



REPORT

Council

Meeting Date: June 21, 2021

FROM: Economic Development and Corporate Strategy Department

DATE: June 8, 2021

SUBJECT: Climate Emergency Declaration Progress Report

LOCATION: Town Hall

WARD: Town-wide

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RECOMMENDATION:

1. That the report entitled "Climate Emergency Declaration Progress Report" dated June 8, 2021, be received;
2. That a Memorandum of Understanding (Appendix A) with the Halton Environmental Network regarding a collaboration to continue to deliver the OakvilleReady program, be approved;
3. That the Town Solicitor be authorized to make any reasonable minor modifications to the Memorandum of Understanding; and
4. That the Memorandum of Understanding be executed in accordance with By-law 2013-057.

KEY FACTS:

The following are key points for consideration with respect to this report:

- This Climate Emergency Declaration Progress report;
 - o is an annual requirement of the Climate Emergency declared by Council in June of 2019; and
 - o details the progress made in fulfilling the six goals of the Climate Emergency Declaration and how the Town is on track to exceed provincial compliance requirements for the integration of climate change into the municipal asset and emergency management planning process.
- OakvilleReady commenced in September 2019, establishing seven resilience hubs across the community, with funding from the Oakville Community

Foundation. The proposed Memorandum of Understanding formalizes the collaboration between the Halton Environmental Network and the Town of Oakville to continue to administer the program.

- Upon Council approval of the MOU, the Town will contribute up to \$10,000 dollars to the Halton Environmental Network to support the OakvilleReady program, to be funded from the 2021 approved budget for Climate Action.

BACKGROUND:

Town Council unanimously supported the declaration of a Climate Emergency in June 2019, as hundreds of other municipalities and global climate leaders had also done. To inform this decision, Climate Action staff presented the portfolio of initiatives already taking place across the corporation and community to address climate change in the June 18, 2019, [Climate Change Emergency Report](#) to Council.

In the 2019 Climate Emergency resolution, Town staff were directed to report annually on climate change actions and update the climate change strategy to:

- address the operations of the corporation of the municipality;
- identify the public's role in the climate crisis and the actions the community can do to fight climate change;
- embed a climate crisis lens into the Town's asset management program;
- incorporate climate change crisis policies into Livable Oakville, the Town's official plan;
- increase action and ambition for the Town's climate change crisis-related activities; and
- include performance metrics to track progress and timelines for achieving key deliverables/major milestones, and a strategy to report back publicly on progress of municipal and public efforts.

In June 2020, Climate Action staff provided a [Memo to Council](#) on the progress made to fulfill the above deliverables in the declaration's inaugural year.

COMMENT/OPTIONS:

The Town has over a decade of environmental leadership to address climate change. Many of those actions are being led by departments and teams across the Town of Oakville who will continue to embed a climate lens into their work. This report only outlines progress made over the past year (June 2020 to June 2021) by or in collaboration with Climate Action staff (now a part of the Economic Development and Corporate Strategy department), that specifically addresses the six deliverables of the Climate Emergency Declaration.

