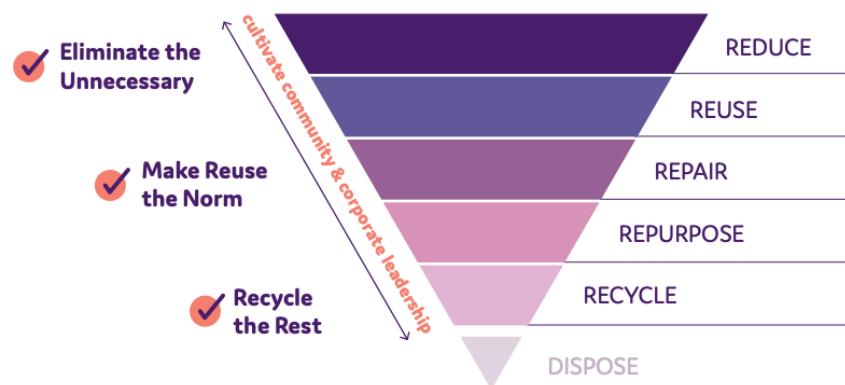


**Council Member Motion  
For the Committee of the Whole Meeting of August 4th, 2022**

**To:** Committee of the Whole **Date:** July 23, 2022  
**From:** Councillor Loveday  
**Subject:** Victoria 3.0: Becoming a National Leader in the Circular Economy

**BACKGROUND**

As a result of human activity, planet Earth has reached a state of ecological crisis with rapidly advancing climate change, waste and pollution, and biodiversity loss. These impacts largely arise from an economic model that couples economic growth with virgin resource usage and externalizes many social and environmental outcomes. Increasingly, the circular economy has been recognized as an alternate economic model which shifts away from the current take-make-waste model and toward a model designed for circularity, restoration, and regeneration<sup>1</sup>. This shift towards circular practices seeks to eliminate waste by considering all materials as resources, restoring natural systems at the same time. The circular economy views waste as a design flaw and aims to keep products and materials in circulation. This is accomplished through a 9R approach: refuse, rethink, reduce, reuse, repair, refurbish, remanufacture, recycle, and recover energy<sup>2</sup>, putting the greatest emphasis on the former, ‘upstream’ approaches.



**FIGURE 3. Waste reduction hierarchy**

Chart from Zero Waste Victoria

As centers of high population, waste production, carbon emissions, and innovation, cities are critical players in the transition to a more sustainable, circular economy. Cities around the world are adopting strategies and taking actions to become more circular. ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability defines a circular city as “one that promotes a just transition from a linear to a circular economy across the urban space, through multiple city functions and departments and in collaboration with residents, businesses and the research community”<sup>3</sup>. The European Circular Cities Declaration offers some ideas for what a circular city could look like in practice<sup>4</sup>. Signatory cities commit to using organizational levers including awareness raising, embedding circularity principles in urban planning, infrastructure, and asset management, and leveraging their procurement processes to promote the market for circular services and products. Further, signatory cities commit to aligning economic incentives towards circularity, and using regulatory powers to encourage secondary materials markets, and platforms to encourage reuse, repair, and sharing<sup>4</sup>.

The City of Victoria has adopted its Zero Waste Victoria Strategy which has strong language and targets regarding circularity and eliminating unnecessary waste. It is founded upon 3 core strategies: eliminating unnecessary consumption and waste, reuse as the new normal, and recycling waste that is unavoidable. The strategy includes a goal of reducing landfilled waste by 50% by 2040.

The City of Victoria’s Climate Leadership Plan includes the action of working “towards alignment with the principles of a circular economy and develop actions to reduce consumption-based GHGs”. This Climate Leadership Plan highlights potential future actions including “adopting consumption-based emissions accounting for the City of Victoria” and “developing a sustainable consumption strategy that identifies and prioritizes options for lower carbon consumption”. The Climate Leadership Plan connects the dots between consumption habits, waste, and carbon emissions. The plan states that the smartest and most impactful way to decrease GHG emissions related to waste is reduce the amount we waste in the first place.

These goals and targets are not consistently reflected in the City of Victoria’s strategic and planning documents. The City of Victoria’s economic development strategy, Victoria 3.0, is a long-term plan which aims to lay the groundwork for the city to grow as a sustainable, influential city with a strong innovation ecosystem and a resilient economy. While Victoria 3.0 includes actions to promote sustainable business practices, it doesn’t directly facilitate circular economy entrepreneurship or aid the transition towards circular practices. Executing Victoria 3.0 without a circular economy lens added could lead to economic development priorities that do not align with circular practices. This could leave the City of Victoria’s economic development strategy not fully aligned with the City of Victoria’s Climate Leadership Plan and solid waste strategy Zero Waste Victoria.

