an engineer might be ineffective for a planner. Even different planners organize their work differently. Building a totally comprehensive filter that meets all the needs of all the professions employed, is a virtually impossible task.

It is my recommendation that to be flexible and adapt to the different ways people can consider environmental sustainability, is to encourage including Environmental Implications as a standard section of the Council Report Templates. The expectation is that staff, or report writer, would articulate how they included sustainability considerations in their recommendation(s). This work would not be approved by SEMO, or any other department, but a variety of staff throughout the organization would be positioned to coach and assist other staff as appropriate. This is simple, flexible and effective.

The TNS tool (Attachment One and Two) would be available for staff for assistance, but would not be a required tool.

SEMO has full confidence in the capability in the breadth of our staff to meet this short requirement. HRM staff embraces environmental sustainability.

This recommendation would be consistent with the blended approach to sustainability that has grown at HRM. It is flexible but ensures that consideration has been taken. It will allow staff and Council to continue to grow with sustainability in our processes and actions. With Clean and Healthy Environment as one of the six Community Outcome Areas, and the Environment and Sustainability Committee as one of the six standing committees of Regional Council, adopting a flexible approach to ensure Environmental considerations are evaluated in the decision making process is appropriate. During the creation of the Outcome Area work, SEMO staff participated in four other outcome areas (Safe, Inclusive and Welcoming Communities; Clean and Healthy Environment; Well Planned and Engaged Communities; and, Economic Prosperity), and likely could have participated in them all. Clearly, the thread of sustainability is woven throughout all outcome areas as the environment provides clear economic and social value as well.

The City of Calgary follows a similar format (Attachment Three (page 4 of this document)).

Adoption of the Three Pillars approach to Sustainability (Environmental, Economic, and Social) does not preclude HRM from continuing to participate in The Natural Step exchange. TNS training and peer support are relevant and useful, whether their terminology around the adoption of sustainable practices is used or not. HRM will continue to work with The Natural Step.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

There are no budget implications related to this recommendation.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICIES / BUSINESS PLAN

This report complies with the Municipality's Multi-Year Financial Strategy, the approved Operating, Project and Reserve budgets, policies and procedures regarding withdrawals from the utilization of Project and Operating reserves, as well as any relevant legislation.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Aside from plans and efforts from staff, the concept of adopting Environmental Considerations in the standard council report format has been recommended by local environmental NGO's, including Ecology Action Centre and Sierra Club.

ALTERNATIVES

1. The Environment and Sustainability Committee may direct staff to develop a more comprehensive filter and conduct broad corporate training on usage. This is not recommended as costs implications would arise, and the flexibility of encouraging articulation of Environmental Considerations would be stifled.
2. The Environment and Sustainability Committee may direct staff to not adopt Environmental Considerations as a standard format. This is not recommended as it is contrary to the Community Outcome Areas.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment One: Draft Comprehensive Sustainability Filter
Attachment Two: The Natural Step Four Systems Conditions
Attachment Three: City of Calgary sample report (page 4 of the document)

A copy of this report can be obtained online at <http://www.halifax.ca/commcoun/cc.html> then choose the appropriate Community Council and meeting date, or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 490-4210, or Fax 490-4208.

Report Prepared by: Richard MacLellan, Manager – Sustainable Environment Management Office, 490-6056

HRM Sustainability Planning Tool



Project Title: _____

Project Department Lead: _____

Briefly describe the project/decision:

In the table below, please make comments regarding the extent which this initiative moves HRM closer to or farther away from its strategic priority of sustainability. Please use specific examples or metrics where appropriate.

Sustainability Goals and Metrics		Not Applicable	Positive, moves HRM toward sustainability goals	Negative, moves HRM away from sustainability goals
To encourage HRM to:				
General	Smart use of alternative fossil fuels and metals.			
specific	...reducing use of fossil fuels			
specific	...encouraging use of alternative fuels and energy sources			
specific	...reducing use of scarce metals			
specific	...encouraging use of recycled, recyclable, reused, and reusable components and materials			
General	Smart use of synthetic chemicals and substances.			
specific	...reducing product/chemical toxicity			
specific	...reducing negative impact on human health			
specific	...encouraging use of products made with natural components			
specific	...encouraging use of recycled, recyclable, reused, and reusable components and materials			
specific	...product/chemical is eco-label certified			