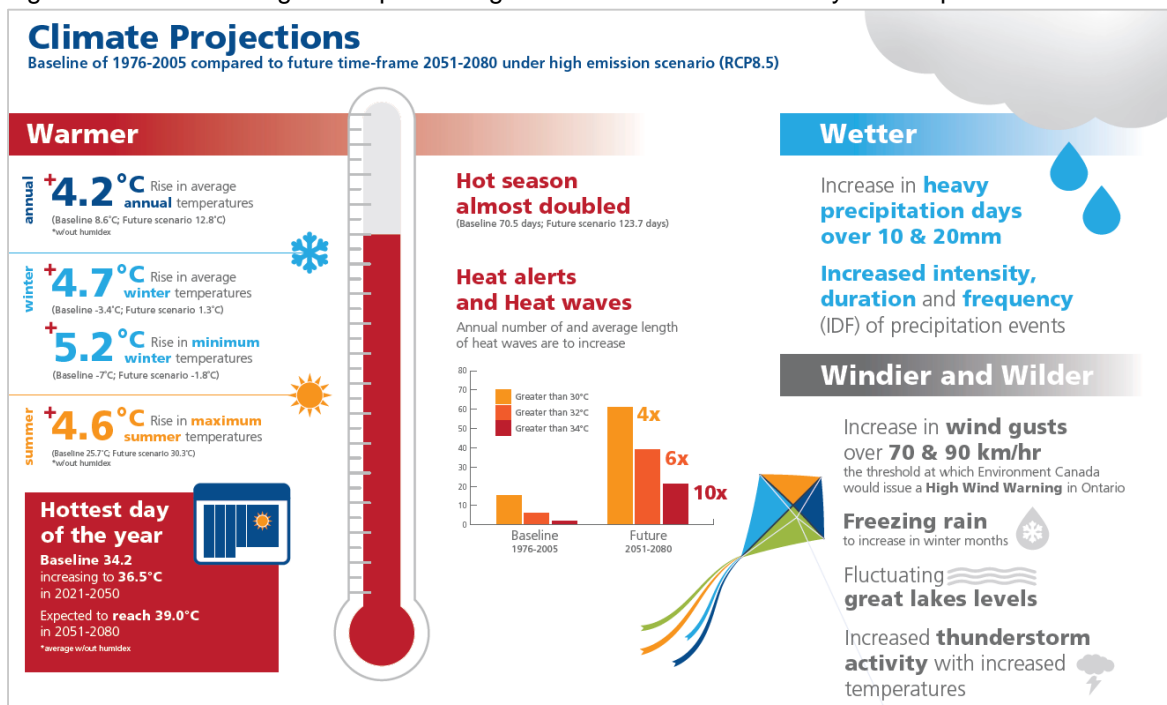
1. To address the operations of the corporation of the municipality

Climate Change Projections Report

To understand how climate change will impact the operations of the corporation, staff first needed to compile and analyze climate data to develop the Climate Projections Report. This report, developed in-house and finalized in January 2021, depicts how the climate in Oakville is projected to change toward the end of the century under both high and low greenhouse gas emission scenarios. The majority of data used for this update report is from [The Climate Atlas of Canada](#), a product of the Prairie Climate Consortium that is supported and funded by Environment and Climate Change Canada, Health Canada and several other partner organizations, which is a trusted resource used to inform Canadian municipal climate action plans. The updated Climate Projections Report can be found in *Appendix B*.

Approximately 40 variables related to temperature, precipitation, high wind, ice and snow accumulation were modeled for two future timeframes of 2021–2050 and 2051–2080 and compared to the baseline timeframe of 1976–2005. At a high level, the results indicate that, among other impacts, Oakville should expect to experience significantly warmer, wetter, wilder and windier weather as depicted in Figure 1 below. Figure 1 is one of three infographics created to simplify and communicate the results of the report and show potential impacts to the environment, the corporation and the community. Complementary infographics can be found in *Appendix C*.

Figure 1: Climatic changes that pose the greatest risk to the community and corporation of Oakville.



Building Climate Literacy

Since June 2020, the findings of the Climate Change Projections Report have been used widely across the corporation to engage departments and teams, such as the Town's Emergency Operations Team, Asset Management, Facilities and Construction Management, Planning and Recreation and Culture. The findings have also been used to:

- inform the corporate and community emergency management programs, exceeding 2020 emergency management provincial compliance standards in utilizing climate projections to inform the risk assessment process;
- inform community initiatives outlined in this report; and,
- embed climate considerations throughout the corporation.

2. Identify the public's role in the climate crisis and the actions the community can do to fight climate change

Community Mitigation Efforts

The Town is supporting two key community initiatives that engage the public in opportunities to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions:

- As a leadership team member of the Halton Climate Collective, a collaborative partnership between all Halton Municipalities, Sheridan College, HEN, Conservation Halton, Halton District School Board, Halton Catholic District School Board and the University of Waterloo, who work to educate, inform and inspire individuals to mitigate their personal emissions;
- As an Oakville Energy Task Force member, and partner in developing the Council endorsed Community Energy Strategy (CES). Council has financially supported the Oakville Energy Task Force in formally building community capacity to implement the strategy through a new community non-profit called Future Energy Oakville (FEO). Council received the [Community Energy Strategy Implementation Update Report](#) on April 20, 2021, that highlights the progress made on the implementation of the CES priority projects and a service agreement between the Town and FEO.

