



REPORT

Council

Meeting Date: July 11, 2023

FROM: Strategic Initiatives and Communications Department

DATE: June 27, 2023

SUBJECT: Climate Emergency Declaration Progress Report

LOCATION: Town Hall

WARD: Town-wide

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RECOMMENDATION:

That the report entitled “Climate Emergency Declaration Progress Report” dated June 27, 2023, be received for information.

KEY FACTS:

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

- This Climate Emergency Declaration Progress report;
 - is an annual requirement of the Climate Emergency declared by Council in June of 2019; and
 - details the progress made in fulfilling the six goals of the Climate Emergency Declaration
- The Town hired Manifest Climate in June of 2022, one of North America’s largest climate technology solution providers to support the town through the Task Force on Climate-Related Financial Disclosures (TCFD) alignment process. Manifest conducted a TCFD review of town documents and prepared an assessment and recommendations for the town to address gaps in the four core areas of the TCFD framework as they relate to climate.

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, staff were directed to report annually on climate change actions and update the climate change strategy to:

1. address the operations of the corporation of the municipality;
2. identify the public's role in the climate crisis and the actions the community can do to fight climate change;
3. embed a climate crisis lens into the Town's asset management program;
4. incorporate climate change crisis policies into Livable Oakville, the Town's official plan;
5. increase action and ambition for the Town's climate change crisis-related activities; and
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.

Since the declaration staff have provided an annual update to Council on the progress made to fulfill the above deliverables. These annual reports include: the June 26, 2020 [Memo to Council](#); the June 8, 2021 [Climate Emergency Declaration Progress Report](#); and April 19, 2022 [Climate Action: Progress and Directions Report](#).

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 organization who will continue to embed a climate lens into their work. This report outlines progress made over the past year (June 2022 to June 2023) that specifically addresses the six deliverables of the Climate Emergency Declaration.

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

Staff are addressing the impacts of climate change on corporate operations of the municipality in the following ways:

Emergency Management

Working to embed climate change impacts into the town's Emergency Response Plan refresh and the provincially mandated training and exercises for Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) staff and stakeholders.

Climate Resiliency Action Plans

Staff continue to implement the multi-departmental:

- Facility Construction and Management Climate Resiliency Action Plan that was developed in late 2021 as part of the Facilities Management Review. The climate risk and vulnerability assessment identified ten risks and vulnerabilities related to future climate projections and developed eight goals and 24 priority initiatives to be implemented in and around town facilities.
- Recreational Programming and Special Events Climate Resiliency Action Plan addresses how climate change will impact the way events and programming are planned and delivered in Oakville. A Climate Considerations for Special Events Checklist has been developed to ensure that mitigation and adaptation efforts for waste reduction and diversion, GhG emissions and extreme weather have been considered and implemented. This checklist can be applied to all special events and town programming including summer camps and events.

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

Staff have been working in the following ways to identify the public's role in the climate crisis and the actions the community can take:

Home Energy Retrofits Outreach

On April 4, 2023, Town and Oakville Enterprises Corporation (OEC) staff held a joint Council Workshop on the Home Energy Retrofit Program to outline outcomes of the feasibility study that was conducted, provide updates on landscape changes and learnings from other municipal programs, and propose a path forward for the town. The path forward, centred around homeowner education and awareness, aims to overcome market-related barriers faced by homeowners, and promote and encourage uptake of existing in-market programs while contributing to [Community Energy Strategy](#) (CES) goals.

