



**City of Kingston  
Information Report to Council  
Report Number 21-024**

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**To:** Mayor and Members of Council  
**From:** Peter Huigenbos, Commissioner, Business, Environment & Projects  
**Resource Staff:** Julie Salter-Keane, Manager, Climate Leadership  
**Date of Meeting:** December 15, 2020  
**Subject:** Working Group on Climate Action Report Update

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**Council Strategic Plan Alignment:**

Theme: 1. Demonstrate leadership on climate action

Goal: See above

**Executive Summary:**

On October 15, 2019, City Council received [Report Number 19-261](#) 'Working Group on Climate Action Report' to encourage the community's industrial, commercial and institutional sector to adopt its recommendations for immediate, low cost GHG reduction action items , and directed staff to implement applicable immediate and low cost action items within the City's corporate operations and report back to Council with an information report on the progress of action items implemented.

The Working Group on Climate Action Report contains eleven (11) actions to be implemented in partnership by various organizations, institutions and businesses within the community. The opportunities for actions are under the following themes: buildings, transportation, green space, waste, food and agriculture, water and other. As per the mandate of Council, the actions are considered immediate and low cost.

Sustainable Kingston has taken a leadership role in coordinating and implementing a number of actions as described in the Working Group on Climate Action Report. Collectively, working group members, including the City of Kingston, are already actively engaged in many of the areas outlined in the report. The action items in the report have served as a means to continue

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to engage the industrial, commercial and institutional (ICI) sector, share best practices and enable wider adoption of emissions reduction strategies.

This report provides an update on the City of Kingston's implementation of the recommendations. In some areas, implementation has been delayed due to the pandemic. Staff will bring another update report in late 2021.

**Recommendation:**

This report is for information purposes only.

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**Authorizing Signatures:**

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY COMMISSIONER

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**Peter Huigenbos, Commissioner,  
Business, Environment &  
Projects**

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY CHIEF  
ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

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**Lanie Hurdle, Chief  
Administrative Officer**

**Consultation with the following Members of the Corporate Management Team:**

Paige Agnew, Commissioner, Community Services Not required

Brad Joyce, Commissioner, Corporate Services

Jim Keech, President & CEO, Utilities Kingston

Desirée Kennedy, Chief Financial Officer & City Treasurer Not required

Sheila Kidd, Commissioner, Transportation & Public Works

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**Options/Discussion:**

Staff has committed to providing Council with a progress update on the actions implemented within the corporate operations recommended within the Working Group on Climate Action Report ([Report Number 19-261](#)).

The opportunities for actions are grouped under the following themes selected by the Working Group on Climate Action: Buildings, Transportation, Green Space, Waste, Food and Agriculture, Water and Other.

This report is provided as a summary of the progress on the applicable actions and are organized by the themes selected by the Working Group on Climate Action. As noted above, the Corporation is already actively involved in the implementation of many of the recommended actions and these are included within this report. The implementation of some action items has been delayed due to the impact of COVID-19 and, as noted, will commence when staff capacity has been restored or safety protocols are in place.

**Buildings Theme**Working Group on Climate Action Report Recommendation

Sustainable Kingston is working with ICI members to develop an outreach campaign/challenge (similar to the Plastic Free Summer Challenge) to:

- turn-down the heat in the winter break period if the building is closed;
- adjust standard heating and cooling temperatures by 1 degree; and
- optimize the use of existing Building Automation Systems (BAS) to reduce natural gas and electricity consumption and costs.

City of Kingston's Implementation

Facilities Management & Construction Services (FMCS) have been using facility BAS for over a decade across a variety of municipal facilities. Currently, the City has twenty-five facilities on the corporate BAS and this number is expected to grow to 28 by 2021. These systems are the backbone of the City's energy management strategy and are critical in achieving the City's corporate emission and reduction targets.

The BAS plays a crucial role in maintaining air quality in the City's facilities; COVID-19 demands more fresh air, even in the winter months. The BAS allows finite control while staff balances air quality with occupancy comfort, energy savings and safety.

The City of Kingston's BAS are used to manage the heating, ventilation, air conditioning and lighting systems in our facilities. FMCS uses the BAS to reduce energy consumption while maintaining indoor air quality and comfort by:

- Setting occupancy schedules so system only run when needed.
- Adjusting the thermostats based on the season and outdoor conditions.
- Monitoring mechanical equipment for faults or failures.