Building Community Resilience

In September 2018, led by Climate Action staff in collaboration with Emergency Management and the Halton Environmental Network (HEN), and with funding from the Oakville Community Foundation, a year-long pilot project commenced to establish seven neighbourhood resilience hubs. The seven climate resiliency hubs are located in areas of town that are most vulnerable to the impacts of extreme

weather events including precipitation, high wind, temperatures and ice storms. OakvilleReady is designed to educate and help the community prepare themselves, their properties and each other to be more resilient to the impacts of climate change. These hubs serve as a valuable resource for the community of Oakville and the Town's emergency management program.

Under the direction of the town's Community Emergency Management Coordinator, hubs may be asked to provide a short-term gathering place for those in need during or in the aftermath of an extreme weather event or emergency. Although not originally envisioned to play a role in a pandemic response, and having themselves been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, the OakvilleReady hubs have contributed greatly to the prolonged response and recovery to the pandemic by hosting 15 webinars aimed at keeping the community educated and connected, organizing two food drives that raised over \$1500 and 2000 lbs of food for Kerr Street Missions and delivering over 20 garden containers to seniors within the community. OakvilleReady hubs have been and continue to conduct wellness checks on isolated or vulnerable members within the community.

HEN has been essential to the success of this program to date, which has garnered local and national attention. Staff were asked to present on the success of the OakvilleReady program to faith organizations across Canada on November 9, 2019, at the Forming Partnerships with Local Faith Based Organizations collaborative workshop in March 2020 hosted by the City of Burlington and have been interviewed by CBC News.

The initial funding from OCF was used for program branding, website and toolkit development, a communications plan, and to host the launch event. OakvilleReady has operated without dedicated funding since.

To ensure the sustainability and continued success of this program it is proposed that the Town formalize the collaboration with HEN to deliver OakvilleReady together, through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU, *Appendix A*).

As highlighted in the MOU, staff propose providing HEN \$10,000 with dedicated funds from Climate Action's 2021 approved operating budget to support OakvilleReady programming. In accordance with the MOU, which has a term of one year, commencing July 1, 2021, HEN would provide the following support to the OakvilleReady program:

- the administration associated with the bi-monthly meetings and communications;
- drafting an annual work plan with the Town that identifies roles, responsibilities, and timelines;
- developing and delivering various outreach and education initiatives throughout the year;

- facilitating partnerships with various local public and private sector organizations (faith-based groups, Halton Region Health, Emergency Management, Police, Interfaith Council and utilities) to support the OakvilleReady program;
- the development and delivery of multiple program initiatives including presentations, webinars, workshops, food drives, local food security, and various other climate adaptation and mitigation projects;
- authorizing funding applications to support the OakvilleReady program;
- website development and updates;
- promoting the program to other municipalities, especially others in Halton Region; and
- annual reporting on full project evaluation.

3. Embed a climate crisis lens into the Town's asset management program

A climate crisis lens is being applied to the Town's asset management program through the update to the Asset Management Plan (AMP) and the Town's Facility Management Review (FMR). The Town is on track to meet the requirements to integrate climate change in municipal asset management plans as listed in Phase 1 & 2 of *O. Reg. 588/17: Asset Management Planning for Municipal Infrastructure* by:

- embedding climate action language into the AMP and FMR;
- creating a Climate Lens Team and developing a work plan aimed at integrating climate considerations into each facet of the FMR;
- using the Climate Projections Report in collaboration with the departments of Asset Management, Transportation and Engineering, Facilities and Construction Management (FCM) and Recreation and Culture (R&C) to identify the impacts resulting from our changing climate and the risks that those impacts pose to Town assets;
- conducting an assessment to determine the likelihood of these impacts occurring and the degree of vulnerability associated with each; and
- beginning to identify the programs and policies needed to mitigate the identified impacts and risks associated with climate change.

Through the FMR, staff have begun to implement the following climate mitigation and adaptation actions:

- Developed a Climate Considerations Decision Making Tool to help staff identify the environmental impacts of facility operations;
- Utilized this tool to embed climate considerations into FCM and R&C Standard Operating Procedures.

