

Report to Council



Date: December 6, 2021
To: Council
From: City Manager
Subject: Update on the Climate and Environment Review
Department: Planning & Development Services

Recommendation:

THAT Council receives, for information, the Staff update on the Climate and Environment Review, dated December 6, 2021;

Purpose:

To update Council on the progress of the Climate and Environment Review, and to provide an outline of the next steps in the review.

Background:

On May 31, 2021, Staff presented Council with the work proposed for the Climate and Environment (C&E) Review.¹ The Report outlined the main components of the project (e.g., scope, benefits, key team members), including the following objectives:

- Establish, through Staff and community engagement, a corporate framework related to C&E, including key priorities, and objectives.
- Determine the effectiveness of the City's current C&E related policies, programs, resources, actions, and systems relative to the established framework.
- Determine the gaps of the City's current C&E related policies, programs, resources, actions, and systems relative to the established framework.
- Provide a series of recommendations to advance the priorities, and objectives related to C&E.

The scope of this project includes the five key phases presented in Figure 1. Phase 1 (Initiate) and 2 (Identify) are complete and Phase 3 (Analyze) is in progress. Phase 4 (Recommend) will occur in 2022

¹ COK. 2021. May 31, 2021 PM Council Session, Item 5.2. Retrieved from:
<https://kelownapublishing.escrimemeetings.com/Meeting.aspx?Id=cbb59138-egd3-4a1e-868e-85176ffa1f4e&Agenda=Agenda&lang=English&Item=37&Tab=attachments>

and Phase 5 (Implement) will occur in 2022 and 2023 pending Council endorsement of the recommendations.

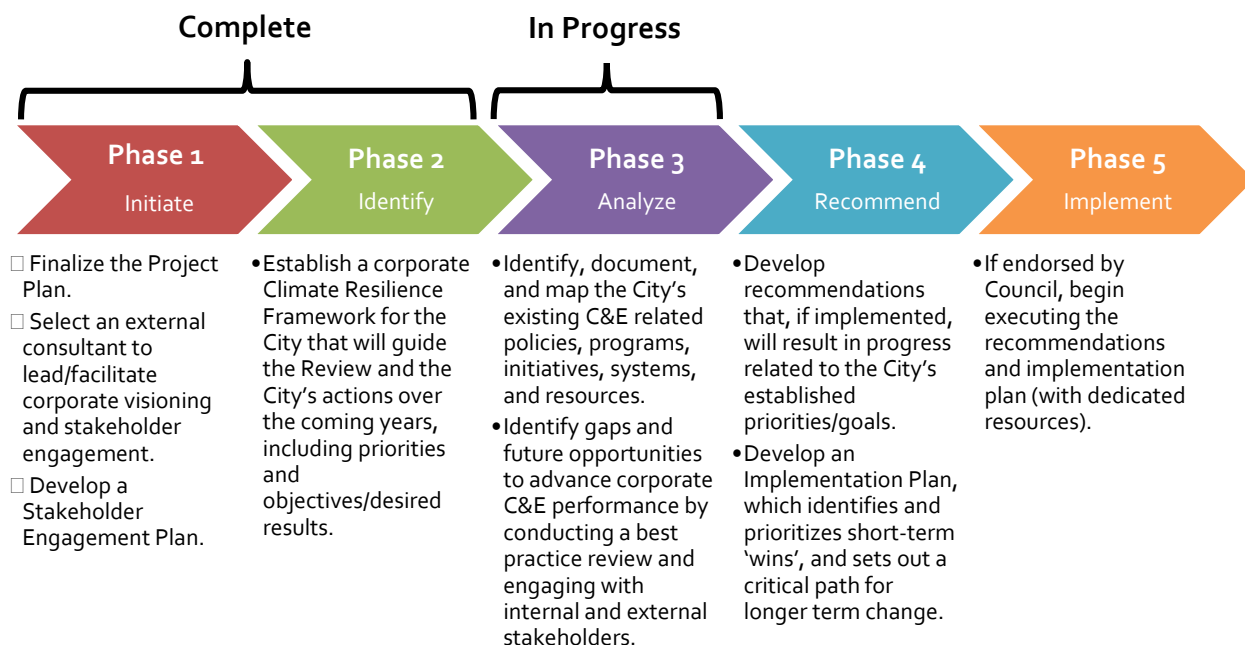


Figure 1: Project Phases

The Report also outlined the expected deliverables for the project. While the main deliverable is a report recommending City actions to take more significant steps forward in the areas of climate action and environmental protection (expected Q3 2022), it was suggested Staff update Council in Q4 of 2021 regarding project progress, including a summary of the Corporate Climate Resilience Framework, which includes key priorities and objectives.

