

DATE: May 11, 2020

TO: MAYOR AND COUNCIL

NAME AND TITLE: Dave Dyer, General Manager, Infrastructure and Public Works

SUBJECT: 2020 Climate Change Mitigation Plan

ATTACHMENT(S):

1. 2020 Climate Change Mitigation Plan – Public Facing Document
2. 2020 Climate Change Mitigation Plan – Technical Report
3. PowerPoint Presentation

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That Council APPROVES the 2020 Climate Change Mitigation Plan attached to the report dated May 4, 2020 from the General Manager of Infrastructure and Public Works, titled “2020 Climate Change Mitigation Plan.”

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this report is to present the 2020 Climate Change Mitigation Plan (2020 CCMP) for Council’s consideration. The 2020 CCMP includes updated greenhouse gas (GHG) emission inventories, reduction targets and actions that can be taken to achieve these targets. This Plan will replace the 2007 Energy and Greenhouse Gas Management Plan and inform a City of Prince George Climate Action Strategy, which will prioritize actions in this CCMP as well as actions related to adaptation and the relationship of climate action community development.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

The 2020 CCMP will help to realize the *myPG* goal to “reduce carbon emissions and adapt to climate change.” Additionally, this work is critical to the “Environmental Leadership and Climate Action” pillar in the City’s annual report and Council’s priority in that section of the annual report to “Monitor and work to decrease greenhouse gas emissions from City operations and the community as a whole.”

BACKGROUND:

The City has a long history of climate action leadership, joining the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) Partners for Climate Protection (PCP) program in 2001 and becoming one of the first communities in Canada to complete the five-milestone program. In January 2018, Council approved an application for grant funding under the *FCM Municipalities for Climate Innovation Program: Climate Change Plans and Studies Grants* (FCM–MCIP) to update the 2007 Energy and Greenhouse Gas Management Plan.

The City received grant approval in 2018 and the final plan and reduction targets must be approved through a Council Resolution before the grant funding will be disbursed to the City. This funding covers up to \$125,000 or 80% of the eligible Project costs.

DISCUSSION:

There is evidence that the climate is changing and the rate of change is greater in northern latitudes. For example, while average global temperatures have increased by 1°C since pre-industrial times (~1800s), the average annual temperature has risen by 1.7 °C in Prince George just since 1942¹.

This proposed Climate Change Mitigation Plan provides guidance to the community on actions to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and conserve energy in order to “mitigate” or minimize climate change impacts. Climate change is associated with the burning of fossil fuels, such as natural gas, gasoline or diesel; therefore, reducing fossil fuel use mitigates future climate change impacts. In addition, climate change mitigation efforts have social, economic and health co-benefits. For example, pursuing energy upgrades in a residential home can result in cost savings while investing in active and public transportation can decrease transportation costs and improve physical and mental well-being.

Over the last decade, the City initiative that has provided the greatest reduction in greenhouse gas emissions has been the City’s Downtown Renewable (District) Energy System. This system uses sawmill residuals from Lakeland Mills to heat nearly a dozen downtown buildings. In fact, it is one of only a handful of municipal energy systems in Canada to use a renewable fuel source. Co-benefits have included keeping energy dollars in the local economy and improving air quality. It is also now a significant asset for the City in attracting additional infrastructure investments that favour projects with low emissions.

EMISSIONS REDUCTION TARGETS AND ACTIONS:

The 2020 CCMP provides updated GHG reduction targets and outlines actions that can assist the City in achieving these targets. The targets will replace the original targets set in 2007, which sought to reduce corporate GHG emissions by 10% and community emissions by 2% below 2002 levels by 2012.

The Government of Canada is committed to reducing GHG emissions by 30% below 2005 levels by 2030, and will be working towards a net-zero emissions future by 2050². Under the CleanBC Plan, the Provincial Government has set targets to reduce GHG emissions by 40% below 2007 levels by 2030, 60% by 2040 and 80% by 2080³. The 2020 CCMP sets the following corporate and community GHG reduction targets:

Target Year	Corporate Targets *	Community Targets**
2025	5% reduction in emissions from 2017 levels.	5% reduction in emissions from 2017 levels.
2030	17% reduction in emissions from 2017 levels.	12% reduction in emissions from 2017 levels.
2040	50% reduction in emissions from 2017 levels.	50% reduction in emissions from 2017 levels.
2050	80% reduction in emissions from 2017 levels.	80% reduction in emissions from 2017 levels.