Adding a circular economy focus to the Victoria 3.0 plan could help the City of Victoria capitalize on the economic opportunity of the circular economy. Accenture has valued the economic potential of the circular economy as \$4.5 trillion of increased economic output by 2030<sup>5</sup>. These recommendations are also timely: the Province of BC is developing a Circular Economy Strategy as part of the Clean BC roadmap to 2030 and the Federal

Government is working to integrate circular economy principles into the Federal Sustainable Development Strategy. These commitments from upper levels of government increase the potential for the city to capitalize on Provincial and Federal investments.

At the May 21, 2021, Council meeting, the following motion was adopted: “That Council direct staff to report back with opportunities to provide a circular economy lens to actions within the Victoria 3.0 strategy”. This report builds on that motion and provides additional direction. Through academic research, a review of best practices from other jurisdictions, and interviews with stakeholders and experts, the following recommendations were developed. These recommendations aim to help the City of Victoria become a national leader in the circular economy and to support circular economy entrepreneurship in Victoria. The local circular innovation ecosystem is already supported by the Project Zero incubator, and these recommendations aim to help those enterprises achieve scale. Further, these recommendations aim to help and encourage existing businesses to adopt more sustainable practices and circular business models.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

That Council endorse the following recommendations in principle and direct staff to report back on their inclusion as additions to the Victoria 3.0 economic development strategy, including a suggested year, “Lead” and “Support” for implementation of each proposed action:

1. Add a new section within the Reinvention and Resilience: Building a Strong and Resilient Local Economy chapter entitled “Become a National Leader in the Circular Economy”
2. That the following actions be included under the “Become a National Leader in the Circular Economy” heading:

### **Access To Space**

- a. Ensure access to appropriately zoned space for circular businesses to operate, including light industrial zoned land and smaller units appropriate for startups. Include this zoning in the city-initiated rezoning of the Arts and Innovation District.
- b. Develop policies to preserve industrial and light industrial land to encourage sustainable innovation and living wage jobs.
- c. Support the creation of a circular economy hub, to enable the benefits of co-location, including the sharing of space, equipment, and knowledge, and enabling opportunities for circular economy activities such as repair clinics and maker-spaces.

### **Convening and Championing**

- d. Host and support training and information sessions for city staff, local entrepreneurs, and existing businesses on the benefits and opportunities of

- adopting circular practices and lighter footprint living, including improved information on the 9R principles and what is recyclable.
- e. Consolidate resources for sustainable and circular entrepreneurship on the new City website.

### **Supporting Innovation**

- f. Support economic development initiatives that encourage repair, sharing and exchange, reuse and waste diversion.
- g. Explore possibilities and partnerships for the creation of a Zero Waste Demonstration Site in the CRD, to encourage circular innovation, and enable clean technology, zero waste, and diversion-based companies and social ventures.
- h. Launch a circular innovation grant fund to support projects that focus on sustainable waste diversion and related activities that support the development of a circular economy

### **Procurement**

- i. Evaluate and amend procurement and pre-procurement processes (including consideration of reverse tradeshow and 'challenge pitches') to add a circular economy principles lens over procurement practices, including purchase of equipment (e.g., computers, furniture, etc.), vehicles, and buildings / infrastructure.
- j. Explore opportunities for public bodies to drive demand and expand markets for circular products through collaborative procurement.

### **Internal City Actions**

- k. Review key policy and planning documents to ensure circularity principles are applied to urban planning, as well as infrastructure and asset management (e.g., buildings and road construction).
- l. Ensure circular businesses, non-profits, and social ventures receive city support through regulatory and permitting processes

**3.** That the City of Victoria's high-level targets for waste and carbon emissions reduction be added as additional guiding principles to Victoria 3.0.

Respectfully submitted,



Councillor Loveday

1. Ellen MacArthur Foundation (2013) Volume 2: Towards the Circular Economy. Opportunities for the consumer goods sector. Cowes: Ellen MacArthur Foundation
2. Potting, J., Hekkert, M., Worrell E., Hanemaaijer, A., (2017) Circular Economy: Measuring Innovation in the Product Chain. PBL Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency. 2554.
3. Circular City Actions Framework. (2022). [https://circulars.iclei.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Circular-City-Action-Framework\\_V2.pdf](https://circulars.iclei.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Circular-City-Action-Framework_V2.pdf)
4. Circular Cities Declaration (2022) <https://circularcitiesdeclaration.eu/>
5. Accenture (2015) Waste to Wealth. <https://newsroom.accenture.com/news/the-circular-economy-could-unlock-4-5-trillion-of-economic-growth-finds-new-book-by-accenture.htm>