



# Committee Report

<b>To:</b>	Warden Hicks and Members of Grey County Council
<b>Committee Date:</b>	February 28, 2019
<b>Subject / Report No:</b>	PDR-CW-13-19
<b>Title:</b>	Climate Change Action Plan Student Report
<b>Prepared by:</b>	Scott Taylor
<b>Reviewed by:</b>	Randy Scherzer
<b>Lower Tier(s) Affected:</b>	All Municipalities in Grey County
<b>Status:</b>	Recommendation adopted by Committee of the Whole as presented as per Resolution <i>CW50-19</i> ; Endorsed by County Council on March 14, 2019 as per Resolution <i>CC24-19</i> .

## Recommendation

- 1. That Report PDR-CW-13-19 regarding the University of Guelph student project on a Climate Change Action Plan for Grey County be received for information.**

## Executive Summary

The County is partnering with students from University of Guelph Masters of Rural Planning and Development program to undertake a study on a Climate Change Action Plan for Grey County. This study is being completed as part of the students' course work for their Masters in Planning, and will benefit the County and member municipalities. As part of the study, the students will provide high level policy recommendations to combat climate change, as well as strategies for operational improvements that could help lower the County's impact. Outreach in the form of stakeholder interviews and/or a survey, in addition to background research, and a review of other municipal approaches, will be completed to inform this study. The students will complete and present their findings in April 2019.

## Background and Discussion

All levels of government need to show leadership, and take proactive steps to combat climate change. As part of the County's recent Recolour Grey consultation process, staff heard numerous times that climate change mitigation is important to Grey County residents and employers. County Planning staff are partnering with students from University of Guelph Masters of Rural Planning and Development program to study this issue further. Alexa-Rae Valente, Louis Helps, and Gursewak Singh will be working on a report that makes

recommendations to the County to provide actionable steps the County can take to help combat climate change.

The study process will include;

- a jurisdictional scan of other county and municipal approaches to combat climate change, working towards overall greenhouse gas reduction and climate change preparedness,
- reviewing any Federal/Provincial legislation or policy to be adhered to, and
- a survey of select Grey County and member municipal staff to get their opinions on policy or operational improvements that could be considered for this plan.

The product would be a report outlining high level recommendations to develop a Climate Change Action Plan. This report may include recommendations on;

- official plan policies, zoning provisions, or general design standards and best practices,
- infrastructure standards or upgrades with the aim of creating more resiliency (e.g. paved shoulders, stormwater facilities, etc.), and/or
- improvement considerations for County operations beyond land use planning (e.g. building improvements, vehicle requirements, etc.).

Staff are cognizant that the scope of this study could become overwhelming if not defined properly. Furthermore, the student team is working within a very limited timeframe (the report needs to be completed by early April 2019), which is partnered with their workload from other classes as well. County staff see this student partnership project as a 'first step' towards a County strategy. Following the completion of this student project, the County can build on key pieces from the student's work, to develop a more robust 'made-in-Grey' Climate Change Action Plan later in 2019.

As part of this study, County staff will supply background resources to the students and connect them to County and municipal staff for their input on this project.

The County has been lucky enough to partner with the University of Guelph Masters of Rural Planning and Development program on three other occasions, and in all instances received high quality results. The results of these three past studies have been incorporated into Recolour Grey.

The results of this study have been tentatively slated to be presented at the April 11, 2019 Committee of the Whole meeting.

## Legal and Legislated Requirements

There are no legal or legislative considerations at this time.

## Financial and Resource Implications

The work completed by the student consulting team is without cost to the County, and done as part of the coursework for their master's degree. County staff are grateful to the students' efforts in this regard, and would note that having to pay a consultant to complete a similar study would likely cost between \$25,000 - \$35,000.

## Relevant Consultation

Internal: Planning, Transportation Services, Housing, Long Term Care, Information Technology, Paramedic Services, Tourism, Grey Roots, Finance, Corporate Services, and Economic Development staff will all be consulted as part of this study.

External: Municipal staff will be consulted as part of this study.

## Appendices and Attachments

*None*