

THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF GEORGINA

REPORT NO. SI-2024-0022

**FOR THE CONSIDERATION OF
COUNCIL**

November 20, 2024

SUBJECT: CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION PLAN – STATUS UPDATE

1. RECOMMENDATION:

- 1. That Council receive Report No. SI-2024-0022, prepared by the Corporate Strategy and Transformation Division, Strategic Initiatives Department dated November 20, 2024 respecting the Climate Change Action Plan - Status Update; and**
- 2. That Council direct staff to apply for a funding opportunity from the Federation of Canadian Municipalities' Local Leadership for Climate Adaptation initiative for the Climate Change Action Plan development.**

2. PURPOSE:

This report provides Council with an overview of the progress to date on the Climate Change Action Plan development, including an overview of the Risk Assessment and Greenhouse Gas Inventories before the development of corresponding climate actions.

The report also seeks Council approval to apply for cost-share funding for the Action Plan development through the Federation of Canadian Municipalities' Local Leadership for Climate Adaptation initiative.

3. BACKGROUND:

In the 2023-2027 Corporate Strategic Plan, a Climate Change Action Plan (CCAP) was identified as a priority initiative.

This capital project was approved through the 2024 budget with the goals to:

- Identify cost-saving and innovative opportunities
- Secure additional grant funding
- Strengthen community well-being and resilience
- Enhance community engagement
- Strengthen partnerships

4. ANALYSIS:

4.1 Update on Project Phases Completed

Georgina's Climate Change Action Plan has just completed the fourth phase of the following five-phase development process:

Phase 1: Project Planning (February – April 2024) – completed:

- Hired Climate Initiatives Lead (Research Analyst Instructor, Epidemiologist, Residential Energy Advisor) and Climate Initiatives Advisor (Ph.D., Geography/Atmospheric Science (Climate Modelling), Senior Climatologist)
- Created Project Charter, Stakeholder Register, Data Source Inventory
- Completed kick-off presentations to internal departments and sponsors

Phase 2: Background Research (May – June 2024) – completed:

- Conducted Environmental Scan of internal policies, plans, and external reports
- Developed a Community Engagement Plan
- Conducted research, analysis and identified climate hazards and projections for Georgina in 2050 based on data from the Ontario Provincial Climate Change Impact Assessment and local context
- Consulted with key external partners (York Region, Lake Simcoe Regional Conservation Authority), Council and Town Committees (Environmental, Economic, Agricultural) on strengths, weaknesses, threats and opportunities
- Initiated Greenhouse Gas inventories for Town of Georgina and community using corporate consumption data and data from The Atmospheric Fund

Phase 3: Stakeholder Engagement (July – August 2024) – completed:

- Developed and launched staff survey and public survey
- Engaged with public, staff and stakeholders about climate change concerns, impacts, actions and co-benefits.
- Over 500 members of the public engaged:
 - 211 survey responses
 - 300 in-person interactions at 8 community events
- Over 100 staff members engaged:
 - 90 survey responses
 - 6 cross-departmental meetings
- Over 25 stakeholder groups engaged:
 - 8 focus group sessions plus individual meetings by request

Table 1: List of Stakeholders Engaged

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chippewas of Georgina Island First Nation • York Region • Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority (LSRCA) • Federation of Agriculture (York Chapter) • Soil and Crop Association (York Region) • Georgina Community Action Table • Routes Connecting Communities • Central Counties Tourism • Ontario Ministry of Environment, Conservation, Parks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • York Region Environmental Alliance • Rescue Lake Simcoe Coalition • Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA) • Southlake Regional Health Centre • Georgina Builders Association • Jericho Youth Services • Lake Simcoe Watch • Local business owners
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Phase 4: Risk Prioritization (September – November 2024) – completed:

- Used Risk Assessment matrix to prioritize climate risks in Georgina based on the Ontario Provincial Climate Change Impact Assessment methods and feedback from stakeholder engagement
- Validated priority risks through consultation with departments and stakeholders
- Validated of Greenhouse Gas Inventory results with departments

4.2 Risk Prioritization Results

After completing Phases 1-4, data from the Ontario Provincial Climate Change Impact Assessment and extensive stakeholder feedback ranked the following climate hazards as the highest risks in Georgina:

- Extreme heat
- Lake Simcoe water quality decrease and temperature increase
- Warmer, wetter winters
- Extreme precipitation.