*corporate emissions include City operations such as energy used in City buildings and fleet

**community emissions include residential and commercial building heat, community vehicle traffic and residential garbage. It does not include industry.

¹ Environment Canada (2019) Historical Data Prince George.

https://climate.weather.gc.ca/historical_data/search_historic_data_e.html

² Government of Canada (2020) Progress towards Canada’s greenhouse gas emissions reduction target.

<https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/environmental-indicators/progress-towards-canada-greenhouse-gas-emissions-reduction-target.html>

³ Province of BC (2019) Climate action gets new teeth with accountability act.

<https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2019ENV0110-002082>

These targets align with the long-term emissions reduction target of the Province and will need to be reflected in the next iteration of the Official Community Plan. The targets and actions were developed in consultation with several City Departments, external stakeholders and the public through workshops, referrals, public open houses and an online survey. Approximately 800 members of the public were engaged through the participation sessions.

To achieve the 2025 and 2030 reduction targets, the 2020 CCMP identifies thirty-four (34) corporate and thirty-five (35) community actions. These actions align with objectives and priorities of several City of Prince George planning documents, such as the Official Community Plan, Transit Future Action Plan, Park Strategy, Economic Development Strategy and the Asset Management Policy.

The Climate Change Mitigation Plan actions fall under six focus areas:

1. Transportation	2. Land Use	3. Buildings
4. Waste Management	5. Renewable Energy	6. Policy, Decision Making and Reporting.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS:

The total cost to complete the 2020 Climate Change Mitigation Plan project is \$139,550 (excluding taxes, Open House materials and City Staff costs). This project is funded from the FCM–MCIP program in the amount of 80% of eligible costs to a maximum of \$125,000. The City’s contribution is funded from an internal reserve dedicated to climate change mitigation and GHG reduction initiatives funded from Carbon Tax Credits. In order for funds to be paid to the City from the FCM–MCIP program, the final 2020 CCMP including targets and actions must be approved by Council.

PUBLIC ROLLOUT AND COMMUNICATION OF PLAN:

Public education is an important component of any Climate Change Mitigation Plan. Communication of the actions within the 2020 CCMP is essential for achieving the action items and targets laid out in the plan. It is important to follow up with all those who were involved in the process to create actions and demonstrate that their participation was incorporated. Sharing information on the City’s 2020 CCMP may also empower and inspire residents and businesses to undertake climate actions that provide important co-benefits, such as utilizing active modes of transportation or installing energy retrofits to reduce energy bills. Public participants in the 2020 CCMP engagement process expressed their collective interest in the City’s plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. To ensure public health measures related to COVID-19 are met, information sharing events and activities for the public are proposed for later in 2020. In the meantime, this CCMP will be posted on the City website and components of it will be highlighted in various communiques from the City once approved by Council. Interdepartmental meetings are proposed to occur virtually over the summer months to discuss implementation into five-year work plans through the Climate Action Strategy.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION:

The 2020 Climate Change Mitigation Plan (CCMP) is presented to Council for approval. The updated final plan sets new greenhouse gas reduction targets to align with long-term targets set by the Provincial Government and identifies actions to achieve these targets. Extensive consultation with stakeholders and the public guided the development of the 2020 CCMP targets and actions. Despite current restrictions for public meetings and gatherings, the City is committed to communicating this CCMP through various means. These include providing information to the media, providing this updated CCMP on the City’s website, and informing the community about elements of the CCMP through social media posts. We will also work with relevant local organizations to provide information about the CCMP through diverse networks. Next steps involve the production of a Climate Action Strategy which will include the development of five-year work plans.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

Dave Dyer, General Manager, Infrastructure and Public Works

PREPARED BY: Andrea Byrne, Environmental Coordinator, Environmental Services

APPROVED:

Kathleen Soltis, City Manager

Meeting Date: 2020/05/25