In addition to work that has been completed as part of the AMP or FMR, the Town has made great progress in meeting corporate energy and GHG emission reduction targets through the implementation of several initiatives highlighted in the April 20, 2021, [Community Energy Strategy Implementation Update](#) report.

4. Incorporate climate change crisis policies into Livable Oakville, the town's official plan

The Livable Oakville Official Plan has a critical role in addressing climate and work is underway through the Town's official plan review on a number of fronts.

- As part of the implementation of the town-wide urban structure, a series of Town-initiated official plan amendments have been adopted by Council that help direct growth and development to a defined system of nodes and corridors.
- Most recently, a recommended Official Plan Amendment for the Hospital District went to Council on June 7, 2021. This work helps address climate mitigation through land use policies and designations that identify these lands as a growth area, provide for a concentration of mixed uses and higher densities to encourage transit supportive development and active transportation.
- Sustainable building design and district energy policies are also included in this amendment. For the first time in Oakville, explicit requirements are provided for proponents of development to undertake a district energy feasibility study as part of an application. Adaptation measures in the Hospital District policies include the encouragement of Low Impact Development and policies to protect and support the Natural Heritage System.

Climate policies are acknowledged to be key to the Town's ongoing official plan review as well as for the regional official plan, which is also under review. Numerous initiatives and studies are being conducted to inform this work:

- Oakville's Urban Mobility and Transportation Study explicitly notes the importance of mobility in addressing climate and integrating a greenhouse gas emissions lens.
- Two studies are currently underway on the opportunities for district energy in the community of Oakville. Details of these studies are provided in a report to Council dated January 25, 2021.
- A discussion paper on Climate Change is being initiated in 2022 to support the Town's official plan review.
- Staff provided extensive comments on Halton Region's Climate Change Discussion Paper to help inform the region's official plan review

- Planning staff provided key input into the Oakville Community Energy Strategy (2020) to establish policy alignment that will be incorporated as part of the Town's official plan review

Staff is also actively engaged in training opportunities on integrating climate into official plans and was involved in a circular economy hackathon that engaged an international audience in exploring green development opportunities focused on a development site in Oakville.

5. Increase action and ambition for the town's climate change crisis-related activities

The Town has hosted a variety of community events since 2006 to promote environmental and climate action by the public. All in-person opportunities to increase action and ambition for the Town's climate change-related activities were hosted online this year due to the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions. Despite this, staff empowered the community to take action by hosting virtual Earth Week and Emergency Preparedness Challenges. Over 60 residents registered and completed over 130 actions to lower their GHG emissions, become more educated and engaged environmental stewards and better prepare themselves and each other for the impacts of climate change.

Climate Action staff also work in collaboration with several community groups to increase the capacity for climate action within our community. The following has been accomplished in the last year through these collaborative efforts:

Oakvillegreen

In 2020–2021, Oakvillegreen continued to work with the Town and engage the community and undertake public plantings, pollinator projects, invasive species removal, education and awareness and Low Impact Development projects.

While the pandemic and lockdown significantly impacted the ability to carry out community events, in 2021 a total of 47 events were held that engaged 736 residents. This is about a third of what would normally occur. In 2021, to date, 10 events have been held, engaging 444 people.

Halton Climate Collective (HCC)

The HCC works to align and accentuate the climate mitigation and adaptation efforts taken in each Halton municipality while providing extensive climate change-related educational opportunities for the community. While all efforts of the HCC can be found on their [website](#), two of the HCCs most impactful initiatives over the past year were:

Generation Green

The 2021 Generation Green Unconference was designed and delivered by 55 youth stakeholders from across Halton Region. Staff from the Climate Action team presented on climate mitigation and climate adaptation to approximately 596 HDSB students and also participated in the judging of final projects. Of the 124 projects, 95 of them were completed by Oakville students and resulted in a reduction of 2.37 billion grams of CO2 equivalents locally.

HCC Reads

HCCReads is a collaboration between the HCC and Halton public libraries to encourage residents to read books focused on environmental protection and climate change. This year's HCCReads engaged over 850 residents and youth to read Canadian author Sheila Watt-Cloutier's memoir, *The Right to Be Cold*.