Sustainability Goals and Metrics		Not Applicable	Positive, moves HRM toward sustainability goals	Negative, moves HRM away from sustainability goals
To encourage HRM to:				
General	Smart land and eco-system management.			
	... protection of natural habitat			
specific	... protection and enhancement of green-space			
specific	... improvement of land quality			
specific	... materials taken from well managed eco-systems			
specific	...encouraging use of recycled, recyclable, reused, and reusable components and materials			
specific	... wood taken from FSC certified forest			
General	Enhance the ability of people to meet their human needs.			
	... creating a safe work environment			
specific	... enhancing inclusive and transparent decision-making			
specific	...improving human health			
specific	...activities encourage community engagement			
specific	... activities support diversity			
specific	... activities that enhance accessibility			
specific	... activities that contribute to the local economy			
specific	...activities that contribute to and/or preserve local culture			

STRATEGIC QUESTIONS CHEAT SHEET FOR SUSTAINABLE DECISION-MAKING

1. Does the action/decision move us in the right direction?

- Does it take us closer to our vision?
- Is it aligned with our core purpose, core values and strategic initiatives?
- Does it move us closer to alignment with the four sustainability principles? (see below)



Sustainability Principle (SP) #1

Reduce and eventually eliminate our contribution to the ongoing build-up in nature of substances extracted from the Earth's crust (e.g. fossil fuels, heavy metals)

FAVOURING



- Energy efficiency and power from renewable sources
- Metals that are plentiful (aluminium, iron etc...)
- Re-usable, recyclable and recycled content materials

AVOIDING



- Energy inefficiency and fossil fuel power
- Metals that are scarce in nature (mercury, cadmium, lead, nickel etc...)
- Disposable, non-recyclable and materials made from unused resources



Sustainability Principle (SP) #2

Reduce and eventually eliminate our contribution to the ongoing build-up in nature of man-made substances (e.g. persistent compound/chemicals)

FAVOURING



- Natural, biodegradable materials (glass wood, cotton, water-based etc.)
- Materials that are managed in tight technical cycles (re-used, recycled)
- Organically grown, untreated
- Re-usable, recyclable and recycled content materials

AVOIDING



- Petroleum-based and synthetic (esp. toxic and hazardous) materials
- Materials that are likely to be dispersed into nature
- Chemically grown, treated
- Disposable, non-recyclable and materials made from unused resources



Sustainability Principle (SP) #3

Reduce and eventually eliminate our contribution to physically damaging natural systems that serve us (e.g. water filtration)

FAVOURING



- Materials from well-managed ecosystems
- Fast-growing crops (hemp, bamboo etc...)
- Use of previously developed lands
- Re-usable, recyclable and recycled content materials

AVOIDING



- Over-harvested resources
- Slow-growing, resource-intensive methods
- Use of undeveloped green space
- Disposable, non-recyclable and materials made from unused resources



Sustainability Principle (SP) #4

Reduce our contribution to the creation of societies in which many people cannot meet their basic needs

FAVOURING



- Safe working and living conditions
- Inclusive and transparent decision-making
- Affordable products and services, sufficient resources for livelihood
- Political freedom

AVOIDING



- Unsafe living and working conditions
- Exclusive and closed decision-making
- Unaffordable products and services; economic barriers
- Political oppression

2. Is it a stepping stone (flexible platform) toward success and sustainability?

FAVOURING



- Efficiency measures (e.g. reduction of consumption, energy efficiency)
- Technical solutions that are adaptable and scalable
- Actions that build broader support for sustainability initiatives

AVOIDING



- Actions that tie you into using current technologies
- Partial solutions that cannot be further developed (i.e. dead-ends)
- Capital investments that lock you into a single way of doing things

3. Does it provide a good return on investment

FAVOURING



- Actions that lead to cost reductions, time savings, efficient use of materials and other resources, quick early wins
- Actions that will generate new revenue streams
- Capital investments that will build social capital (e.g. buy-in and support)

AVOIDING



- Actions that tie up too much capital in partial solutions
- Actions where the benefit does not outweigh the cost
- Actions that create high levels of risk (ecological, social or economic)
- Actions that do not align with new ecological/economic/social standards

Community Services Report to
The SPC on Community and Protective Services
2011 January 05

ISC: UNRESTRICTED
CPS2011-04
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WELCOMING COMMUNITY POLICY

SUMMARY/ISSUE

Request for approval of the Welcoming Community Policy.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL DIRECTION/POLICY

On 2009 July 13, Council approved Aldermen Ceci, Colley-Urquhart and Chabots' Notice of Motion (NM2009-33) that directed Administration to 1) review municipal best practices in immigration policy, action strategies and performance measures; and 2) do a gap analysis by comparing these best practices to existing City of Calgary policies (including but not limited to CCMAR Charter and Fair Calgary Policy); 3) develop for consideration of City of Calgary immigration and Settlement Policy Framework, building on the City's existing policies to strengthen collaboration with other levels of government, to enhance integration of immigrants and refugees into our community; 4) request that the Government of Canada Immigration Settlement dollars follow the immigrant; 5) report through the SPC on Community and Protective Services no later than 2010 April.

