



## **2024 Budget Request**

**Request: Climate & Environmental Initiatives**

**Department: Community & Environmental Services**

**Request ID: CES2024BUDGET-C-10**

**Financial Ask: \$325,000 over three years (Contingent on staff resource)**

**Funding Source: Capital – Working Capital**

This document and its attachments are public and available in an accessible format upon request.

### **Background and Strategic Priority**

In November 2023, Council endorsed a Corporate Climate Action Plan for the Township of Georgian Bluffs.

The 2020 – 2024 Corporate Strategic Plan cites a commitment to Demonstrate and Enhance Environmental Stewardship

### **Analysis**

#### **Tree Planting (Staff dependant)**

As part of the commitments under the Going Green in Grey County community and corporate climate action plan, protecting the natural environment and seeking to minimize the impacts of climate change are highlighted as key elements. Among these, tree planting to both offset losses through changes such as Emerald Ash Borer, and to help mitigate the impact of climate change, is a key activity.

In partnership with Grey County municipalities, it is hoped that 5M tree can planted across Grey County between 2024 and 2050. In addition to mass tree planting, implementing smaller scale local tree projects such as 'tiny forest', enhancing stature



tree planting on Township properties such as parks and trails, and working in partnership with others to achieve tree planting goals such as 'living snow fences' are projects where the municipality can show leadership in climate actions. It is anticipated if \$60,000 (\$20,000 per year) is invested in tree planting, it will result in at least 20,000 new trees over three years. It is also likely, that with a municipal funding commitment, that grant funding will be available to enhance tree planting projects.

Tree planting projects require staff resources to identify and plan for opportunities, to work with community and partners in delivering projects and in respect of looking after trees when planted. In addition, in order that grants can be identified and maximised, staff resources are required to identify and apply for these opportunities. The staff impact of this work is reflected in the staffing budget request.

### **Green Fleet Strategy**

The Corporate Climate Action Plan has demonstrated that one of the largest areas of emissions for the Township is the vehicles that are required to support operations. These also reflect one of the largest assets categories in the Township. Planning for the renewal and replacement of this fleet, ensuring operational consistency, but migrating toward a cleaner fleet, will take dedicated planning and specialist knowledge of the equipment that is coming to market. The fleet on the future will likely require a mix of Zero Emission Vehicles and equipment including Electric, Hydrogen and Biogas as well as other emerging technologies. Planning for this change, and ensuring adequate infrastructure is in place is critical. Staff anticipate this planning phase will require external specialist support and expect to spend \$20,000 on that.

### **Energy Conservation Strategies**

Buildings are also identified as one of the largest areas of emissions. Systems such as water heating, building heating, heat loss and cooling and lighting are all sources of energy demand and use, and therefore contribute significantly toward the carbon footprint of these facilities. Alongside measures to offset this impact (such as through the use of solar systems to create energy), much of the reduction in building emissions can be found through energy conservation measures, which seek to audit energy use in buildings looking for improvements in the technologies used to heat and cool them, and changes in operational practices that reduce overall consumption demands. \$75,000 over three years (\$25,000 per year) is being requested to enable staff to complete energy audits and develop energy conservation strategies for the Townships buildings, starting with the higher impact building infrastructure.

### **Implementing Renewable Energy (Staff dependant)**

The Corporate Climate Action Plan seeks to offset some emissions by adding renewable energy to offset the impact of one operational building. It is estimated that



this will have a capital cost of \$75,000 to deploy and will have a payback to the Township of less than 10 years.

Staff resources are required to support this work in scoping a project, identifying the appropriate location, working with consultants and renewable energy companies to identify appropriate technologies to be used and then project managing the implementation of renewable project(s). Staffing impacts are considered within a separate Budget Request.

### **Dark Skies and Lighting (Staff dependant)**

In 2023, Council directed staff to seek to implement measures that address retaining dark skies across the Township. In 2017, an external assessment and upgrade of streetlights on Township roads was undertaken to reduce energy demands by switching to LED. Staff propose to update the street light inventory, identifying where there may be dark sky compliance (colour and lighting direction) issues, and seek to address these. It is estimated that \$60,000 may be needed for this work.

This is a new body of work for the Township focussed on both corporate assets and community assets. Dedicated resources are required to manage the review and implementation of changes to corporate lighting, but also to engage and work with the community on community-wide projects and improvements.

### **Community Education and Engagement (Staff dependant)**

Implementing and taking action to address corporate emissions is essential in the Township showing leadership in climate and environment action. However, the larger contribution to climate change is the wider community and the Township has a role to play in working with community to deliver action through education, awareness raising and engagement in climate actions. To continue to sustain works undertake in 2023 with the Community Climate Action Team, an education and event budget of \$5,000 annually (\$15,000 total) to support events, education, and activities is proposed.

### **Organic Waste Separation (Foodcycler) Phase 2**

Following a successful pilot in 2023, staff are recommending an additional 200 units are made available in a second phase of the pilot in 2024 at an impact of \$20,000 for subsidising units to the public.

### **Financial Impact**

Implementation of these objectives is dependent on additional staff resources. Assuming additional staffing is available \$325,000 over three years. If additional staffing



is not available, activities will be restricted and \$95,000 will support energy conservation work and a Green Fleet Strategy.



### Report Approval Details

Document Title:	2024 Budget Request Corporate Climate Action Plan Implementation.docx
Attachments:	
Final Approval Date:	Nov 14, 2023

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

Samantha Buchanan, Treasurer

Niall Loble, Director of Community Services