In the short-term, the Town and OEC will explore partnerships with existing entities, such as utilities and providers, to leverage current in-market and future programs in Oakville, and develop and launch a homeowner education and awareness outreach program. While the Town and OEC continue to pursue potential partnerships to

advance the uptake of retrofits in Oakville, the Town has launched a homeowner education and awareness program by:

- Updating the Community Energy Planning webpage on the Town's website with an overview of the work completed to date and path forward
- Developing and promoting (via the Town's communication channels including social media) [the Home Energy Retrofit Resources webpage](#) to explain:
 - What home energy retrofits and "deep" retrofits are, and their benefits
 - Why and how home energy contributes to climate action and Oakville's overall energy and climate goals
 - Home energy audits and their benefits
 - Available and upcoming rebate and incentive programs to help cover the costs of home retrofits

This webpage will continue to be updated with additional information and resources, while staff work with Communications to develop a comprehensive engagement plan to promote this resource.

OakvilleReady

The Town has continued its commitment to the community climate resiliency program, [OakvilleReady](#) (OR). The OR program is designed to increase the community's resilience to climate change through various outreach and educational opportunities and projects that positively influence stormwater infiltration, greenhouse gas reductions, biodiversity and local food security. Additional details on the OR program can be found in the [OakvilleReady Progress and Financial Directions Report](#), dated February 27, 2023.

Halton Climate Collective (HCC)

Climate Action staff participate in the [Halton Climate Collective](#), in collaboration with the City of Burlington, Halton Region, Town of Halton Hills, Town of Milton, the Halton Catholic and District School Boards, Conservation Halton, the University of Waterloo, and Sheridan College, to align climate messaging and education across the Halton Region. The HCC supports the Generation Green Un-Conference for youth and the HCCReads book club both of which inspire environmental conversations and actions.

Community Outreach and Education

Staff host and participate in several community events each year to engage and educate residents on climate change impacts and opportunities. Staff participated in:

- Oakville's 2022 Canada Day Celebration
- TA Blakelock's Earth Week Event

Staff also hosted the following:

- Virtual Earth Week Challenge encouraging participants to complete a wide range of environmentally-friendly activities such as planting a garden, exploring electric mobility and shopping local.
- A climate-focused Girl Guide Event that, in partnership with Oakville Fire, resulted in over 50 Girl Guides receiving their emergency preparedness badges.
- Emergency Preparedness Week virtual challenge, encouraging participants to complete a wide range of activities to better prepare themselves for the impacts of climate change such as high winds, temperature extremes, flooding and ice storms.

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

Task Force on Climate Related Financial Disclosures (TCFD)

On April 25, 2022, Council received the [Climate Action: Progress and Directions Report](#), which recommended three priority projects to further the Town's climate action strategy and promote good governance. One of the priority projects was to adopt an accountability framework based on the TCFD.

Created in 2015 by the Financial Stability Board of the G20 group of nations, the TCFD seeks to provide information on how organizations are managing climate risk. This standardized framework is used to disclose, assess, and respond to climate-related risks and opportunities, and can also be used by municipalities to integrate climate change considerations into capital planning, strategic and budgetary decisions. Through a multi-year phased process, it provides guidance, rather than prescriptive rules, to follow and provides a way to embed climate considerations into critical functions such as finance and asset management.

Staff recommended initiating a TCFD disclosure process in 2022 that would, among other things:

- Identify gaps in the Town's climate action to support the development of solutions, specifically related to the TCFD framework's four thematic areas of:
 - Governance;
 - Risk management;
 - Strategy;
 - Targets/metrics; and
- Provide a framework for annual climate reporting that aligns with leading national and international organizations and that would be integrated with the Town's annual reporting in the longer term.

TCFD Recommendations for Oakville

In June 2022, the Town hired Manifest Climate, one of North America's largest climate technology solution providers to support the Town through the TCFD-alignment process. Manifest conducted a review of Town documents and prepared

an assessment and recommendations for the Town to address gaps in the four core areas of the TCFD framework as they relate to climate.

