



## CITY OF VANCOUVER

### ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Report Date: June 13, 2006  
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Meeting Date: June 26, 2007

TO: Vancouver City Council

FROM: Project Manager, Southeast False Creek and Olympic Village in consultation with the Director of Financial Planning & Treasury

SUBJECT: Southeast False Creek: LEED For Neighbourhood Development Pilot Project Participation

#### RECOMMENDATION

- A. THAT Council endorse participation of the Southeast False Creek neighbourhood in the LEED for Neighbourhood Development Pilot Project at a cost to register estimated at \$14,000 USD; source of funding to be the Property Endowment Fund: Southeast False Creek Development.
- B. THAT Council approve a budget of \$90,000 to hire a consult to assist with LEED Neighbourhood Development certification process; source of funding to be the Property Endowment Fund: Southeast False Creek Development.

#### CITY MANAGER'S COMMENTS

The City Manager RECOMMENDS approval of the forgoing.

#### COUNCIL POLICY

- Southeast False Creek Policy Statement - adopted by Council on October 5, 1999 and amended on July 8, 2004
- Southeast False Creek Official Development Plan (SEFC ODP) - enacted on July 19, 2005 and amended on March 21, 2006
- Southeast False Creek Financial Plan and Strategy - adopted by Council on July 8, 2004
- Southeast False Creek Green Building Strategy - adopted by Council on July 8, 2004
- Neighbourhood Energy Utility - adopted by Council on March 2, 2006

- **Southeast False Creek Public Realm Plan** - adopted by Council on July 20, 2006

## PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to seek City Council authorization to register SEFC as a LEED for Neighbourhood Development Pilot Project, to authorize payment of the registration fee, and to hire a consultant to assist with the LEED documentation.

The LEED for Neighbourhood Development Pilot Project is an 18 month program that runs from July 9, 2007 to January 9, 2009. Registration for participation in the Pilot Project is required by June 28, 2007.

## BACKGROUND

LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) is a green building rating system designed primarily for individual buildings. The LEED for New Construction (LEED NC) encourages buildings to utilize green building practices to improve energy and water efficiency, and indoor air quality.

The U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) is working on development of a new rating system for neighbourhood development. The new rating system is designed to certify exemplary development projects that perform well in terms of smart growth, new urbanism and green building. LEED for Neighbourhood Development (LEED ND) places an emphasis on the design and construction elements that bring buildings together into a neighbourhood, and relates the neighbourhood to its larger context. It is the aim of LEED ND to influence developers to revitalize existing urban areas, reduce land consumption, reduce automobile dependence, promote pedestrian activity, improve air quality, decrease polluted storm water runoff, and build more livable, sustainable, communities for people of all income levels.

To test this new rating system, the USGBC has selected over 120 projects world wide to participate in the pilot project. The SEFC Project Office submitted an application, and SEFC was selected, to participate in the LEED ND pilot.

SEFC is comprised of approximately 80 acres of former industrial land on False Creek. The majority of land north of First Avenue, approximately 50 acres, is owned by the City of Vancouver (the "City Lands"). The remaining 30 acres is in private ownership (the "Private Lands"). Area 2A will be temporarily transformed to house 2800 athletes and officials during the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games.

All buildings in SEFC are to be designed to a minimum of LEED Silver equivalent. In Area 2A the buildings will be designed to LEED Gold equivalent, and in the case of the Community Centre LEED Platinum.

## DISCUSSION

The City of Vancouver has established itself as an innovator and leader in sustainable city building. The City was one of the first organizations to join the USGBC and the Canadian Green Building Council (CaGBC) and one of the first municipalities to establish a baseline of

LEED Gold for municipal buildings and facilities. Since that time the City has referenced LEED in the SEFC ODP and city-wide green building strategy demonstrating the City's commitment to innovation and adoption of sustainable performance indicators for buildings. LEED ND offers a unique opportunity to support innovation in measuring sustainability at the neighbourhood scale.

