



To: General Purposes Committee **Date:** March 2, 2021
From: Peter Russell **File:** 10-6125-07-01/2021-
 Director, Sustainability and District Energy Vol 01
Re: **City Participation in the Circular Cities and Regions Initiative**

Staff Recommendation

That as described in the report titled “City Participation in the Circular Cities and Regions Initiative” dated March 2, 2021 from the Director, Sustainability and District Energy, the City of Richmond’s application to participate in the Circular Cities and Regions Initiative (CCRI), be endorsed.

Peter Russell
Director, Sustainability and District Energy
(604-276-4130)

Att. 1

REPORT CONCURRENCE		
ROUTED TO:	CONCURRENCE	CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER
Economic Development	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Environmental Services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Finance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Engineering	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Parks Services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
SENIOR STAFF REPORT REVIEW	INITIALS:	APPROVED BY CAO

Staff Report

Origin

The purpose of this report is to seek Council support for City of Richmond participation in the Canadian Circular Cities and Regions Initiative. This report supports Council's Strategic Plan 2018-2022 Strategy #2 A Sustainable and Environmentally Conscious City:

2.1 Continued leadership in addressing climate change and promoting circular economic principles.

This report supports Council's Strategic Plan 2018-2022 Strategy #5 Sound Financial Management:

5.3 Decision-making focuses on sustainability and considers circular economic principles.

This report supports Council's Strategic Plan 2018-2022 Strategy #6 Strategic and Well-Planned Growth:

6.2 "Green" and circular economic growth and practices are emphasized.

This report supports Council's Strategic Plan 2018-2022 Strategy #7 A Supported Economic Sector:

7.1 Demonstrate leadership through strategic partnerships, collaborations and exploring innovative and emerging economic practices and technical advancements.

Analysis

Innovative approaches taken by the City demonstrates commitment and leadership in Canada for integrating circular economy principles which include:

- using 40% reclaimed asphalt in a pilot project, the first such application in Canada on a major city road;
- integrating circular economy criteria into Procurement Policy #3104;
- developing a Richmond food recovery network, and;
- conducting robust internal and external stakeholder engagement over the past three years.

Staff see an opportunity to build upon the City's success by participating in the Circular Cities and Regions Initiative (CCRI). The CCRI offers opportunities to learn, share best practices, build capacity, and cooperate with other leading municipalities to further circular economy outcomes through their Peer-to-Peer Network (P2P).

The CCRI is a one-year national pilot developed by the National Zero Waste Council, Federation of Canadian Municipalities, Recycling Council of Alberta, and RECYC-QUÉBEC to advance circular economy knowledge-sharing and capacity-building for Canadian local governments. By participating in the CCRI P2P Network, the City of Richmond will:

- Learn new approaches to embed circular economy within the broader community.
- Identify key points of intervention.
- Review relevant opportunities and challenges in advancing a local circular economy.
- Understand the benefits, challenges and opportunities with peers across Canada.
- Engage directly with Canadian and international experts.
- Access one-on-one mentoring, support and advice.
- Explore how to measure progress toward community circularity.
- Create a long-term roadmap for a circular economy in Richmond.
- Shape themes and topics to be explored through the CCRI Network, such as: building a circular strategy; circular economy and climate at the local level; food waste reduction; plastic and textile waste management; innovation in the built environment; and advancing the sharing economy.
- Gain exclusive access to circular economy capacity building sessions and training materials developed by the Ellen MacArthur Foundation and other expert organizations, including dedicated tools and resources aimed at policymakers, helping to build capacity and knowledge across the organization.

Interested local governments have been invited to register by completing the online form. Upon submission of the form, cities will then be asked to submit, by email, a Statement of Intent (content of form in Attachment 1) and a Letter of Support from Council, no later than April 23, 2021.

