

## Staff Report

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**Report To:** Operations Committee

**Report From:** M. Palmer, Senior Manager Strategic Initiatives and Operational Effectiveness

**Meeting Date:** September 13, 2022

**Report Code:** CM-22-012

**Subject:** Climate Action Strategy – Proposed Timeline and Deliverables

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### Recommendations:

THAT in consideration of Staff Report CM-22-012 respecting Climate Action Strategy – Proposed Timeline and Deliverables, the Operations Committee recommends that City Council:

1. Approves the proposed timelines and objectives for the climate action mitigation plan;
2. Approves the City joining the Partners for Climate Protection program;
3. Appoints the Chair of the Operations Committee to be the elected representative in the Partners for Protection program; and
4. Appoints the Senior Manager, Strategic Initiatives and Operational Effectiveness to be the staff representative in the Partners for Protection program.

### Highlights:

- The City's climate action strategy will be in alignment with the Grey County climate action plan
- The City must take action to adapt to and mitigate the effects of a changing climate

## **Strategic Plan Alignment:**

[Strategic Plan](#) Priority: Green City - KR5 - Develop a climate mitigation plan as part of a Climate Action Strategy that incorporates the 2021 corporate climate change adaptation plan

## **Previous Report/Authority:**

[CR-21-011 Draft Corporate Climate Change Adaptation Plan](#)

[Corporate Climate Change Adaptation Plan with Appendix](#)

[OP-22-005 Partners for Climate Protection](#)

[Going Green in Grey - Presentation of Grey County Climate Action Plan](#)

## **Background:**

The City has a long history of reducing energy use, particularly with corporate initiatives to address Green House Gases (GHGs) concerns. The City's Strategic Plan identified a Green City as a council priority. Some of these initiatives include:

- Replacing three gas powered vehicles within the corporate fleet with electric vehicles
- Installing an electric vehicle charging station at the Farmers Market
- Installing two 10kW ground-mount and two 5kW rooftop solar panel installations
- LED lighting upgrades to numerous City buildings, including the Bayshore, Harrison Park Shop, Library, Fire Hall, JMRRC, Greenwood Cemetery, McQuay Tannery, City Hall, Harrison Park Senior Centre, CN Station, Water Treatment Plant, Public Works Garage and Building, Transit Terminal, and Parks Facilities
- Completing City-wide conventional streetlight conversion to LED lighting.
- Allocating funding each fiscal year to complete cured-in-place piping to reduce infiltration (groundwater) in the sanitary sewer system
- Completing the construction of the East Bayshore sewage pumping station a location susceptible to sewage bypass events
- Updating the Official Plan, which includes policies that support environmental management and sustainability in the areas of climate change, urban forests, significant woodlands, environmental impact

studies, lake filling, soil contamination, air quality, water quality and conservation, energy conservation, and community gardens.

With the rising concern of climate change throughout the world, the City identified the need to consider the effects that it may have on its services. Through its consideration, the City determined that the first step in ensuring resiliency in light of a changing climate was a Corporate Climate Change Adaptation Plan (CCCAP). In April 2021, Council approved the City's initial Corporate Climate Change Adaptation Plan. The actions identified within the CCCAP increase the City's capacity to cope with the impacts and thrive in the face of a changing climate.

The next step in developing a Climate Action Strategy will be to develop a climate mitigation action plan. In February 2022, Operations Committee received a report (OP-22-005) outlining the benefits of joining the Partners for Climate Protection. In June 2022, Grey County staff presented the County of Grey's Climate Action Plan, which included community and corporate actions to achieve the targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

## **Analysis:**

The City's Climate Action Strategy will build upon the work completed by Grey County and incorporate both the updated Corporate Climate Change Adaptation Plan as well the Climate Mitigation Plan, which will be developed.

Grey County worked with ICLEI Canada from 2019-2022 to develop a Grey County Climate Change Action Plan that will help the County and its partners reduce local GHG pollution and begin adapting to the changing climate. As climate change does not have geographic boundaries, the City will build upon the Grey County Climate Action Plan to ensure a collaborative effort in setting targets and identifying actions to address climate change.

## **Climate Mitigation Plan**

A cross-functional project team of City staff has been formed, and the Owen Sound Climate Action Team has been identified as key stakeholders in developing the City's Climate Mitigation Plan.

