

Region of Waterloo

Planning, Development, and Legislative Services

Community Planning

To: Planning and Works Committee

Meeting Date: August 15, 2023

Report Title: ClimateActionWR – Collaborative Funding Agreement

1. Recommendation

That the Regional Municipality of Waterloo extend the collaborative funding agreement with the Cities of Cambridge, Kitchener and Waterloo for an additional five year period to fund ClimateActionWR, requiring a total contribution of \$315,380, as outlined in report PDL-CPL-23-024, dated August 15, 2023.

2. Purpose / Issue:

To request Council endorsement to extend a collaborative funding partnership.

3. Strategic Plan:

The collaborative funding arrangement helps achieve Strategic Objectives 3 Environment and Climate Action, and 2 Sustainable Transportation, as well as Actions 3.1 Reduce greenhouse gas emissions; 3.5 Promote the efficient use of urban land, and protect and enhance agricultural and natural areas; and 2.3 Increase participation in active forms of transportation (cycling and walking). It also advances our strategic imperatives, including: balancing rural and urban communities; fostering partnerships; taking climate action; and efficiency, effectiveness and value for money.

4. Report Highlights:

- To implement the first region-wide Climate Action Plan (2010-2020), the Cities of Cambridge, Kitchener and Waterloo, as well as Reep Green Solutions and Sustainable Waterloo Region established ClimateActionWR (Report CR-FM-13-022, dated December 3, 2013). Beginning in 2019, ClimateActionWR led the development of TransformWR, the 30-year strategy and 10-year plan for climate action in Waterloo Region.
- In 2021, Area Municipal and Regional Councils unanimously adopted TransformWR, as well as an ambitious community greenhouse gas (GHG) target of a 50% reduction in emissions by 2030, below 2010 levels.

- Most recently, ClimateActionWR has focused on the following initiatives:
 - Preparing and presenting to municipal councils *Our Progress, Our Path 2020*, the 2nd iteration of the community GHG inventory report (PDL-CPL-23-005);
 - Developing a dynamic monitoring and reporting platform to increase accountability and provide educational opportunities; and
 - Further engaging the Townships of North Dumfries, Wellesley, Wilmot, and Woolwich to strengthen relationships and support the implementation of actions adopted in TransformWR.
- As climate action is inherently a collective pursuit, continuing and enlarging the ClimateActionWR collaborative partnership is recommended to support the implementation of TransformWR.
- Staff recommend extending the collaborative funding agreement for an additional five years (2023 – 2027). The Region’s annual contribution of \$60,000 is included in the 2023 operating budget.

5. Background:

Since 2013, the Region of Waterloo has held a collaborative agreement with Reep Green Solutions and Sustainable Waterloo Region to operate the ClimateActionWR program. To fund this program, the Region of Waterloo holds a secondary agreement with the City of Cambridge, City of Kitchener, and City of Waterloo.

The aim of ClimateActionWR program is to achieve a GHG emissions reduction target of 80% by 2050 below 2010 levels through the implementation of the TransformWR strategy. The program objectives are to:

1. Collaborate among municipalities and other organizations to optimize collective impact by leveraging knowledge, resources, and leadership of partnership organizations, and providing a regional perspective on key collective opportunities, barriers and priorities;
2. Move actions towards implementation, advance opportunities, and identify new initiatives for consideration by prioritizing efforts according to evolving circumstances, convening stakeholders to identify leaders for new initiatives, and working to leverage partners’ successes;
3. Engage the community by facilitating open dialogue and increasing stakeholder participation in local programs; and
4. Monitor action and report measurable results by collecting, summarizing and communicating progress towards community targets.

In 2022, ClimateActionWR staff conducted a review of its governance structure to identify opportunities to increase impact. In 2024, a new governance structure will be implemented that will engage a greater number of stakeholders and extend the reach and sphere of influence of this collaborative.

6. Communication and Engagement with Area Municipalities and the Public

Area Municipalities:

All eight municipalities in Waterloo Region participate as members of this collaborative; ClimateActionWR staff convene the collaborative on a bi-monthly basis. In addition, funding partners meet quarterly as members of the Management Committee for the purpose of establishing strategic priorities, reviewing annual work plans, and evaluating progress.

Public:

ClimateActionWR has conducted extensive community consultation as part of the development of TransformWR, with more than 1,600 residents providing feedback through events, workshops, interviews, focus groups, and surveys. ClimateActionWR staff regularly participate in or host community events in order to showcase the work of the collaborative, seek input from residents, and encourage climate action across the community.

7. Financial Implications:

A five year extension to the collaborative funding agreement would require a total Regional contribution of \$315,380 over the next five years (2023-2027) as outlined in Table 1.

Table 1: Annual Financial Contribution to ClimateActionWR for 2023 to 2027

Year	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027
Regional contribution (2024-2027 includes an annual cost of living adjustment of 2.5%)	\$60,000	\$61,500	\$63,038	\$64,613	\$66,229
5 Year Total					\$315,380

The approved 2023 Community Planning operating budget includes a provision of \$60,000 for the Region's contribution to this work. Annual contributions equal to the Region's are anticipated from the Cities of Cambridge, Kitchener and Waterloo, per the terms of the agreement between the municipalities.

8. Conclusion / Next Steps:

Motivated by the findings of the most recent community GHG emissions inventory (PDL-CPL-23-005), the ClimateActionWR collaborative will work toward achieving the following transformational changes by 2050, as outlined in TransformWR:

1. Most trips are taken using active transportation, with the support of a robust

public transit system.

2. Remaining personal and commercial vehicles are zero emissions vehicles.
3. Waterloo Region uses less, wastes less, and no longer disposes of organic matter in landfills.
4. Waterloo Region has a thriving local food system built on local farming and food production and processing that feeds much of our community.
5. Waterloo Region has leveraged reducing GHG emissions to increase equity, prosperity, and resiliency for all.

9. Attachments:

Nil

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