Below is a breakdown of the TCFD framework, its four core areas, and eleven actions applicable to municipalities:

Table 1: TCFD Framework & Recommendations for Municipalities	
TCFD Core Area	TCFD Recommended Actions (adapted for municipalities)
Governance The Town's governance around climate-related risks and opportunities	Describe the mayor and council's oversight of climate-related risks and opportunities
	Describe management's role in assessing and managing climate-related risks and opportunities.
Strategy Disclosing potential impacts of climate-related risks to the Town	Describe climate-related risks and opportunities over the short-, medium-, and long-term
	Describe the impact of climate-related risks and opportunities on the strategy and financial planning of the town
	Describe the resilience of the town's strategy, taking into consideration different climate-related scenarios, including a 2°C or lower scenario
Risk Management How the Town identifies, assesses, and manages climate-related risks	Describe the town's processes for identifying and assessing climate-related risks
	Describe the town's processes for managing climate-related risks
	Describe how processes for identifying, assessing and managing climate-related risks are integrated into the town's overall risk management
Metrics and Targets Detailing and measuring expectations on the Town's climate-related risks	Disclose the metrics used by the town to assess climate-related risks and opportunities in line with its strategy and risk-management process
	Disclose Scope 1, Scope 2, and, if appropriate, Scope 3 GHG emissions and the related risks
	Describe the metrics used by the town to manage climate-related risks and opportunities as well as performance against targets

Manifest is helping the Town strengthen alignment to the above by further breaking down the 11 recommendations into more granular components that are easier to evaluate, implement, and disclose. Each action in the table above refers to something that the Town may or may not be doing, and contains a set of "TCFD criteria" (or areas of disclosures/datapoints) to determine whether the Town is aligning to that action. For example, under the Governance area, the Town may already be doing the two actions listed above, but may not be disclosing them in public documents; as a result, this would not align with the "TCFD criteria" for those actions. Once the Town begins publicly disclosing those actions (which can be done in a variety of ways, such as updates on the website, within existing annual reporting

mechanisms, Council Reports, etc.), the Town would achieve the associated TCFD criteria, strengthening the Town’s alignment with the TCFD Framework.

Staff worked with Manifest to review actions and recommendations for Oakville and prioritize them according to:

- Best practice, which suggests first focusing on the thematic area related to Governance, and then Strategy as a second focus area.
 - Governance is a foundational component that should be solidified first, because good governance aligns Council and senior management to ensure the right oversight structures are in place for integrating climate-related risks and opportunities into decision-making processes.
- Actions which can be completed in the timeliest manner while contributing meaningfully to Oakville’s overall TCFD alignment
 - The quick win recommendations all reflect actions that the Town is already undertaking but is not necessarily disclosing in public documents

Based on Manifest’s assessment and review, the six governance related TCFD recommendations for Oakville to target in 2023 are:

Table 2: Town of Oakville 2023 TCFD Action Plan			
	TCFD Area	Recommendation	Identified Gap
1	Governance	Establish a clear process to inform and enable management-level authority for climate matters	The Town is taking these actions, but not publicly disclosing.
2	Governance	Establish a regular cadence for the Board review of climate-related matters	
3	Governance	Delegate appropriate and clear authority to promote management-level authority on climate matters	
4	Governance	Set up a documented process to govern the Board's oversight of climate-related risks, opportunities, goals, and targets	
5	Governance	Integrate climate-related matters into key areas of Board/Board Committee decision-making	
6	Governance	Assign clear responsibility for climate oversight with Board members	

By the end of 2023, staff will work with Manifest to prepare a TCFD Update to achieve alignment with the recommendations and strengthen Oakville's overall standing against the TCFD framework.

Implementation of the TCFD's voluntary recommendations represents a multiyear, phased opportunity for municipalities to begin disclosing, assessing, responding to, and ultimately quantifying climate-related financial risk and opportunities. A full list of the recommendations is provided in Appendix A. For the longer term, the Town will aim to integrate TCFD Reporting into its annual reporting; annual financial reports from cities such as [Mississauga](#), [Toronto](#), and [Vancouver](#) now include sections on climate risk and TCFD.

