



New Department of Sustainability Demonstrates City's Commitment to Moving Forward on Victoria's Key Priorities

Date: Tuesday, February 10, 2009

For Immediate Release

VICTORIA, BC – To help address Council's key strategic priorities and to promote better inter-governmental relations, the City of Victoria has created a Department of Sustainability that will focus on providing professional expertise in dealing with a wide range of social, environmental and economic/fiscal sustainability issues.

One of the primary goals of the department will be to work with the Greater Victoria Coalition to End Homelessness, community groups, downtown businesses and other levels of government to address critical social issues facing the city. This department will also be responsible for spearheading the Victoria Sustainability Framework, developing sustainable policy and promoting sustainable practices. In addition, the Department will coordinate and administer all City grant programs and be responsible for pursuing funding opportunities that arise from public and private grant programs.

"Sustainable practices – social, economic and environmental – must be an operational priority for the City of Victoria. It is about having a tool kit that lets us move forward with the confidence," said Mayor Dean Fortin. "Every decision that Council makes has both long term and short term impacts. This new department will help us better assess those impacts and address the needs of the community."

"We have a responsibility to the Victoria residents of today – and tomorrow – to create a community that is sustainable for future generations," noted Councillor Sonya Chandler, a long-time Council advocate for sustainable practices both inside City Hall and in the community. "Victoria is leading the charge locally."

The City of Victoria's has a proven track record of leadership on sustainability issues. In September 2008, the City of Victoria was recognized by the Ethisphere Council, as a 2020 global leader in sustainability. Also in September 2008, the City of Victoria received the LiveSmart BC Green Cities Award and \$50,000 from the Province of BC for demonstrating leading initiatives and partnerships to greener, healthier communities. Late in 2008 Victoria ranked number one of 27 Canadian cities rated in the GreenApple Canada Smart Transportation Ranking on sustainable urban transportation practices.

Job descriptions and department structure will be finalized over the next week and advertised as soon as possible. The new department requires no additional resources.

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