6. Include performance metrics to track progress and timelines for achieving key deliverables/major milestones, and a strategy to report back publicly on progress of municipal and public efforts

The Town has a longstanding history of climate and sustainability leadership with a strong foundation established through the Environmental Strategic Plan (ESP), Climate Change Strategy, Conservation Demand Management Plan and the Community Energy Strategy, among other plans already in place and underway. To focus specifically on the needs of the climate emergency, staff are currently developing a Climate Roadmap (roadmap) to succinctly pull together this work on where the Town aims to be with respect to climate and sustainability. The roadmap would clearly identify what is already in place, what gaps exist, and what can be done to fill those gaps. At a broad level, the roadmap will identify the timelines for key initiatives and deliverables and address the roles of both the corporation and the community in this process.

A draft of the roadmap is being rolled out to Senior Management at a Climate Workshop being held on June 25, 2021, and will include the proposed approach for a corporate climate lens program. The climate lens program will serve to formally screen for and embed climate considerations in the Town's decision-making processes. Staff will engage in departmental consultations in Summer 2021 on the approach for the climate lens program and the draft roadmap.

Staff expects the final roadmap to be brought to Council in Fall 2021, with the refined climate lens program to be developed in 2022.

Up until 2019, the Town's State of the Environment Reporting, ecological footprint program and annual reporting on the ESP provided both quantitative and qualitative measures on the Town's sustainability efforts. In conjunction with the roadmap, work is currently underway to transition the Town's reporting and performance measures

to the climate emergency and provide a cohesive approach to measuring and reporting on the collective work being done across the corporation and the community.

The updated format for reporting and metrics will draw from the roadmap, existing work and work currently underway or planned in 2021 for department level and community measures and KPIs including:

- Facilities management review;
- Conservation Demand Management reporting (town facilities) under *O. Reg. 507/18: Broader Public Sector: Reporting and Conservation and Demand Management Plans*;
- Reporting under *O. Reg. 588/17: Asset Management Planning for Municipal Infrastructure*; and
- State of the Environment (SOER) reporting
- National Climate League Climate Reality Project (community).

CONSIDERATIONS:

(A) PUBLIC

Staff collaborated with community stakeholders in Oakville and across Halton Region to deliver the initiatives described within this report. These external stakeholders include Halton Environmental Network, OakvilleGreen, Conservation Halton, the City of Burlington, Town of Halton Hills, Town of Milton, Sheridan College, Halton Region, both Halton school boards, the University of Waterloo and multiple faith-based organizations within Oakville. Oakville residents, students and youth have been the recipient of targeted climate change education and engagement throughout the year.

(B) FINANCIAL

The OakvilleReady MOU (*Appendix A*) builds on the Town's commitment from the Oakville Community Foundation's initial funding of approximately \$57,000. The MOU outlines the terms of a financial contribution of \$10,000 from Climate Action's approved 2021 operating budget to the Halton Environment Network to support the OakvilleReady program.

(C) IMPACT ON OTHER DEPARTMENTS & USERS

The progress highlighted in this report to fulfil the six objectives of the Climate Emergency Declaration was accomplished in collaboration with staff from multiple departments including Asset Management, Facilities and Construction Management, Recreation and Culture and Emergency Management.

(D) CORPORATE STRATEGIC GOALS

This report addresses the following corporate strategic goal(s):

Livability – To be the most livable town in Canada by embedding climate change resiliency throughout the corporation and community.

Engaged Community – community initiatives that are described within are aimed at educating, engaging, and empowering the community to take action on climate change.

Environment – all progress described within this report ultimately works to protect the natural environment by reducing greenhouse gas emissions and protecting the environment from the already occurring impacts of climate change.

(E) CLIMATE CHANGE/ACTION

This report depicts the climate mitigation and adaptation efforts taken by staff over the past year to address the Climate Emergency declared by Town Council in June of 2019.

APPENDICES:

Appendix A: OakvilleReady MOU

Appendix B: Climate Projections Report

Appendix C: Climate Projections Infographics

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