



**City of Kingston
Information Report to Council
Report Number 21-124**

To: Mayor and Members of Council
From: Peter Huigenbos, Commissioner, Business, Environment & Projects
Resource Staff: Julie Salter-Keane, Manager, Climate Leadership Division
Date of Meeting: May 18, 2021
Subject: Climate Leadership Initiatives - Status Update

Council Strategic Plan Alignment:

Theme: 1. Demonstrate leadership on climate action

Goal: See above

Executive Summary:

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview and update on Climate Leadership initiatives from the Corporate Strategic Plan and motions of Council and their anticipated timeline for completion. A previous status update was provided to Council in October 2020 through [Report Number 20-219](#).

This report specifically focuses on the following projects that are in the Climate Leadership Division work plan for 2021 and 2022:

- Climate Leadership Plan
- Kingston Home Energy Retrofit Program
- Green Standard Community Improvement Plan
- Kingston Community Climate Action Fund
- Report annually on the corporate progress of the 15% greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction target
- Report annually on the community GHG reduction progress
- Purchase verified “gold standard” carbon offsets to achieve the GHG reduction target by 2022

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- Council Motion - Impact of Climate Change on rural resident's wells
- Council Motion - Open Door Air-Conditioning By-Law
- Council Motion - Working Group on Climate Action Update
- Council Motion - Natural Burials
- Independent Electricity System Operator (IESO) Regional Planning Study - Kingston Electrical Supply

All of the work being done by these projects presents opportunities to contribute towards realizing the priorities outlined by Council in the 2019-2022 Strategic Plan. Each of the projects target reductions in community emissions. These projects involve an ambitious amount of work that is being undertaken by all City departments along with support from external agencies and consulting firms.

Several other initiatives are also underway in the corporation, including the electrification of corporate fleet vehicles, energy retrofits in City buildings and an Environmental Assessment for the generation of renewable natural gas. Council received an update on these initiatives in the Strategic Plan 2020 Year-End Update [Report Number 21-079](#). Council also received a status update on March 23 regarding Major Policy Planning Projects that are in the work plan for 2021-2022, and contribute to sustainable land use and Council's strategic priority to demonstrate leadership on climate action.

Recommendation:

This report is for information only.

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Authorizing Signatures:

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY COMMISSIONER

Peter Huigenbos, Commissioner,
Business, Environment &
Projects

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY CHIEF
ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

Lanie Hurdle, Chief
Administrative Officer

Consultation with the following Members of the Corporate Management Team:

Paige Agnew, Commissioner, Community Services

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:**Climate Leadership Plan:**

The development of the Climate Leadership Plan (CLP) is progressing and is scheduled to be completed by the end of 2021. The Community Advisory Committee, appointed by City Council in October 2020, met in November and provided valuable input into the development of the Mitigation Survey. The Community Advisory Committee will meet in late May to review and provide feedback to the Steering Committee on the draft list of actions.

The CLP Project page launched in the fall of 2020 on the City's Get Involved platform and has to date engaged with over 2,300 residents of which 485 residents have completed the 4 surveys on adaptation, mitigation and the CLP vision statement. Most recently, on February 17, 2021, the City launched a public engagement on the CLP, inviting residents and business owners to tell us how we can best support their actions to reduce GHG emissions. Over 350 residents and businesses completed the survey, and the responses will help the City's Project Team understand how the community can take climate action to reduce GHG emissions and how the City can support these efforts.

A "What We Heard" Report will be provided towards the end of the workplan as a general summary of the key feedback received during meetings, surveys and public events. The What We Heard Report will be posted to the Get Involved Website. Information in the What we Heard Report will be used to inform the final draft of the CLP.

Building on the work already completed by the City, the CLP has been initiated to provide an integrated corporate and community climate change management strategy as per Council's Strategic Priority to Demonstrate Leadership on Climate Action. The CLP will assess the likely impact of existing and planned initiatives and defines further required actions to chart a clear path to achieve the target of carbon neutrality by 2040. The economic benefits of the transition to a low carbon society will be acknowledged throughout the years to highlight progress related to economic development and community prosperity. In addition, the CLP will also identify key climate change risks and vulnerabilities, providing guidance on opportunities and adaptation measures to make Kingston more resilient to changing climate conditions and extreme weather.

In line with the Natural Step's framework for Integrated Community Sustainability Planning, the CLP will foster continued transformational change at the community level by engaging community leaders and the public on priority actions to bridge the gap between the current state and where the community wants to be in future.