As the first new neighbourhood in Vancouver to be designed with the principles of sustainable development, staff recommend that SEFC be used as a test to inform development of the LEED ND rating system. There are a number of benefits to participating in the pilot project. Participation will increase the profile for SEFC and Vancouver's major projects, and build capacity within the organization in measurement and quantification of sustainability. Through this pilot project, SEFC will help shape how new neighbourhoods are planned across the USA and Canada.

Based on a preliminary assessment, staff is confident that SEFC can achieve 70 of 106 points, which would secure LEED Gold certification. Credits are awarded in the following categories: Smart Location & Linkage, Neighbourhood Pattern & Design, Green Construction & Technology, and Innovation & Design Process.

Additional benefits of participating in the pilot are identified below:

#### Third Party Verification

The independent assessment of SEFC by a third party will allow SEFC to be compared to similar neighbourhoods in other cities with a common baseline. This baseline provides a benchmark against which improvements and innovation can be measured. This will be a valuable learning opportunity for Council, staff and the public to assess the successes and identify areas of opportunity for future neighbourhood planning.

#### Green Building Design

SEFC is the first major development in Vancouver to have a Council approved Green Building Strategy which sets a minimum requirement of LEED Silver equivalent. Buildings in the Olympic Village (Area 2A) have gone farther to commit to LEED Gold and LEED Platinum for the Community Centre. This commitment to green buildings can be recognized world-wide through participation in the Pilot Project.

#### Sustainable Infrastructure

Many of the sustainable design initiatives in SEFC are in the public realm. For example, the streets have been designed to collect rainwater and transport it to wetlands, or bio-swales, for release into False Creek. Design decisions such as these are unique to SEFC and can be evaluated and promoted through participation in the Pilot Project.

#### Promotion of Best Practices

Participation in the LEED Pilot Project would provide staff with the ability to promote sustainable best practices in the LEED categories of Local Food Production, On-site Energy Generation, Recycled Content for Infrastructure, Construction Waste Management where SEFC policy is limited.

### Olympic Legacy

Vancouver has committed to providing Area 2A for use as the Olympic Village in 2010, and is also committed to contributing to the green legacy of the Games. Delivering an Olympic Village that is one of the first LEED certified neighbourhoods in the world would be a significant achievement that would be recognized on the world stage.

### Support for Canadian Green Building Council

While this is a U.S. initiated pilot project, the City, through SEFC, can assist in expediting the development of a Canadian version of LEED for Neighbourhood Development. Staff will work closely with the CaGBC to facilitate resolution of credit interpretations required for the Canadian context.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The registration fee for participation in the LEED New Neighbourhood Pilot Project is \$14,000 USD for projects between 20-100 acres.

In addition to the registration fee, staff time will be required to coordinate the documentation. This will need to be a collaborative effort between the SEFC Project Office, the Planning Department and Development Services as there are a variety of private developers, including the City and Millennium SEFC Properties Ltd., involved in developing SEFC.

Staff will require additional consultant resources to assist with the documentation process. It is anticipated that the value of the proposed consultancy would be up to \$90,000. Staff will develop a Request for Proposals and report back on the selection of a consultant, if this approach is endorsed by Council. If the budget to complete the consultancy is not supportable, then registration will not be pursued as the fee is non-refundable.

## **PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

Staff from the SEFC and Olympic Village Project Office, Planning and Development Services will need to coordinate to ensure all developers provide the necessary information, and work collectively to ensure the maximum points are achieved. It is anticipated that the Project Office will lead this work with the assistance of a consultant. No additional staff is required to complete this work.

## **CONCLUSION**

Participation in the LEED for Neighbourhood Development Pilot Project enables Vancouver to continue its leadership role in developing sustainable neighbourhoods. SEFC has been envisioned as a demonstration of sustainable development. It is therefore recommended that SEFC would be used to test the LEED pilot program for new neighbourhoods.

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