Manifest Climate will support the preparation of Oakville's TCFD Update and will also prepare and deliver workshops to provide training to senior level staff on climate concepts, the TCFD and climate risk as it relates to finance, so that the Town can work towards TCFD integration in annual reporting in the longer term. A training workshop for Council is proposed for Fall 2023.

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

District Energy

In October 2022, staff in partnership with the Danish Consulate of Toronto held a two-day District Energy and Sustainable Building Workshop at Town Hall. Staff and other stakeholders (including Halton Region, OEC, Future Energy Oakville, Danish district energy companies, and climate staff from other municipalities) networked and learned about:

- Sixteen Mile Sports Complex: focusing on a Town facility (community center) as a case study, presenting site-specific information and a site visit to the Sports Complex.
- District Energy System, Hospital District: in the context of Oakville's District Energy Feasibility Studies, evaluating opportunities for district energy at the Hospital District and discussed risks and mitigation, stakeholder engagement best practices, and opportunities to advance a scaled approach.

Approximately 50 attendees participated over the two-days, and staff from other municipalities have reached out in the interest of replicating Oakville's workshops.

Midtown Oakville

1. Midtown Oakville OPA

Staff are working on opportunities to integrate and potentially strengthen language around community climate and energy considerations in the Draft Midtown Oakville OPA.

2. Midtown Strategy

Staff are working to ensure opportunities to integrate community energy and climate risk and resilience are realized throughout the project.

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

Halton Municipal Climate Team (HMCT)

Staff collaborate with various stakeholders year-round to increase action and ambition for the Town's climate-related activities. Most recently, representatives from all four area municipalities and Halton Region have agreed to formalize collaboration efforts. The mission of this newly formed Halton Municipal Climate Team (HMCT) is to identify shared climate change objectives across the member municipalities and leverage a collaborative approach across the Halton regional community to further climate change outcomes. The anticipated outcomes of this team are to:

- Coordinate efforts to leverage potential funding opportunities.
- Identify, collaborate and align common goals to efficiently advance climate change work.
- Ensure a combined and coordinated effort to avoid duplication and build on best practices.
- Advance mitigation and adaptation efforts to combat local climate change impacts.
- Learn from others to deepen collective actions.
- Collaborate and coordinate community engagement efforts.

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

Staff will continue to report to Council on municipal and public efforts taken to mitigate and adapt to climate change annually through this Climate Emergency Progress Report, updates on both the Community and Corporate GhG Emissions and Energy Reduction reports.

The town also continues to track climate key performance indicators (KPIs) related to corporate GhG emissions and energy usage, air quality, public green space and tree canopy that provides an annual comparison and public transparency.

As part of the development of the new Town of Oakville Council Strategic Plan and 2023–2026 Action Plan, which was endorsed by Council in June and is returning for final approval at this July meeting, updated environmental and climate-related key community indicators (KCI) are also being finalized as follows:

- Green area (hectares) per 100,000 population
- Annual numbers of trees and shrubs planted
- Percentage reduction in corporate GHG emissions
- Percentage reduction in corporate energy usage
- Total residential energy usage per capita
- Air quality health index

CONSIDERATIONS:

(A) PUBLIC

Staff collaborated with stakeholders in Oakville and across Halton Region to deliver the initiatives described within this report. These external stakeholders include Halton Environmental Network, Conservation Halton, the City of Burlington, the Town of Halton Hills, the Town of Milton, Sheridan College, Halton Region, Halton Catholic and District School Boards, the University of Waterloo, and multiple community and 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

There are no direct financial implications to receiving this report although the continued participation and implementation of climate mitigation and adaptation initiatives that are described within this report may incur costs that, if needed, will be brought to Council at a later date.

(C) IMPACT ON OTHER DEPARTMENTS & USERS

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

(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 the Town Council in June of 2019.

APPENDICES:

Appendix A - TCFD Recommendations & Application to Oakville

Prepared by:
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Recommended by:
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Submitted by:
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