The hazards that were found to be lower risk are wildfire smoke from distant fires, annual precipitation and extreme cold.

The sector sub-categories that were found to be most impacted by climate risks are:

- Unhoused people
- People living with low income
- Seniors and children
- Outdoor workers including firefighters
- People with cardiac or respiratory medical conditions and/or disabilities
- Chippewas of Georgina Island First Nation
- Livestock, field crops and fruit/ vegetable farmers
- Electrical power generation and demand
- Stormwater management

- Wetlands and Lake Simcoe
- Coldwater fish, migratory songbirds and insects
- Summer recreation and tourism (outdoor arts, entertainment, and fishing)
- Winter recreation

The sector sub-categories that were found to be lower risk are:

- Buildings
- Roads and bridges
- Sewage treatment
- Water supply and irrigation
- Mammals
- Warmwater fish
- Coniferous forests
- Construction
- Manufacturing
- Retail trade
- Transportation
- Telecommunications

Attachment 1 provides more details about the risk levels and impacts on slides 9 to 14.

4.3 Greenhouse Gas Inventory Results

In addition to assessing the climate risks that require adaptation, the greenhouse gas inventories identify mitigation opportunities. The corporate greenhouse gas inventory found that the Town of Georgina emits approximately 2,100 metric tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent per year, with municipal buildings contributing to over 50% of these emissions, and the municipal fleet contributing to over one third.

The community greenhouse gas inventory from The Atmospheric Fund for York Region found that 53% of community emissions come from transportation, and 43% come from buildings. Staff are waiting on the community greenhouse gas inventory results for Georgina to be provided from The Atmospheric Fund, expected in late November 2024.

4.4 Next Steps – Action Plan Development

The next phase of the Climate Change Action Plan development will be to create an action plan that addresses the priority risks and opportunities with associated costs and benefits. The comprehensive Climate Change Action Plan will include details of all five phases of the project and will be presented to Council in Q2, 2025 for endorsement.

4.5 Funding Opportunity for Action Plan Development

The Federation of Canadian Municipalities recently launched the Local Leadership for Climate Adaptation initiative which provides up to 85% cost-share funding to develop an adaptation plan that outline actions to mitigate climate risks and enhance resilience across various sectors within the municipality, based on a climate risk assessment. As staff are about to begin the development of the action plan, the Town is well-poised to receive cost-share funding for this development. Staff intend to submit a funding application by the November 29th 2024 deadline, requesting approximately \$50,000, following Council direction.

5. RELATIONSHIP TO STRATEGIC PLAN:

The initiative supports the 2023-2027 Corporate Strategic Plan:

Pillar	Advancing Environmental Sustainability
Goal	Support Georgina's resilience through environmental sustainability and climate mitigation and adaptation
Initiative	Develop Climate Change Action Plan to define a path forward for the Town that focuses on high value initiatives

6. FINANCIAL AND BUDGETARY IMPACT:

The project budget of \$250,000 was approved by Council through the business case 24-CI-SI-02.

In addition, staff intend to apply for approximately \$50,000 in cost-share funding through the Federation of Canadian Municipalities' Local Leadership for Climate Adaptation initiative which will offset this amount in the budget approved in business case 24-CI-SI-02.

7. PUBLIC CONSULTATION AND NOTICE REQUIREMENTS:

There is no statutory requirement to provide notice of this report.

8. CONCLUSION:

Staff have completed the first four phases of the Climate Change Action Plan development which included project planning, background research, stakeholder engagement, and risk prioritization.

From these phases, staff have identified extreme heat, Lake Simcoe water quality and temperature, warmer and wetter winters, and extreme precipitation as the priority risks to be addressed through the action plan development. The findings from the

community and corporate greenhouse gas inventories will also inform opportunities for mitigation and potential cost savings.

In the final phase of the project, staff will compile and prioritize actions that address the priority risk and opportunities with the ultimate goals of strengthening community well-being and resilience, reducing Town costs, securing additional grant funding, enhancing community engagement, and strengthening partnerships. Staff intend to apply to the Federation of Canadian Municipalities' Local Leadership for Climate Adaptation initiative to offset a portion of the approved budget for the action plan development. The action plan will be presented to Council in Q2, 2025 which will include an implementation and communication plan.

APPROVALS

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Attachments:

Attachment 1: Climate Change Action Plan Status Update Presentation