



External Briefing Note

GEORGINA

Subject: Update on 2023-2027 Environmental Sustainability Initiatives

To: Georgina Environmental Advisory Committee

From: Simone Weinstein, Program Manager
Olga Lawton, Manager, Strategy and Transformation

Reviewed by: Shawn Nastke, Director of Strategic Initiatives
Michael Vos, Director of Operations and Infrastructure
Rob Wheeler, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer /Treasurer
Ryan Cronsberry, Chief Administrative Officer

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Briefing:

Overview of relevant initiatives from 2023-27 Corporate Strategic Plan

The [2023-27 Corporate Strategic Plan](#) heard from the community the importance of the environment and natural assets to Georgina's identity. Some highlights from the engagement process include:

Lake Simcoe is a prized asset in the community with significant potential for the future. Lake Simcoe is at the centre of community identity and well-being – it is Georgina's "crown jewel" and strongest asset in attracting people and businesses to the Town. The lake is also a crucial component of the Town's unique quality of life, offering recreational opportunities and outdoor activities that help people stay active and healthy. Moving forward, there may be opportunities to better leverage the lake to further enhance quality of life in the community and drive business attraction, tourism and investment in the Town. While the Town continues to explore these opportunities through plans and strategies such as the Waterfront Master Plan, it is also essential that Lake Simcoe, as a critical natural asset in Georgina, continue to be protected from pollution, climate change impacts and other adverse impacts.

Sustainability must be integrated into Town operations and decision-making. Although the Town has several initiatives underway to advance climate change action and sustainability in the corporation, there is an opportunity to prioritize sustainability in the Town of Georgina by embedding a robust and flexible sustainability lens into decision-making processes. This would

mean integrating sustainability into everything the Town does, as well as renewing environmental and climate change commitments, leading by example within the corporation to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and energy use, and exploring opportunities to drive or incentivize community sustainability and behavioural change.

To reflect community feedback and the Town’s commitment, the Town added a fifth pillar to the Corporate Strategic Plan, “Advancing Environmental Sustainability”, with two goals:

1. Celebrate and respect Georgina’s natural environment, including Lake Simcoe
2. Support Georgina’s resilience through environmental sustainability and climate mitigation and adaptation

To achieve these goals, the Town identified the initiatives below, to be completed over the next four years.

Status update on “advancing environmental sustainability” initiatives

	Initiatives	Target start date	Target completion date	Status update
1	Work with LSRCA on the watershed health, including improving stormwater management to reduce pollutants entering Lake Simcoe	2023	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implemented a LittaTrap pilot program to reduce pollutants entering the waterways through storm infrastructure. This one-year program includes waste collection and monitoring and is fully funded by the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority (LSRCA) • Council approved funding for a baseline assessment of 20 stormwater management wet ponds and six stormwater management dry ponds throughout Georgina to assist in future project planning and prioritization • Implementing annual maintenance including sweeping, catch basin cleaning and salt reduction measures • The Town is implementing a salt mix product that activates faster and is more effective so less can be used to treat roads (additional

				information in Report No.OI-2023-0005)
2	Advocate and support the advancement of Council's 2023 resolution related to the federal government's Freshwater Action Plan Fund and in particular funding related to Lake Simcoe	2024	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Lake Simcoe Freshwater Ecosystem Initiative was released late January 2024 • The Town has started exploring project concepts for the Town of Georgina as well as in partnership with LSRCA, and is working on its applications for the March 15, 2024 deadlines
3	Review and update the Town's Tree Preservation and Compensation Policy	2024	2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council approved budget of \$30,000 in 2022 • Staff released Quick Bid Request for Acquisition (QBRFA) in Q3 2023 to retain an arborist consultant which was awarded • The project is currently in the consultation phase, Planning Policy has undergone public open house, online media surveys as well as internal stakeholder meetings • Staff will be conducting external stakeholder meetings in the next coming weeks and using gathered information to report to council to inform the update to the policy document
4	In partnership with the Environmental Advisory Committee and environmental stakeholders, coordinate an annual Earth Day event and other educational and awareness opportunities	2024	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The planning for the Earth Day event is in progress and the Environmental Advisory Committee will be engaged in next steps

5	Advocate for the construction of the Holland Marsh phosphorus recycling facility	2024	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feasibility study is in progress by the Ministry; design to begin after that • The Town is keeping up to date with the project as it progresses
6	Update Energy Conservation Demand Management (ECDM) Plan	2024	2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hired a co-op student to support the development of the updated Energy Conservation Demand Management Plan in January 2024 and the development is underway
7	Develop a Climate Change Action Plan (CCAP) to define a path forward for the Town that focuses on high value initiatives	2023	2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$250,000 in 2024 Budget for the development of the CCAP was approved • Staff are in the process of hiring a Climate Initiatives Lead to support the development of the CCAP and support other environmental initiatives. The position is expected to start early March • Staff will be hiring consulting services to support the development of the CCAP, with the RFP expected to be released mid-February
8	Conduct a feasibility study to consider opportunities and options to greening the fleet	2024	2027	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The RFI process will take place in 2024 to inform the project, with the project expected to begin in 2025
9	Continue to implement Waste Management Plan (corporate and community)	2024	2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Town will transition in 2026 to producer-led blue box collection • Council to decide on collection methods at the recommendations from staff throughout 2024-2026 • Staff are part of York Region's Single-use Plastics Working Group to stay up-to-date with best practices • Review of single-use plastics program, diversion tactics, and

				community awareness programs throughout the term of Council
10	Other project updates	Ongoing	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LEED Gold certification is being pursued for the Multi-use Recreation Complex

Relevant grants

In 2023, the Town submitted a number of competitive grant funding applications to support various environmental initiatives. Below is a status update:

Grant program	Grant funder	Project	Application status
Catch Basin Traps Funding	Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority (LSRCA)	LittaTrap Pilot Project	Awarded and active
Natural Infrastructure Fund	Infrastructure Canada	Hedge Road Rehabilitation (Stabilization) Project	Under review
Disaster Mitigation and Adaptation Fund	Infrastructure Canada	Hedge Road Rehabilitation (Projects A-D)	Under review
Urban Tree Planting to Mitigate Extreme Heat	York Region	Boulevard and park tree planting – 2024-25	Under review
EV ChargeON	Province of Ontario – Ministry of Transportation	EV Charging Station Infrastructure	Under review