### **Key Milestones in the Development of the Climate Mitigation Plan**

Three key milestones have been identified as critical to the development of the Climate Mitigation Plan

### **1. Creating a baseline inventory and forecast by January 2023**

The baseline inventory includes community and corporate baseline energy and emissions. To ensure consistency with the Grey County Climate Change Action Plan, the City will use 2019 as the base year. A community inventory was captured as part of the Grey County Climate Change Action Plan. The community inventory includes natural gas, electricity, propane, fuel oil and wood, personal vehicle use, off-road vehicle use, emissions from landfilled solid waste, and emissions from wastewater. Grey County staff are collaborating with City staff to segregate the community data, which is specific to the geographic boundaries of the City of Owen Sound. The corporate inventory includes natural gas and electricity for City buildings, municipal fleet and equipment, and streetlights. In partnership with Georgian College, the City is investigating the hiring of a co-operative student within the environmental technology program to assist with the inventory and forecast development.

### **2. Set emissions reduction targets for community and corporate GHGs by February 2023**

To ensure alignment with the Grey County Climate Change Action Plan, the City will adopt the community targets identified by the County. Corporate targets for the City will need to be identified. There are several approaches to determine a specific numerical target – it could be ground up where it is the sum of what reasonable actions can be undertaken, it could be an aspirational goal and then determine what actions it takes to achieve the target or a hybrid approach. The City will utilize the corporate targets identified by Grey County as one benchmark in the development phase.

### **3. Develop a local action plan by April 2023**

The local action plan is the development of detailed actions for the City to achieve its GHG emissions reduction target. Staff from across the organization will be engaged in the development of actions. In alignment with the Grey County plan, identified actions will be finalized and prioritized based on the following criteria: relative GHG reduction potential, the cost to implement, community benefit and level of City influence.

### **Corporate Climate Change Adaptation Plan**

Concurrently with the development of the climate mitigation plan, staff will assess the actions from the Corporate Climate Change Adaptation Plan.

Implementation of the actions has been challenging in the fiscally constrained environment. An update on the actions taken and the suggested revisions to the actions will be brought forward as part of the overall Climate Action Strategy to identify progress and mitigate barriers to success.

### **Climate Action Strategy**

The purpose of the climate action strategy is to have a fulsome plan for the City that encompasses mitigation and adaptation efforts. The action plans must have targets and identify tangible, realistic actions to achieve the targets. The overall climate action strategy, which incorporates the draft climate action mitigation plan and the corporate climate change adaptation plan, will be brought forward to the Operations Committee in June of 2023 for consideration.

To ensure the success of the development of a climate action strategy, the project team and the Owen Sound Climate Action Team have identified potential risks to the project and mitigation tactics to overcome those risks.

One of the risk mitigation tactics identified is joining the Partners for Climate Protection (PCP) program, administered by the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM). By becoming a member of the PCP, the City can access resources to assist in completing the Climate Action Strategy and utilize the standardized five-milestone framework.

### **Financial Implications:**

The costs related to the co-operative student will be funded from the Climate Change reserve fund.

Participation in the Partners for Climate Protection program is free to the City as it is funded by the Federation of Canadian Municipalities and ICLEI Canada. By joining the PCP, the City will qualify for federal grant funding related to climate change initiatives.

When the climate action strategy is developed, any actions which require costs will be identified.

## **Communication Strategy:**

Communication of this report is through the posting of Committee meeting agendas on the City of Owen Sound website. This Fall, a communication and engagement plan will be developed for the community and City staff.

## **Consultation:**

City staff have met regularly with the Owen Sound Climate Action Team over the past year to discuss climate change initiatives, share resources and talk about what actions the City is undertaking in response to climate change. The project team includes staff from across the City and members of the Climate Action Team Owen Sound, all of which have been consulted in developing the project plan and this report.

## **Attachments:**

Grey County Climate Change Action Plan

## **Recommended by:**

Mike Crone, Director of Public Works and Engineering

## **Submission approved by:**

Tim Simmonds, City Manager

For more information on this report, please contact Michelle Palmer, Senior Manager of Strategic Initiatives and Operational Effectiveness, at [mpalmer@owensound.ca](mailto:mpalmer@owensound.ca) or 519-376-4440 ext. 1246.