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- Reporting issues to the maintenance team through automatic intuitive alarming.
- Performing analytics to identify and repair inefficient systems.
- Providing continuous monitoring of our mechanical systems.

FMCS manages the BAS system following industry standards and has reduced energy consumption on average by 15% in each facility since implementation. These reductions will be maintained through continuous improvement as FMCS continues to optimize these systems.

## **Food and Agriculture Theme**

### Working Group on Climate Action Report Recommendation

Sustainable Kingston, in partnership with KFL&A Public Health, support and engage with ICI sector organizations to promote sustainable diets. Short-term, low cost options for consideration may include public and workplace education and marketing campaigns, incentives in the private sector to support the provision of more plant-based foods, and business partnership development to facilitate new food purchasing/procurement opportunities.

### City of Kingston's Implementation

Occupational Health and Wellness staff launched the first quarterly wellness newsletter for employees in March 2020. The March issue of the City Occupational Health & Wellness Newsletter featured the following:

- Wellness tips and articles
- Upcoming event information
- Safety Tip of the Month
- "What's in your lunch" featuring various City employees and leadership

Occupational Health and Wellness staff have been greatly impacted by COVID-19 and their needed support to employees. As such, the newsletter was limited to the March issue. Plans are to continue the newsletter after the recovery from COVID-19.

### Working Group on Climate Action Report Recommendation

Sustainable Kingston is encouraged to promote and support existing community partnerships and projects focused on food waste diversion and food rescue practices that reduce food waste in the ICI sector.

### City of Kingston's Implementation

- The City of Kingston continues to support community partnerships on food waste diversion and food rescue through community organizations such as Loving Spoonful. Council recently approve the revised scope of the strategic initiatives in the 'Foster Healthy Citizens & Vibrant Spaces' section of the 2019-2022 Kingston Strategic Plan to include the review of Springer Market Square Public Market by-law to increase the availability and prioritize access to local food in Q2 2021.

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## **Green Space Theme**

### Working Group on Climate Action Report Recommendation

Sustainable Kingston, in partnership with Utilities Kingston, will encourage the ICI sector to implement similar sustainable landscaping into their property and project designs. Through Sustainable Kingston, the City will share lessons learned from the 2020 pilot project for potential implementation on ICI properties.

### City of Kingston's Implementation

In 2019 staff developed a three-year tree sale program to encourage the planting of trees on private property in the years 2020, 2021 and 2022. The sale of 1,200 trees in each of these years would add 3,600 trees to the overall City tree canopy, a portion of which will be within the urban forest boundary. People that own property within the City could purchase a tree at a cost well below the retail value of the tree and plant the tree on their private property. The species and size of tree available to purchase is consistent with the Urban Forest Management Plan. This program has been deferred to start in 2021 as tree sales could not take place in 2020 due to COVID-19 restrictions.

The City was also planning a pilot program to plant wildflower verges along the roadside of Sir John A. Macdonald Boulevard in 2020. Wildflower verges have many benefits, from reducing GHG emissions from mowers to providing critical habitat for pollinators. This pilot program was also deferred to 2021 due to COVID-19 restrictions. Staff are looking forward to planting wildflowers in 2021.

## **Transportation Theme**

### Working Group on Climate Action Report Recommendation

Sustainable Kingston, in partnership with the ICI members, will continue to raise awareness and encourage active and sustainable transportation in the ICI sector through workplace campaigns and challenges such as carpool programs, group parking passes, Commuter Challenge, Employer Transpass Program and Kingston Transit Orientation.

### City of Kingston's Implementation

Kingston Transit provides reduced monthly transit passes to employees through participating employers. Kingston Transit orientation and public education activities have been significantly reduced in 2020 due to COVID-19.

The City's Safe Routes to School program was launched in the early part of 2020 at three elementary schools. Programming and consultation at these schools was initiated; however, this work has been limited by the COVID-19 restrictions. There are plans to resume this work supporting active travel to school through route improvements and education in 2021, contingent on the schools having capacity to engage in this work.

