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Town of Aurora

Memorandum

Planning and Development Services

Re: Corporate Environmental Action Plan 2021 Progress Report

To: Environmental Advisory Committee

From: Sebastian Contarin, Energy and Climate Change Analyst

Date: June 22, 2022

Recommendation

1. That the memorandum regarding Corporate Environmental Action Plan 2021 Progress Report be received; and
2. That the Environmental Advisory Committee comments regarding Corporate Environmental Action Plan 2021 Progress Report be received and referred to staff for consideration and further action as appropriate.

Background

The Corporate Environmental Action Plan (CEAP) is a five-year plan that outlines environmental sustainability action items directed at staff at the corporate level. An annual progress report is presented to the Environmental Advisory Committee (EAC) and to Council.

The 2010 CEAP and the 2018 version received input from three Advisory Committees, staff and senior management.

The purpose of the CEAP is to protect and enhance the natural environment, promote environmental sustainability, integrity and conservation of resources, and create a practice of environmental stewardship within the community. The CEAP is intended to provide corporate direction on key strategic environmental initiatives that will be initiated over the next five years. The CEAP was developed to assist Council to plan for and implement specific actions to improve the Town's environmental performance and sustainability for future generations. The success of the Plan requires a coordinated approach to implementation that includes all of the Town's departments.

The overall themes in the CEAP cover:

- Water Conservation;
- Sustainable Urban Development;
- Waste Reduction and Diversion;
- Biodiversity and Natural Heritage;
- Climate Change and Energy; and
- Environmental Awareness

Analysis

The CEAP 2021 Progress Report show cases the Town's actions towards environmental sustainability and supports Council's commitments to the environment.

In 2021, the Town Council approved the Electric Vehicle Charging Station Policy, taking another important step towards decreasing the community's greenhouse gas emissions through the transition towards an electric-fuel exclusive corporate transportation fleet.

Though 2021 brought many challenges due to the COVID19 pandemic, staff continued to effectively implementation of the CEAP. The following is a summary of the Town's 2021 successes from the CEAP Progress Report (a more detailed summary of the Town's environmental objectives by theme and the Town's initiatives are found in Attachment 1):

Areas of Implementation	Completed Actions
Water Conservation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Town Operations installed an in-ground holding tank at library square to harvest and repurpose greywater, generated from splashpad usage, as a resource for irrigation for landscape and vegetation; and• Town Operations changed 315 water meters in 2021 as part of its water loss reduction strategy.
Sustainable Urban Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Applied low impact development techniques during construction of the 2021 road reconstruction projects (bio-swales and enhanced oil/grit separator);• Replaced sanitary laterals as part of its water loss reduction strategy;• The Town participated and maintained the Annual Smart Commute Designation Award, maintaining the Gold Standard every year since 2012; and

Areas of Implementation	Completed Actions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation of LEED Gold certified design features on town-owned facilities during construction of the 2021 construction projects.
Waste Reduction and Diversion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Included recycled concrete material as a provisional item as part of 2021 road reconstruction project procurement to encourage sustainable construction and building practices for Town infrastructure; Integrated energy and waste reducing methodological practices as part of 2021 infrastructure maintenance and monitoring projects; Integrated CB shields as part of 2021 storm pond reconstruction project; The Town has diverted approximately 66% of waste its waste; exceeding the 2018 base year rate by 1%; Council approved the Bag Tag Program, which aims to educate residents on proper waste disposal practices and increase town-wide waste diversion rates; Increased the number of multi-residential buildings within the Town's recycling program.
Biodiversity and Natural Heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planted 1,900 trees and shrubs on Aurora lands; A thirteenth partnership was established in 2021 with the Adopt a Park Program and Partnership development (Herb McKenzie Park); Maintained the partnership with York Region for invasive species control where Phragmites, Garlic Mustard, Giant Hog Weed, and European Buckthorn were targeted on regional frontage adjacent to Aurora parkland. Arboretum continued work on Phragmites control.
Climate Change and Energy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Town had the kick-off to their Climate Change Adaptation Plan and Green Development Standard in 2021; Integrated Aurora's "Every Second Counts" public education campaign in 2021, as part of the Council-approved Anti-Idling Policy; Council approved the Town's first Green Fleet Action Plan and Electric Vehicle Charging Station Policy, which aims to electrify the Town's corporate fleet to produce zero emissions by 2051; The Town had partnered with IVY Charge and installed eight (8) dual head level 2 chargers at town-owned facilities; with proposed actions on installing two (2) additional dual head chargers as part of the Library Square Project;

Areas of Implementation	Completed Actions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continued energy use tracking at town facility demonstrated a total of 19,828,350 equivalent kilowatt-hours in 2021; approximately 14.5% less consumption compared to 2018;• Council approved \$50,000 for the implementation of energy efficient measures within town-owned facilities, as part of effort to reduce corporate emissions;• Acquisition and implementation of energy efficient infrastructure within town-owned facilities;• Generated 613,727 kilowatt-hours of electricity from Town solar rooftop systems;• Continued adoption of monthly Building Performance meetings with Facility staff and Energy and Climate Change Analyst, to discuss ongoing energy projects, operational changes, energy consumption, trends, best practices for energy conservation, new technologies, utility incentives;• Continued investigation of new technology to improve energy efficiency at SARC using the Building Automation System innovation;• Performed a building audit, for natural gas consumption, under Enbridge's Run it Right program, resulting to reductions to annual GHG emissions and operational costs across town-owned facilities;• Integration of operational changes at town-owned facilities, in effort to reduce energy consumption during COVID 19 shutdown, resulted to an estimated energy cost avoidance of \$488,000 (~23% energy avoidance) in 2021.
Environmental Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continued efforts on updating the Town of Aurora website, providing the community up-to-date information on the Town's climate change initiatives and plans;• Integration of Every Second Counts Town Anti-Idling education campaign;• Integration of two (2) Community Environmental awareness GO Green Challenges;• Developed an enhanced Lymantria Dispar Dispar (LDD) strategy that includes monitoring, robust communication plan, burlap kits, and watering and injection treatments of select prominent trees.

Town staff implemented a tracking sheet to monitor progress and encourage accountability.

The Progress Report consists of a summary document, highlighting the achievements for 2021 (see Attachment 1), and a separate tracking document, used by staff to monitor the progress of the action items (see Attachment 2).

The CEAP is reported annually, presented to Council and EAC and then posted on the Town's website. Ideally, reports are presented by mid-year for the previous reporting year. This timeframe allows staff to collect, verify, input and analyze all the data needed for tracking and reporting. Since the CEAP monitors facility energy consumption, utility bills often get adjusted or corrected and require additional time to finalize the data.

The CEAP 2021 Progress Report is scheduled to be presented to Council in the fourth quarter of 2022.

Attachments

Attachment 1 - DRAFT Corporate Environmental Action Plan 2021 Progress Report
Attachment 2 - Corporate Environmental Action Plan 2021 Tracking Sheet