

MINUTES
SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE ACTION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Held at Saanich Municipal Hall, Committee Room 2 and via MS Teams

770 Vernon Avenue

Tuesday, October 22, 2024, at 4:02 p.m.

Present: Councillor Nathalie Chambers (Chair), Timio Colistro (via Teams), Diya Courty-Stephens, Ronald Jeffries, Kurban Keshvani (via Teams) 4:14 p.m., Leslie Miller-Brooks and Mattias Spalteholz

Staff: Rebecca Newlove, Manager of Sustainability and Angela Hawkshaw, Committee Clerk

ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES

MOVED by R. Jeffries and Seconded by M. Spalteholz: "That the Minutes of the Sustainability and Climate Action Advisory Committee meeting held June 19, 2024, be adopted as circulated."

CARRIED

CHAIRS REMARKS

- The Canadian Urban Forestry conference was valuable and educational.
- 90% of Toronto is rural and 10% is urban. The region takes its commitment to trees seriously, which is both inspiring and hopeful.
- There are approximately 700,000 trees in Saanich, but there is no provincial mechanism in place to protect them.
- Other regions have developed a "tree score" to promote equity among neighborhoods. This score assesses and compares tree coverage, ensuring equitable access to green spaces and funding.
- Trees in urban areas often have a shorter life expectancy than those in natural settings.
- Soil cells are intended to provide trees in urban environments with suitable conditions for healthy growth; however, they have not proven to always be effective.
- Future considerations could explore the possibility of integrating protected natural areas with recreational spaces, allowing both to co-exist.
- The Urban Forestry and Biodiversity Strategies have been endorsed by Council. Funding is in the early stages.
- The application for the Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM) grant to support green infrastructure has been endorsed, benefiting Tillicum Elementary School. A landscape architect has been consulted to provide guidance on design, evaluation, pollution mitigation, and shade cover.
- The Parks Department has been working with School District 61 (SD61) to explore opportunities for planting trees on school property.

CLIMATE PLAN TARGETED UPDATE: TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Manager of Sustainability gave a presentation on the Climate Plan Targeted Update: Terms of Reference (PowerPoint on file). The following was noted in response to questions and during committee discussion:

- Municipalities across the region continue to network and share best practices.
- Per capita greenhouse gas emissions are decreasing, aided by remote work, e-bike initiatives, and active transportation efforts.
- Sea level rise mapping conducted by the Capital Regional District (CRD), was updated in 2022. A UBCM grant has been secured to assist with addressing sea level rise in the Gorge area.
- An increase in population could negatively impact greenhouse gas emissions.

ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION

The following was noted during the Round Table Discussion in response to questions and during committee discussion:

- Bird-safe or bird-friendly glass could be considered for new builds.
- A suggestion was made to revise Saanich's documentation to refer to natural gas as fossil gas, as the term "natural" can lead to mixed perceptions.
- A coordinated effort from all levels of government is needed to address climate challenges.
- Community engagement occurs on various platforms, including talking with residents on buses and attending different programs around the municipality to connect with people.
- Shade protection should be considered a high priority.

MOVED by L. Miller-Brooks and Seconded by R. Jeffries "That the Sustainability and Action Plan Advisory Committee recommend that Council endorse the Climate Plan Targeted Update: Terms of Reference."

CARRIED

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion from R. Jeffries the meeting adjourned at 5:28 p.m.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is scheduled for November 20, 2024 at 4:00 p.m.

Councillor Nathalie Chambers, Chair

I hereby certify these Minutes are accurate.

Angela Hawkshaw, Committee Clerk