The City-run initiatives and outreach that typically support the Commuter Challenge and Cycling Week were not completed in 2020 due to COVID-19 limitations. There are plans to resume this work in 2021 pending the status of these events.

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Working Group on Climate Action Report Recommendation

The ICI sector should pursue and implement best practices aimed at reducing work-related travel through teleconferencing/telecommuting and carpooling when possible.

City of Kingston's Implementation

In early 2020, Information Systems & Technology staff introduced Microsoft Teams whereby employees can conference and communicate with coworkers more frequently which reduces unnecessary travel to meetings and events resulting in the reduction of GHG emissions from the use of vehicles.

In July of this year, the City of Kingston introduced a Remote Work (Telework) Policy. The policy establishes the rules for eligible employees to carry out work duties from a designated remote work location, which is typically a home office.

**Waste Theme**Working Group on Climate Action Report Recommendation

Sustainable Kingston, in partnership with the ICI sector, will continue to raise awareness and promote waste diversion and reduction efforts through education, campaigns, challenges, waste diversion projects and incentives such as the plastic-free summer challenge, workplace waste reduction initiatives and the Ontario EcoSchools program.

City of Kingston's Implementation

There are several City programs that support keeping Kingston beautiful, including regular street sweeping, enforcement of litter-related by-laws and the collection of waste from receptacles in parks and downtown streets. The City is seeking resident input as it develops future community cleanup initiatives, with a focus on community involvement and participation.

Aluminum and paper products have seen a decline in capture rates in the blue and grey boxes in recent years and the City of Kingston ran a month-long social media campaign informing the public of the financial and environmental impacts of not diverting these materials from landfill. Engagement on the posts were good, but full analytics are not available. Due to financial constraints, the annual curbside waste audit was not completed in 2020, and the effects of the campaign cannot be quantified.

Sustainable Kingston has also produced an online video series for schools in place of in school presentations for 2020. As the City of Kingston's partner in delivering school presentations, these videos rely on the information provided by the City of Kingston's Solid Waste Services Department.

**Water Theme**Working Group on Climate Action Report Recommendation

The City of Kingston and Sustainable Kingston should continue to promote programs and education through Utilities Kingston, including rain barrels, toilet rebates and wise water use landscaping demonstration such as the Water Conservation Garden located at the 1211 John

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Counter Boulevard Municipal Campus, so that the ICI sector has access to education and examples of measures that are immediate and low cost.

#### City of Kingston's Implementation

The City of Kingston continues to promote programs and education through Utilities Kingston. Utilities Kingston's incentive programs for water conservation and demonstration garden activities were scaled back in 2020. Rain barrel sales were deferred in the Spring due to COVID-19 restrictions. Some applications for toilet rebates have been received and are being processed. The water wise demonstration garden at the John Counter Boulevard Municipal Campus remained open to the public; however, in person programming and tours were not held.

#### **Other Actions**

##### Working Group on Climate Action Report Recommendation

City staff can assist the developers with the testing of the smart device app, Netzero, during the market validation stage by providing existing data on City facilities to the app developers.

##### City of Kingston's Implementation

City staff met with the developers of the smart device app, Netzero, in December 2019 and provided existing data on City facilities to the app developers for testing.

#### **Existing Policy/By-Law:**

None

#### **Notice Provisions:**

None

#### **Accessibility Considerations:**

None

#### **Financial Considerations:**

None

#### **Contacts:**

Julie Salter-Keane, Manager, Climate Leadership Division 613-546-4291 extension 1163

#### **Other City of Kingston Staff Consulted:**

Jeff Bumstead, Chief Information Officer, Information Systems & Technology

Jeremy DaCosta, Director, Transit Services

Raymond Garner, Director, Solid Waste Services



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Bill Linnen, Director, Public Works Services

Ian Semple, Director, Transportation Services

Deanne Roberge, Director, Human Resources & Organization Development Services

Rachel Sheldon, Supervisor, Occupational Health, Safety & Wellness, Human Resources & Organization Development Services

Therol Peterson, Manager, Facilities, Facilities Management & Construction Services

Russel Horne, Building Performance Controls Technologist, Facilities Management & Construction Services

Allen Lucas, Manager, Research & Projects Office, Utilities Kingston

**Exhibits Attached:**

None