Several important municipal programs currently under development have the potential to reduce emissions greatly by 2040. These include the Active Transportation Master Plan, the Biogas Master Plan, the Kingston Home Energy Retrofit Program (KHERP) and the Green Standard Community Improvement Plan. While these are significant projects, there is no doubt that additional actions will be needed over the next 19 years to further decrease emissions towards achieving carbon neutrality.

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The most significant opportunities for additional emissions reduction in Kingston are adopting electric vehicles, retrofitting existing buildings in all sectors, and switching fossil fuel-based industrial processes to low carbon hydrogen or renewable natural gas. Planning policies will also be key. Planning for more residents to be within walking distance of their daily needs through land use changes is fundamental to the success of the plan. This enables more people to walk or roll to access their local needs and to rely on vehicles less. The objectives of the CLP will formalize these and other opportunities to guide the development of future policies and programs in the City, and to motivate effective community action.

As Kingston continues to take action on climate leadership, the targets, assumptions and outcomes that will be outlined in the CLP will be regularly reviewed against current information. As other levels of government revise and implement climate actions of their own, these influences will also impact Kingston. This regular monitoring and recalibration will identify both gaps and opportunities to take this important work further, allowing the CLP to be a consistently relevant resource.

Kingston Home Energy Retrofit Program:

In January 2021, City Council received the Kingston Home Energy Retrofit Program (KHERP) feasibility and design study and approved a Local Improvement Charges (LIC) By-Law. The KHERP will focus on property owners of one family dwellings which represents approximately 60 percent of the housing supply within Kingston. This priority aligns with the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) Community Energy Financing (CEF) program which began accepting funding applications in March 2021. Council approved the full \$18.5M capital plan in the 2021 budget, to be managed over the 4 years of implementing KHERP. \$14.8M of the \$18.5M is conditional on funding from the FCM. The remaining \$3.7M in loans and grant would be the City's portion over the four years.

Staff submitted the initial application in early March and it was approved by FCM for the full application submission. The full application was submitted to FCM on March 31, 2021. As of the writing of this report, FCM staff have indicated that they are currently reviewing the full application. Following final notification from FCM on the City's funding application, staff will report back to the Environment, Infrastructure & Transportation Policies Committee with the final program details including the results of additional stakeholder consultation and a recommendation regarding the implementation plan for KHERP.

Green Standard Community Improvement Plan:

In January 2021, City Council received an update on the Green Standard Community Improvement Plan (CIP). The report also recommended to amend the Official Plan to permit a Green Standard Community Improvement Plan and Project Area within the entire municipality.

Council approved the Official Plan Amendment on April 6th to permit a Green Standard CIP and Project Area within the entire municipality. Consultation with staff and stakeholders has been ongoing over the last several months to evaluate advanced building performance levels alignment with proposed incentive programs for new construction.

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The Green Standard CIP will support and implement provincial and local policies and strategies relating to energy and water conservation for new building construction. The goal of the Green Standard CIP is to encourage the construction of new buildings in Kingston in a way that achieves significant and measurable improvement in energy performance and water conservation so that community GHG emissions are reduced or mitigated within the entire municipality.

Staff will report back to the Environment, Infrastructure & Transportation Policies Committee in Q3 2021 with the proposed Green Standard CIP and CIP By-Law.

Kingston Community Climate Action Fund:

Council approved the recommendations in [Report Number 20-131](#) at the July 7, 2020 meeting that directed staff to establish the Kingston Community Climate Action Fund. The Kingston Community Climate Action Fund established a green fund where donations can be made to support community projects. Council approved the recommendation of [Report Number KEAF-20-004](#) that approved two projects for funding donations in 2020. The following summarizes the two projects approved for public donations for the 2020 campaign:

Organization Name	Project Focus	Funds Requested
Habitat for Humanity Kingston	Four air source heat pumps	\$26,000.00
Martha's Table	Electric vehicle	\$45,000.00

The donation campaign launched on December 1, 2020 and concluded on March 31, 2021. Donations were received through Canada Helps and the Kingston Community Credit Union. The total amount of donations raised, including the matching funds of \$5,000 from the Kingston Community Credit Union and the City committed funds of \$15,000, is \$43,611. Staff are currently working with both Martha's Table and Habitat for Humanity Kingston to confirm both projects have secured additional funding in order to reach the funds required for each project. Although the donation campaign did not reach the targets, staff are extremely pleased with the inaugural 2020 campaign considering the difficulties the community is facing throughout the pandemic.

