

Staff Report

Presented By: Mark Paoli, Director of Development Services

Meeting Date: July 7, 2025

Subject: FCM Climate Change Program Analysis and Recommendations

Attachment(s): Partners for Climate Protection Program Sub-Committee Report
FCM PCP Resolution

Recommendation

That Council endorse the Town of Saugeen Shores joining the Federation of Canadian Municipalities Partners for Climate Protection Program; and

That Council refer to the Striking Committee for recommendations on the staff and Council point of contact appointments.

Report Summary

In Q4 of 2024, the Environmental Ad-Hoc Advisory Committee provided a report to Council with a series of recommendations towards advancing environmental sustainability in Saugeen Shores. Council referred the Committee's recommendations to staff to report back on the implementation. This report summarizes the analysis that has been carried out with specific regard to the climate change recommendation.

Background/Analysis

The Environmental Ad-Hoc Advisory Committee established a Sub-Committee to focus on a review of climate change programs offered by the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM). The Sub-Committee provided a background report (attached) with the following recommendation which was set out in two steps:

- Step 1: That the Town of Saugeen Shores joins the FCM Partners for Climate Protection (PCP) Program first, to build momentum within the community on local climate action.
- Step 2: That the Town of Saugeen Shores join the ICLEI (International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives, which is affiliated with FCM) Building Adaptive and Resilience Communities (BARC) program as soon as possible as there is greater funding available for municipalities with climate adaptation plans (i.e. through Infrastructure Canada's Green Municipal Fund grants program).

The Committee also offered the following rationale for their recommendation (excerpt from the report):

“The Town of Saugeen Shores is already advancing many important projects and plans whose activities could be included as climate mitigation measures, such as tree planting, maintenance and conservation measures proposed in the Urban Tree Canopy Plan and recommendations set out in the Town Master Drainage Plan. The Town already has in place some of the resources and structures that would be required under the PCP. Joining the PCP would provide the Town with access to a bank of resources, engaged partners, calculators, example climate change plans, etc. that would all support the Town in moving through the five-step Milestone Framework. Once the activities in the PCP are sufficiently underway, the Town would be well-positioned to join BARC and gain access to additional resources and funding opportunities to continue creating positive change in Saugeen Shores.”

Partners for Climate Protection Program

The FCM's PCP program ([FCM PCP website](#)) is a national network of over 500 municipalities (to-date) with the shared goal of taking action against climate change by reducing local greenhouse gas emissions. The program is primarily focused on climate mitigation, which means avoiding and reducing emissions of heat-trapping gases into the atmosphere to prevent further warming.

Examples of mitigation include transitioning from fossil fuel-fired power to renewable energy, reducing energy demand through increased efficiency, restoring and maintaining natural habitats and forests that are carbon sinks, etc. PCP membership is free and gives municipalities access to tools, networking venues, events, case studies and other informational resources. Members also have access to a PCP Hub which offers resources about local climate and energy initiatives, and provides a space for members to connect, ask questions about their mitigation activities, and share successes. In 2022, the PCP network had over 500 members.

Municipalities in the PCP move through a five-step Milestone Framework (MF) and set mid-term and long-term targets for GHG emissions reductions and must complete the MF within ten years of joining the program.

Milestone 1: Create a baseline inventory of emissions, energy use, and energy spending. Forecast future energy demand trends in your community.

- Municipalities can choose to focus on the community or the corporate (meaning the Town as a corporation) sector. While the corporate sector only accounts for 2% of a municipality's energy use, on average, the data is often much easier to collect than the community sector and is often recommended as a starting point for new members.
- Saugeen Shores already has much of the data needed through preparation of the Conservation and Demand Management Plan.

Milestone 2: Determine emissions reduction targets, including a baseline year, a target year, and the percent change from the baseline year.

- Council must adopt the resolution that sets these targets.

Milestone 3: Develop a local climate change plan to describe how the municipality will achieve the emissions reduction targets.

- This plan often includes community partner engagement and will require the Town to engage with the County of Bruce to ensure initiatives align and are complementary.
- The climate change plan describes costs for activities, potential funding sources, and the municipal departments that will implement the activities.

Milestone 4: Implement the projects/activities outlined in the climate change plan.

- This milestone will include an implementation schedule and must link to the municipal budget.

Milestone 5: Monitor the progress of the projects and report on the GHGs reduced from each measure.

Joining the PCP

The PCP is free for municipalities to join. The requirements to join and participate are:

- Submitting a joining resolution from Council (attached).
- Appointing one staff member and one elected official to be the main PCP contacts.
- Moving through the Milestone Framework within 10 years of joining.
- Reporting on progress at least once every two years.
- Actively participating in program activities and sharing experience with other members.

If the Town were to join the PCP, the Town would get access to a library of resources from PCP to support municipalities in moving through each Milestone, as well as access to support from PCP. For example, PCP has an online calculator that computes Greenhouse Gas emissions.

Municipal Participation in Grey-Bruce

There are several municipalities in the wider Saugeen Shores region that have joined the PCP and are at various stages of progress. The municipalities are listed below along with an indication of whether there are staff positions related to the climate change program.