On 2010 April 26, Council approved CPS2010-28 directing Administration to engage business units in the development of a community driven Municipal Immigration Policy including options for a framework to enhance neighbourhood integration and cooperation in the community, and further, that the community standards framework be utilized, and to report to Council through the SPC on Community and Protective Services no later than 2011 January.

ADMINISTRATION RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the SPC on Community and Protective Services recommends that Council:

1. Approve the Welcoming Community Policy;

2. Receive the attached implementation framework for information; and
3. Receive a verbal update on the community standards framework for conflict resolution from Animal and Bylaw Services for information.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SPC ON COMMUNITY AND PROTECTIVE SERVICES, DATED 2011 JANUARY 05:

That Council:

1. Approve the Welcoming Community Policy;
2. Receive the attached implementation framework for information;
3. Receive a verbal update on the community standards framework for conflict resolution from Animal and Bylaw Services for information; and
4. **Direct Administration to identify how specific initiatives and key performance measures have been incorporated by Business Units in the 2012 - 2014 Business Plan and Budget Adjustment process.**

INVESTIGATION

Chaired by staff from Community and Neighbourhood Services, each business unit across the Corporation provided a representative to serve on a Project Team or an Information Team tasked with developing the Welcoming Community Policy (Policy). Twenty-five representatives worked from July through November to draft a policy and framework for implementation keeping senior management informed and providing feedback at each step. An external advisory

WELCOMING COMMUNITY POLICY

team was also created with membership from 15 organizations in Calgary with immigrant related services or mandates. These organizations included the Immigrant Inter-Sectoral Council of Calgary, Canada Citizenship and Immigration, the Calgary Board of Education, Calgary Economic Development, the Calgary Public Library, Alberta Employment and Immigration, Alberta Health Services, Calgary Learns and the United Way of Calgary and Area.

The Policy (Attachment 1) seeks to address the needs of immigrants to Calgary by pursuing action and collaborating in the following five key areas:

- Economic and Social Integration
- Intergovernmental Relations
- Service Access and Equity
- Advocacy, Communication, Public Awareness and Education
- Special Populations

The policy aligns with already existing policy including Fair Calgary and the Triple Bottom Line, is consistent with The City's Diversity and Inclusion Framework currently under development, is a cornerstone of The City's commitment to the Coalition of Canadian Municipalities Against Racism and Discrimination (signed in 2006), and supports engagement with the local community and senior governments in providing successful community integration for immigrants.

Implementation of the policy will occur at departmental and business unit levels throughout The City through the inclusion of goals, actions and performance measures in business plans. These plans will be implemented through the 2010-2014 Business Plan and Budget. Details of the implementation Framework can be found in Attachment 2.

IMPLICATIONS

General

This report has been reviewed for alignment with The City's Triple Bottom Line (TBL) Policy Framework. The goal of the TBL policy is to "protect and enhance the economic, social and environmental well-being of present and future generations of Calgarians". The Welcoming Community Policy specifically supports the TBL by identifying ways to enhance the economic and social inclusion of Calgary's immigrant populations.

Social

The Policy aligns with the TBL social goal of creating an inclusive and safe city for vulnerable populations by promoting responsive services and opportunities to participate in all aspects of civic life for immigrants.

Environmental

Calgary strives to be a city where all citizens care about environment issues are good stewards of our precious environmental resources – clear air, water and land. By engaging immigrants fully, the capacity for the public to contribute and advance environmental concerns is strengthened.

Economic (External)

The Policy contributes to economic development by creating a community where newcomers want to live and invest. Immigrants provide a rich pool of social and economic innovation in Calgary.

BUSINESS PLAN/BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

There are no budget implications at this stage of development. However, it is anticipated that each department will identify its own actions and strategies through their regular business planning process, some of which may have budget implications that would be brought forward through regular budget cycle and business planning reporting.

RISKS

WELCOMING COMMUNITY POLICY

By approving an immigrant integration policy for Calgary, The City will be in alignment with a number of municipalities which have developed local immigration policies or strategies. A policy and implementation framework helps position The City to create a welcoming community for all its citizens and to ensure that, within its mandate, The City is continuing to provide appropriate, accessible and responsive services and employment opportunities for immigrants to Calgary. Without such a policy The City risks responding in an ad hoc, piece meal and undirected manner.

This policy has been anticipated by organizations that serve or support immigrants to Calgary as a sign of leadership from The City and an indication that the municipal government recognizes the importance of immigration to Calgary's economic and social vitality and sustainability past, present and future (Attachment 3).

ATTACHMENTS

1. Welcoming Community Policy
2. Welcoming Community Policy:
Framework and Implementation Plan
3. Letters of Support