Staff are already planning for the 2021 launch of the Kingston Community Climate Action Fund and will be hosting an informational webinar in late May 2021 for local non-profit and charity organizations on how to develop projects for the Fund that meet the eligibility requirements of the program and are ready to be implemented if approved by Council. In addition to the webinar, staff are evaluating and will be enhancing the current processes to ensure continuous improvement to the Kingston Community Climate Action Fund.

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Report Annually on the Corporate Progress of the 15% GHG Reduction Target:

The next Corporate GHG Inventory Report will be presented to Council in Q4 2021. The report will align with the completion of the CLP and will include discussion on the purchase of carbon offsets.

Report Annually on the Community GHG Reduction Progress:

The next community GHG inventory report will be presented to Council in Q4 2021 which will align with the completion of the CLP.

Purchase Verified “Gold Standard” Carbon Offsets to Achieve the GHG Reduction Target by 2022:

The annual purchase of “gold standard” carbon offsets to achieve GHG reduction target for 2020 was not made due to the pandemic’s financial impact and the expected significant reductions in corporate GHG emissions for 2020. This will be revisited in 2021 and reported to Council.

Motion - Impact of Climate Change on Rural Resident's Wells:

As indicated in [Report Number 20-097](#), staff intended to continue to work with the Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority (CRCA) and KFL&A Public Health and report back to Council jointly in Q3 2020. The report was to include a review of best practices in other municipalities on how groundwater data is developed that identifies groundwater quality and quantity strategies for private services within the rural areas. Unfortunately, work with our partners has been delayed due to COVID-19. Although staff do not expect Public Health to have the capacity to support the work for the foreseeable future, we are working with the CRCA and intend to report back to Council in Q2 2021 with an update report.

Motion - Open Door Air-Conditioning By-Law:

Public and stakeholder engagement for a by-law was undertaken prior to the pandemic. The affected businesses of this policy are still dealing with various forms of alternative service delivery during the pandemic. As directed by Council in [Report Number 21-109](#), staff will engage again with businesses and the public in either late 2021 or early 2022 and will bring forth a proposed by-law for consideration of Council in Q2 2022.

Motion - Working Group on Climate Action Update:

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 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.

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Council received [Report Number 21-024](#) in December 2020, which provided 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.

Motion - Natural Burials:

On March 23, 2021, Council passed a motion to direct staff to review best practices from other municipalities on the establishment of a natural burial cemetery within the City of Kingston; and based on the findings and/or new research required, that City staff investigate the establishment of a natural burial site within a City-owned or privately-owned cemetery and report back to Council in Q4 2021. To date, staff has reached out to the Natural Burial Association of Ontario regarding their research as well as conducted discussions with the Cataraqui Cemetery staff.

IESO Regional Planning Study - Kingston Electrical Supply:

Regional electricity planning in the Peterborough to Kingston region is underway. This engagement initiative will provide interested parties with an opportunity to offer input for consideration into the elements of an Integrated Regional Resource Plan (IRRP) anticipated to be complete in Q4 2021 by the Independent Electricity System Operator.

City of Kingston staff from the Climate Leadership Division and Utilities Kingston staff attended a webinar in late March on the IESO Regional Planning Study which also included participation from other community stakeholders such as Queen's University and CFB Kingston. Further to the webinar, City staff submitted feedback to the IESO on April 8th outlining recommendations on the IRRP as well as providing feedback on a number of topic areas identified by the IESO for further comment. The staff feedback included the need to consider the electrical demand from Council's priorities on climate leadership regarding the electrification of corporate fleet, the City's investment in public electric vehicle charging stations, new land use intensification policies, the green standards for new development, the targeting of new advanced manufacturing development, and the City's overall commitment to reducing GHG emissions within its corporate operations and across the city with community partners. These Council priorities and community GHG initiative are expected to increase electricity demand in Kingston in the coming years and are important considerations for the IESO's planning study.

Existing Policy/By-Law:

None

Notice Provisions:

None

Accessibility Considerations:

None

Financial Considerations:

None

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Contacts:

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Other City of Kingston Staff Consulted:

Dave Roewade, Project Manager, Climate Leadership Division

Ian Semple, Director, Transportation Services

Brent Fowler, Director, Corporate Asset Management & Fleet

Tim Park, Director, Planning Services

Speros Kanellos, Director, Facilities Management & Construction Services

Jim Miller, Chief Operating Officer, Utilities Kingston

Exhibits Attached:

None