Table 1: List of Municipalities who have joined the PCP

Municipalities	Related Staff Positions	FCM Program Involvement
Brockton	No Specific Role Identified	PCP
Northern Bruce Peninsula	No Specific Role Identified	PCP
Minto	No Specific Role Identified	PCP
West Grey	Environment and Capital Projects Officer in West Grey	Partners for Climate Protection (PCP)
Grey Highlands	Environmental Compliance Specialist	PCP
Owen Sound	Supervisor of Environmental Services	PCP
Collingwood	Climate Change Specialist (Contract 2021-2024)	PCP
Goderich	Asset Management and Environmental Services Manager	PCP
North Perth	Manager of Environmental Services	PCP
Blue Mountains	Sustainability Coordinator	PCP, Building Adaptive & Resilient Communities (BARC)
Huron-Kinloss	Manager of Environmental Services	PCP, BARC
Georgian Bluffs	Environmental Initiatives Coordinator	PCP, BARC
Meaford	Urban Forestry Coordinator Environmental Services Student (Seasonal)	BARC

The above shows that there is a variety of municipal approaches to providing internal supports for participating in the programs, as each municipality will have its own structures and processes for addressing the service.

Building Adaptive and Resilient Communities (BARC)

Another program available through FCM is their partnership with ICLEI's Building Adaptive and Resilient Communities (BARC) program, which is focused on climate adaptation. More specifically, the program is geared to develop, implement and monitor an Adaptation and Mitigation Plan.

Adaptation is more extensive than mitigation and includes altering behaviour, systems, and ways of life to protect ourselves, economies, and environments from the impacts of climate change. Examples of adaptation include ensuring infrastructure can withstand more extreme weather conditions, or planting species that can thrive in a hotter and drier environment. Developing and implementing an Adaptation and Mitigation Plan is more onerous than a Climate Change Action Plan (which is one of the products of the PCP).

There is a \$20,000 fee to join BARC.

Implementation Analysis

This section discusses implementation of the above-noted recommendation in terms of Strategic Plan and Business Plan overall alignment, staff resources and structure, and budget implications.

Strategic Plan

The recommendation is aligned in principle with the Strategic Plan. More specifically, the Strategic Pillar of Meeting the Needs of a Growing Community under which there is a Direction to “Maintain municipal infrastructure and align with growth”. Addressing climate change implications for infrastructure and facilities is a key consideration in this regard. Moreover, one of the Values of the Strategic Plan is to be Stewards for future generations. The effects of many climate change adaptation and mitigation measures will not be felt directly by current generations while starting now will set the community in a direction to address climate change for future residents and businesses.

Business Plan

The recommendation has synergies with several existing planned projects and initiatives in the 2025 Business Plan. These include:

- Energy Conservation and Demand Management Plan
- 10,000 Tree Planting Initiative
- Tree Inventory and GIS Update
- Southampton South Drainage Environmental Assessment
- Natural Heritage Official Plan Update
- Northshore Trail Restoration
- Water and Wastewater Master Plan
- Waste Management Master Plan

At the same time, it is recognized that the Committee’s recommendations would entail more specific focus and/or deliverables that are not in the 2025 Business Plan or in Future Year Highlights. These would include:

- For the PCP program, a multi-year project to work through the 5 Milestones described above to deliver and then monitor a Climate Change Action Plan.
- For the BARC program, a multi-year project to develop, implement and monitor an Adaptation and Mitigation Plan.

The staff capacity assessment:

- The individual preparing the Climate Change Action Plan would mainly have a coordinating role and does not need to be a technical expert in energy matters.
- A Climate Change Action Plan could be conducted in house with the current staff complement.
- It would take approximately two-three years to complete the Climate Change Action Plan (which is the outcome at Milestone 3) internally.
- Once the Plan is developed, additional staffing and/or consulting needs may be identified. This will be dependent on the types of recommendations made from this

Plan and the level of monitoring required for those recommendations and therefore is difficult to predict at this point.

The assessment of the BARC program:

- Adaptation plans contain more uncertainty, are more complex to manage, and require higher investment and therefore more financial oversight.
- It is a data driven process with more technical expertise required.
- An additional staff person or equivalent multi-year consulting assignment would be required.

Summary

The ESAC Committee's recommendation is aligned in principle with the Strategic Plan and has several areas of synthesis with the Business Plan. Noting that the recommendation has two steps, with an initial commitment to participate in the PCP program to build momentum and capacity, followed by involvement in the BARC program as a future step, the analysis is that the first PCP step can be done with current staff as a multi-year 2026-2028 project, while the BARC project would entail future staffing or consulting commitments in future years (i.e. 2029 and beyond).

Therefore, as there is no cost to join the PCP and noting that the PCP does provide resources, it makes sense to join the PCP now and begin the internal education and program design steps to more fully flesh out the requirements as input to the 2026 Business Plan.

In terms of BARC, it is not required to commit to a decision about participating in that program at this time, while noting that this may be advanced as a Future Year Highlight with further rationale for consideration in the 2026 Business Plan.

Linkages

- Strategic Plan Alignment: Pillar 1: Meeting the Needs of a Growing Community
- Business Plan Alignment: Development Services Major Initiative

Financial Impacts/Source of Funding

No costs or revenue is associated with this report.

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