Project Progress:

Over the past several months, Staff completed the following activities related to the C&E Review:

- **Phase 1 – Project Initiation:**
 - *May - June:* Completed the Project Plan, including Stakeholder Engagement Plan.
 - *July:* Engaged Neilson Strategies Inc. to lead/facilitate corporate visioning, C&E service review, and stakeholder engagement.
- **Phase 2 – Identify Corporate Priorities:**
 - *July – November:* Researched elements of the draft Climate Resilience Framework, including a review of current City priorities/objectives related to C&E and best practices from other communities.
 - *October 19:* Hosted a workshop with 35 City Staff to brainstorm a C&E corporate set of priorities and objectives that informed the Climate Resilience Framework.

- *November:* Created the draft Climate Resilience Framework (Attachment 1) that was informed by the October 19 workshop and internal/external research.
- **Phase 3 – Analyze Current State to Determine Gaps:**
 - *July – Present:* Conducted 15 structured interviews with City Department Managers and/or Subject Matter Experts to begin analyzing the City’s existing C&E related policies, programs, initiatives, systems, and resources.
 - *July – Present:* Conducted six structured interviews with representatives from other municipalities to assess how other local governments of similar size are resourced related to climate action and environmental protection.

Draft Climate Resilience Framework:

Using information gathered from a review of current City priorities/objectives related to C&E (e.g., 2040 OCP, Imagine Kelowna, Council Priorities 2019-2022, Draft 2040 Transportation Master Plan, Community Climate Action Plan), best practices from other communities, and feedback from Staff at the October 19 workshop, Staff established a draft Climate Resilience Framework. The Framework is intended to be the City’s roadmap to achieving the climate action and environmental protection elements of the Imagine Kelowna’s vision: *“Kelowna is a thriving mid-sized city that welcomes people from all backgrounds. We want to build a successful community that honours our rich heritage and also **respects the natural wonders that contribute to our identity. As a place with deep agricultural roots, Kelowna understands the need to protect our environment, manage growth and be resilient as our future unfolds.**”*

The Framework is organized around five pathways to ensure the vision is achieved. The pathways focus on the following priorities:

- Demonstrate corporate climate leadership
- Reduce community greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions
- Adapt to a changing climate
- Protect our unique natural environment
- Shift to a circular economy

Each pathway consists of five desired results that are the ‘end-states’ that must be met to advance each priority. While each pathway is distinct, they are also interconnected, and together create a climate resilient system.

The Framework also outlines six lenses, informed by best practice research and Staff engagement, that form the key values behind the vision:

- Indigenous Knowledge: embed the knowledge that the syilx Okanagan people have accumulated over generations of living in the Okanagan into decision-making.
- Equity: consider the impacts of all people and biota, providing varying levels of support based on individual need or ability.

- **Affordability:** consider the initiative's impact on residents' ability to pay for the necessities of life. This includes upfront costs (e.g., housing purchase price) but also lifecycle costs (e.g., utility bills).
- **Co-benefits:** recognizing the interconnectedness of the pathways, pursue integrated strategies that advance multiple priorities (e.g., low carbon solutions that also reduce risk to climate impacts).
- **Innovation:** seek solutions that incorporate new technology or tools that enrich conventional approaches.
- **Financial Prudence:** balance costs with impact and return on investment.

The intent is to apply these lenses to everything the City does related to climate action and environmental protection.

For the purposes of the C&E Review, the Framework will act as the measuring stick to analyze gaps and organize recommendations. Beyond the scope of the Review, the Framework could be used to track progress and guide environmental action in a more systematic and strategic manner at the City. The long-term objective is for the Framework to be developed as a strategic management hub, bringing together the range of climate/environment-related actions across the organization and aligning them to priorities and desired results. In this manner the Framework could provide a mechanism for visualizing and reviewing the broad range of the City's environmental actions holistically and assessing overall progress through key performance indicators.

Conclusion and Next Steps:

With the Climate Resilience Framework drafted, Staff will now focus on:

- Refining the Framework through Staff and community feedback.
- Continuing to identify, document, and map the City's existing C&E related policies, programs, initiatives, systems, and resources and identify gaps relative to the Framework.
- Understanding how the City is performing relative to the priorities and desired results presented in the Framework.
- Identifying opportunities to advance corporate C&E performance by conducting a best practice review and engaging with internal and external stakeholders.

Internal Circulation:

- Communications
- Policy & Planning

Existing Policy:

- Council Priorities 2019-2022:
 - Environmental Protection
 - Community and corporate GHG emissions are decreasing;

- Neighbourhoods and city infrastructure are resilient and adaptable to climate change;
 - Predictive modelling and forecasting is improving; and
 - The City's response to extreme weather events minimizes disruption to delivering regular operations.
- Imagine Kelowna goals:
 - Protect land, water & air
 - Protect agricultural land
 - Preserve Okanagan Lake as a shared resource
 - Take action in the face of climate change.²
 - 2040 OCP (Draft) – Pillars:
 - Take action on climate
 - Protect and restore our environment

Submitted by:

C. Ray, Champion of the Environment

Approved for inclusion:



Ryan Smith, Director of Planning & Development Services

² City of Kelowna. 2018. Imagine Kelowna: the Visions to 2040. Retrieved from: https://www.kelowna.ca/sites/files/1/docs/related/imagine_kelowna_short_report_digital.pdf.