Participation in the CCRI requires:

- A dedicated staff person as a primary contact for participation in P2P Network meetings, and agreement to engage additional staff with relevant subject matter expertise in the P2P Network on specific themes being explored.
- Ability to start by May 26, 2021, with a P2P Network kick-off meeting, as well as participate in regular meetings through to January 2022.
- Promote and facilitate staff participation in the national webinar series and other learning offers that may be made available via the P2P Network;
- Work with CCRI Project Team to convene a virtual workshop with key staff from City of Richmond, and provide data and information to the CCRI Project Team to inform the workshop outputs.
- Collate relevant data and complete a Community Roadmap and Roadmap Summary by the end of January 2022, based upon templates provided.
- Provide feedback throughout the project, and participate in a CCRI wrap-up webinar;

- Permission to include the City’s corporate logo, a one-paragraph summary and photographs that capture the community, and Richmond’s Roadmap Summary developed through the workshop process.

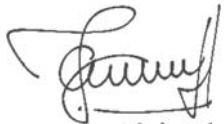
Beginning in May 2021, CCRI will deliver a national webinar series on innovative approaches, as well as provide direct support, guidance and peer-to-peer knowledge exchange for 15 local governments, as they take steps to become more circular.

Financial Impact

None. Resources required to participate in this initiative will be minimal and can be accommodated within existing budgets and staffing levels.

Conclusion

Participation in the CCRI will provide the City of Richmond a pathway to share best practices and learn how to overcome common barriers to support the transition towards a circular economy. The City's participation in this initiative will create new opportunities to achieve community circularity in a more expedient manner. Beginning in May 2021, City staff will be engaged to identify focused solutions and specifications to advance a circular economy in Richmond if the City is selected as a participating city. With Council's endorsement, staff will continue building capacity, sharing knowledge and best practices, and supporting collaborative activities and internal initiatives. After one year, staff would present a Community Roadmap for Council’s consideration, with the intent of accelerating the transition to a circular economy in Richmond. Staff’s involvement will ensure the Community Roadmap is developed based on circular principles including information, guidelines, implementation toolkits, and indicators.



Marcos Alejandro Badra
Waste Management Analyst
(604-204-8643)

Att. 1: Statement of Intent

Statement of Intent

A short 1-2 page summary that addresses the following questions:

Why do you want to participate?

The City of Richmond recognizes the importance of collaboration and networking to help staff, stakeholders and Council learn, share, build capacity, network, and cooperate with other municipalities and organizations to discover best practices and overcome barriers.

The City of Richmond has demonstrated leadership over the past decades by developing innovative policies, programs and services in environmental sustainability, shaped by an inclusive approach to community stakeholder engagement. The City of Richmond is looking to further build on this by identifying a path to achieve a circular economy.

The circular economy transition requires collaboration and co-creation in an open exchange of knowledge and experience across and beyond City borders. The CCRI can contribute to the City in developing its circular economy long-term strategies for creating economically sustainable, vibrant and livable communities.

The City of Richmond's vision for the circular economy is to maximize the value of resources by design through responsible consumption, minimizing waste and reimagining how resources flow in a sustainable, equitable, low-carbon economy. This vision aligns with the City of Richmond's Council policies on environmental sustainability and the emerging Canadian policy context.

What benefits do you hope to realize through participation?

The City of Richmond's circular approach is a result of collaboration between the City and key stakeholders. The experience gained through many engagement processes serves as the foundation for staff and stakeholders to enhance their contribution to the circular economy for economic, environmental and social benefits. Staff identified the following benefits from participating in the CCRI:

- How to measure community circularity progress and success;
- Active learning opportunities for City's staff to identify innovative solutions and specifications based on circular economy criteria;
- A long-term community roadmap for a Richmond-wide circular economy building on recent achievements;
- Regional examples and experiences, case studies, pilot projects, key contacts and research
- Potential partnerships with key stakeholders that could interact and exchange with staff market knowledge and solutions providers;
- Active best practices with peers and leading participants from the business and academic community, and the opportunity to engage in collaborative initiatives to advance circular solutions;
- Developing cross-sector collaboration initiatives by exploring relevant themes and topics, sharing best practices, and building capacity.

How will participating in this initiative support and align with your current, or future strategic plans & policies?

Transitioning from a linear to a circular economy is a journey characterized by short- and medium-term milestones, building toward a long-term objective of 100% circularity. Successful integration of circular economy criteria into City procurements is expected to take place over the medium- to long-term.

