

# STAFF REPORT

**Department: Environmental Services and Special Projects**

**Date: February 16, 2024**

**Item: Climate Action Specialist**

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**Recommendation:** Be It Resolved That: Council Approve the creation of the Climate Action Specialist Intern position as per Hiring Policy #H11-01282 according to the terms set out in the NOHFC grant award.

**Background:**

- Currently, there's no municipal action plan to reduce our carbon dioxide emissions by 45% by 2030 and reach net-zero emissions by 2050.
- Currently, Council is receiving funding from the Green Municipal Fund to participate in the Pathway to Net-Zero. This application will audit 4 buildings in the municipality and provide options for the reduction of carbon emissions.

The Pathway to Net-Zero is a positive project and will begin to highlight our municipal carbon footprint for these 4 buildings. The result will also present options to reduce our carbon footprint. The Pathway to Net-Zero does not measure or gauge performance of reducing carbon emissions by 45% by 2030.

A Climate Action Plan is not just a list of potential projects to be implemented by the deadline, rather it's a strategy to reduce our dependence on fossil fuel and includes options for Council and Senior staff to look at purchases and services through a Climate Lens. An example would be to consider electric vehicles when replacing municipal vehicles. Council should be presented with a "green option" and review the impact of all options on the Municipality's carbon footprint over the life cycle of the asset to look beyond the initial purchase price and look at the total lifecycle costs of maintenance and operations and its impact on the carbon foot print.



- Staff submitted an Application to NOHFC for a Climate Action Plan Specialist intern in the Spring of 2023.
- A Climate Action Plan Specialist will be responsible for the following:
  1. Getting to know the community, understand the existing practises of energy consumption and emissions. This includes taking an inventory of all municipal assets and formulating a carbon footprint of the municipality.
  2. Engage Council in possibly declaring a climate emergency. Many Municipalities across Ontario are making these declarations. The intern will bring this discussion to Council
  3. Identify potential actions to reduce Cabon emissions.
  4. Engage Senior staff and Council to prioritize carbon reducing actions and set targets.
  5. Initiate a Climate Action Plan for Council's approval.

**Analysis:**

- A newly created position that has not been approved in the current budget must be approved by resolution as per hiring policy.
- The position is full time at 35hrs/week with an annual salary of \$52,325, including overhead costs. These costs are offset by the grant of \$35,000 for a net cost to the municipality \$17,325.
- In an earlier staff report, Staff have projected that the cumulative cost of the carbon tax for the Complex for 2023-2030 could approach \$400,000. This additional operating cost will negatively impact the municipality's ability to deliver services. The Climate Action Plan will provide our complete Carbon footprint, forecast our carbon tax cost and its impact on future budgets, provide staff and Council with strategies to look at the purchase of goods and services through a climate lens, and measure our progress towards 45% reduction by 2030.

**Existing Policy:** H11-01282

**Strategic Goal:** Town Government- Effective Municipal Governance and Operations.

**Financial Commitment:** \$17,325



**Budgeted:**    **Yes**     **No**

**Implementation:** The position can be posted upon council Approval with the intent of having the successful candidate in place in the first week of May.

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**Department Manager: Joel Yusko**

**CAO/Clerk: Joseph Burke**

**Approval of Recommendation:**    **Yes**    **No**

**Comments:** This is a critical initiative that we are receiving substantial financial relief from the Province to undertake. The work associated with this opportunity is becoming more and more compulsory and this type of financial support might not always be available to municipalities. We expect that through the work of the intern, energy saving strategies can be implemented, ultimately to reduce spending.