

## **COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – DECEMBER 2, 2014**

### **CLIMATE CHANGE RISK ASSESSMENT TOOL**

#### **Recommendation**

The Commissioner of Strategic and Corporate Services and the Manager of Environmental Sustainability recommend:

1. That the report be received for informational purposes; and
2. That the City Clerk be authorized to execute the City of Toronto climate change risk assessment tool user agreement.

#### **Contribution to Sustainability**

This report is consistent with the priorities previously set by Council in *Green Directions Vaughan*, the Community Sustainability Environmental Master Plan:

- Goal 5, Action 5.1.4. Include a climate change planning strategy for all City Master Plans. The Strategy should shall assess vulnerability to climate change and address and develop plans for mitigating impacts and remedial responses.

As part of the budget deliberation process, Council approved a 2014 additional resource request for climate change adaptation research. The consultant support provided through this additional resource request would help generate information to further develop the City's understanding of climate change impacts and service areas that would most be affected.

#### **Economic Impact**

The City of Toronto has agreed to license, at no cost, their Climate Change Risk Assessment Tool, which was developed by Deloitte, so Vaughan, Markham and Aurora can undertake a climate change risk assessment. Facilitation of the risk assessment exercise which occurred over a series of 3 days and was cost shared among the participating municipalities.

Any climate change adaptation measures developed as a result of the risk assessment exercise will be brought forward to the City department responsible for that asset for further review and analysis.

#### **Communications Plan**

The Environmental Sustainability area of the City of Vaughan's website will highlight the City of Vaughan's efforts on climate change adaptation. This is consistent with Goal 5 of *Green Directions Vaughan* "To be leaders in advocacy and education on sustainability issues" where "Vaughan is committed to sharing its successes with the community".

#### **Purpose**

The purpose of this report is to seek Committee approval to continue to use the climate change risk assessment tool developed by City of Toronto.

## **Background - Analysis and Options**

Municipal governments are taking action on climate change, and rightly so: communities are the places we live, work, and play; and the effects of climate change will be most acutely felt at the local level.

In May 2011, Council passed a resolution to commit to achieve the milestones set in the Federation of Canadian Municipalities Partners for Climate Protection (PCP) five-milestone framework. The benefits of participating in the PCP program include improving energy tracking and management, identifying where environmental impact is originating and highlighting which areas of reduction will have the largest impact with minimal associated cost and work effort. In Q2, 2014 the City of Vaughan achieved the third milestone of the framework when Council approved the Energy Conservation Demand Management Plan for corporate GHG emissions and the Community Climate Change Action Plan for community GHG emissions.

In 2011, the Regional Municipality of York along with several of the larger municipalities in the Region established a Climate Change Working Group comprised of representatives from each of its area municipalities. The objectives of the Working Group include sharing leading practices on climate change management, comment collaboratively on climate change issues and provide mutual learning and networking.

One of the areas that the Climate Change Working Group expressed interest in exploring further was climate change adaptation. The thinking being that climate change will continue to affect community assets, infrastructure and operations more frequently and with greater impact in the near future.

In Q3, 2014 the Climate Change Working Group decided to move forward with conducting a joint climate change risk assessment on a common service: stormwater and wastewater management. With participation from the City of Vaughan, City of Markham, Town of Aurora, as well as York Region, Toronto Region Conservation Authority and Lake Simcoe Conservation Authority. With the assistance of an outside Consultant this group conducted a three-day climate change risk workshop using the methodology and tool developed by Deloitte for the City of Toronto. The workshops included participants from each participating municipality's sustainability office as well as staff from Public Works, Development Engineering and Risk Management. The workshops were held in October and November 2014 at each of the three municipalities.

The outcomes of the workshop included an increased understanding of climate change risks and leading environmental risk assessment methodologies, a list of identified and prioritized climate change risks for stormwater and wastewater assets as well as the likelihood and consequence for these identified risks. With the knowledge gained the municipalities will be able to conduct additional climate change risk assessments with other municipal departments.

## **Relationship to Vaughan Vision 2020/Strategic Plan**

This report is consistent with the City's strategic objective to lead and promote environmental sustainability. *Green Directions Vaughan* is a component of Vaughan Tomorrow - the City's comprehensive growth management program which is mandated by the City's strategic plan, *Vaughan Vision 2020*. It consists of four linked elements which identify and address the ongoing challenges and opportunities that will shape the future of the City of Vaughan.

## **Regional Implications**

By identifying risks resulting from climate change, Vaughan will demonstrate regional leadership in working to address climate change. Resulting activities could include transportation demand. These initiatives have potential to positively impact the economic, social and environment sustainability of the region.

## **Conclusion**

Through a wide range of initiatives, the City of Vaughan has already demonstrated its commitment to sustainability. *Green Directions Vaughan*, Action 5.1.4, makes reference to assessing vulnerability to climate change and developing plans for mitigating impacts and remedial responses. As part of the budget deliberation process, Council approved a 2014 additional resource request for climate change adaptation research. The consultant support provided through this additional resource request would help generate information to further develop the City's understanding of climate change impacts and service areas that would most be affected. As the scope of the risk exercise was being developed, it was determined that City of Toronto had developed a climate change risk assessment tool that could be made available at no cost to other Greater Area Municipalities. The City of Vaughan partnered with Markham and Aurora to apply the risk assessment tool to stormwater and wastewater activities. Once the City of Vaughan signs the user agreement we will be able to use the City of Toronto tool to assess other operational activities for climate change adaptation measures.

## **Attachments**

N/A

## **Report prepared by:**

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Respectfully submitted,

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