

## Council Initiative – Terms of Reference

**Initiative Title:** Energy Transition and Climate Resilience Initiative – Terms of Reference

**City Council Sponsor(s):** Councillors B. Henderson and M. Walters

**Supporting Department and Lead Staff:** Sustainable Development, Peter Ohm

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### **BACKGROUND:**

Over the past 20 years, City Council has acknowledged the risks of climate change and the need for both mitigation and adaptation measures. More recently, Council has responded to this issue in the following ways:

#### Edmonton's Community Energy Transition Strategy

In April 2015, Council endorsed Edmonton's Community Energy Transition Strategy (the Strategy) – aimed at:

- reducing Edmonton's greenhouse gas emissions to levels consistent with limiting the long-term rise in the average global temperature to 2°C;
- increasing energy efficiency and energy conservation in all sectors;
- ensuring Edmonton's energy delivery systems (for electricity and natural gas) are resilient to shocks and disturbances from climate change; and
- positioning Edmonton to participate in what is possibly one of the greatest economic opportunities in history.

#### City Policy C585 – Edmonton's Community Energy Transition Strategy

In August 2015, Council approved City Policy C585 – Edmonton's Community Energy Transition Strategy, setting out 12 general courses of action for Edmonton to follow in becoming an energy sustainable city.

#### Energy Transition Governance Framework

In August 2015, Council recognized the need for a strong governance framework to oversee the implementation of the Strategy – directing Administration to create a bylaw establishing a committee of City Council to provide independent advice on the implementation of the Strategy.

#### Compact of Mayors

In August 2015, Council approved a motion for the City of Edmonton to join the Compact of Mayors. In doing so, the City of Edmonton joins hundreds of cities worldwide in its pledge to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to climate change. Specific actions to be undertaken as a member of the Compact include:

- building a complete greenhouse gas emissions inventory (including the breakdown of emissions by source and sector)
- identifying climate risks
- reporting on both in the Carbon Disclosure Project or carbon questionnaires

- setting a target to reduce greenhouse gas emissions
- conducting a climate change vulnerability assessment to prescribed standards
- publishing a comprehensive climate action and adaptation plan

#### The Way Ahead Implementation Plan

*The Way Ahead Implementation Plan* identifies 23 transformational initiatives that are expected to have the greatest impact in achieving *The Way Ahead* Corporate Outcomes by the end of 2018. They include: 1) implementing Edmonton's Community Energy Transition Strategy and, 2) establishing a climate change adaptation strategy (that would involve diagnosing Edmonton's climate adaptation challenges and establishing a corresponding action plan).

#### **DESIRED OUTCOMES:**

The two desired outcomes of this Council Initiative are 1) Council leadership are 1) Council leadership engagement in the implementation of Edmonton's Community Energy Transition Strategy and 2) Council leadership engagement in the development of Edmonton's community climate change adaptation plan. Both of these outcomes will be achieved through liaison with Council, Administration and external organizations.

- public engagement leadership
- public communication and awareness leadership
- public education leadership
- public advocacy leadership
- program development and evaluation involvement
- strategy oversight and accountability leadership

Areas where Council leadership, evaluation and oversight is needed will include:

- energy use in buildings
- generating of heat and power
- energy efficiency in local industry
- energy efficient land use and transportation
- various greenhouse gas reduction opportunities associated with solid waste
- a variety of opportunities within City operations
- a variety of climate adaptation opportunities, focused mainly on infrastructure that the City controls and influences.

City Council sponsor(s) will be actively informed and involved in the creation of Edmonton's community climate change adaptation plan.

#### **ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC DIRECTION:**

##### ***The Way We Green***

This Council Initiative on Energy Transition and Climate Resilience aligns with:

- Four of the 12 goals in *The Way We Green*:
  - Edmonton's sources and uses of energy are sustainable.

- Edmonton is resilient to disturbances that could affect its energy supplies and distribution system.
- Edmonton is a carbon-neutral city.
- Edmonton is resilient to disturbances from climate change.

### ***Corporate Outcomes and Measures***

- The City of Edmonton's operations are environmentally sustainable (with one of the Measures being City Operations Greenhouse Gas Emissions).
- Edmonton is an environmentally sustainable and resilient city (with one of the Measures being Community Greenhouse Gas Emissions).
- Edmonton's Community Energy Transition Strategy.
- City Policy C585 – Edmonton's Community Energy Transition Strategy.

### **START-UP BUDGET REQUIREMENTS:**

While there is no start-up budget requirements as resources are available within Sustainable Development, success of this initiative will require adequate resourcing of Edmonton's Community Energy Transition Strategy and community climate change adaptation strategy.

### **TARGET DATE FOR COMPLETION OF PROJECT PLAN:**

Edmonton's Community Energy Transition Strategy will be updated at four year intervals (corresponding with the start of a new Council term). City Council will be asked to assess the ongoing need for a Council Initiative around this project at that time.

The establishment of Edmonton's community climate change adaptation strategy will begin in 2016 and be completed in 2017, with implementation activities to follow.