Staff anticipate the need for continued learning, iteration and process adjustments to achieve the policy's ambition and outcomes. The proposed activities support a learn-by-doing approach for both City staff and the external market. City's Council endorsed the following strategy to support progress toward implementing circular economy principles in procurement activities in Richmond:

- **Education, Change-Management and Capacity-Building:** Active learning opportunities will be developed for staff involved in procurement.
- **Staff Collaboration and Support:** Support will be provided to help identify opportunities to achieve desirable objectives.
- **External Market Engagement:** Staff will maintain dialogue and pilot programs on circular principles to support the 'co-creation' of circular outcomes.
- **Shared Learning and Pilot Projects:** Promising examples and experiences will be captured through case studies, pilot projects, key contacts and research.

The CCRI can contribute to the long-term City's plan to progress toward a local circular economy and promote closer relationships with City peers to encourage sharing ideas, market knowledge, and solutions.

What is your current state of readiness? (i.e., what is the level of understanding of the circular economy in the organization and your community?)

By applying a learning-by-doing approach, the City's level of readiness on circular economy has increased significantly in the last three years:

- City of Richmond's Council integrated into its Strategic Plan 2018-2022 the following goals:
 - #2 A Sustainable and Environmentally Conscious City: 2.1 Continued leadership in addressing climate change and promoting circular economic principles.
 - #5 Sound Financial Management: 5.3 Decision-making focuses on sustainability and considers circular economic principles.
 - #6 Strategic and Well-Planned Growth: 6.2 "Green" and circular economic growth and practices are emphasized.
 - #7 A Supported Economic Sector: 7.1 Demonstrate leadership through strategic partnerships, collaborations and exploring innovative and emerging economic practices and technical advancements.
- The City developed a framework based on emerging global best practices and input from its staff and stakeholders to reflect the City's vision for a circular economy. The framework is aligned with Council policies on environmental sustainability and emerging Canadian policy context by the circular economy principles.
- The City of Richmond organized internal engagement activities to leverage staff knowledge and skills on the circular economy. An intranet website was established to disseminate circular economy information among all staff.
- Richmond identified innovative solutions with circular economy principles and anticipated cost-benefit considerations through robust external stakeholder engagement over the last three years:
 - Launch the City of Richmond circular economy landing page on www.richmond.ca;
 - Government Staff Interviews: 12 interviews with leading, early adopter cities and organizations around the world, at different stages of maturity with respect to circular economy;
 - Stakeholder Workshop: Canada's first vendor-focused Circular Economy Engagement Workshop hosted and facilitated by the City of Richmond, with over 70 participants in attendance (pre-COVID);
 - The City's Economic and Environmental Advisory Committees;
 - Industry Interviews: 15 one-per-one interviews with vendors and other external stakeholders.
- Implementation of pilot projects: In support of the City's sustainability, circular economy, greenhouse gas emissions and waste reduction objectives and targets, the City implemented a pilot project in collaboration with Lafarge Canada to use 40% Reclaimed Asphalt Pavement on a major municipal road. To

- extend the pilot project, the City has selected a lower traffic density local road for further investigation expected to be paved in 2021.
- Joined the national Love Food Hate Waste Campaign to promote food waste reduction through a partnership with the province.
- The City of Richmond partnered with FoodMesh to mobilize local food manufacturing, processing and retail businesses to adopt circular economy practices. An online exchange platform enabled the diversion of surplus or off-spec food products away from waste streams to secondary markets or local charities, with a 414,555 kg of diverted food waste and \$2,207,971 savings to food brands and charities.

What topics of interest would you like to see explored through the CCRI?

The City of Richmond would like to explore and exchange ideas with peers experts on the following topics:

- Innovation in the built environment sector, life cycle analyses of wood frame buildings.
- Circular economy and local business innovation,
- Building a community circular strategy that meets Council's expectation,
- Circular economy in public procurement,
- Circular economy and climate action at the municipal level,
- Material flow and embedded carbon,
- Alternative low carbon fuels,
- Food waste reduction,
- Plastics and textiles waste management,
- Sharing economy.