



CORPORATE SERVICES *Staff Report*

REPORT NO: COR-2025-27

TO: Council

SUBMITTED BY: Greg Clark, Director of Corporate Services/CFO

PREPARED BY: Greg Clark, Director of Corporate Services/CFO

REVIEWED BY: Harold O’Krafka, Acting Chief Administrative Officer

DATE: June 2, 2025

SUBJECT: TransformWR 80x50 Strategy - Update

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT Report COR-2025-27 TransformWR 80x50 Strategy – Update be received for information.

SUMMARY:

- Council in 2021 endorsed the TransformWR Strategy
- Minimal progress has been made internally to achieve these goals
- Community goals are reliant on community groups, with the Township having minimal direct control
- Additional resources are required if the Township is meet its internal goals.

BACKGROUND:

At the Council meeting held on March 24, 2025 Councillor Martin put forward the following notice of motion which was approved;

WHEREAS natural gas consumption is a significant contributor to greenhouse gas emissions; and,

WHEREAS natural gas consumption has been increasing rather than decreasing; and,

WHEREAS there is a movement to commit to a 50% reduction of 2010 natural gas greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 for the Township community; and,

WHEREAS the Township has already endorsed the TransformWR strategy which aims to reduce corporate greenhouse gas emissions by 50% (based on 2010 levels) by 2030 and 80% (based on 2010 levels) by 2050 (80by50); and,

WHEREAS the Township acknowledges operations contribute to the overall increase in natural gas consumption, and reductions in these operations could see an overall decrease in greenhouse gas emissions; and,

WHEREAS the Township acknowledges that the community also contributes to the majority of the rise in natural gas consumption, and there are potential strategies and incentives the Township may consider to encourage a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions in both new builds and existing buildings.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED

THAT Council directs Staff to prepare a report within three (3) months that outlines options and recommendations for actions the Township can take to:

Reduce natural gas consumption within Township operations;
Incentivize or require reductions in natural gas consumption in new construction, including both residential and non-residential development;
Support existing homeowners and businesses in reducing natural gas use, through education, partnerships, or other mechanisms.

REPORT:

In June 2021 Wilmot Council approved report COR-2021-022 TransformWR 80x50 which included the following recommendations

THAT the attached TransformWR strategy (Appendix A to report COR 2021-022) be endorsed as the community climate change mitigation strategy for the Township of Wilmot; and further;

THAT Council direct staff across the organization to develop detailed plans to implement the strategy, subject to available funding and resource allocations; and further,

THAT Council direct staff to work with local partners on implementation, monitoring, and reporting progress on the goals outlined in the strategy; and further,

THAT the Township of Wilmot advocate for provincial and federal support and action to achieve the community transformations outlined in the TransformWR strategy.

Since that time there has been some progress internally, purchase of electric vehicles, installation of charging stations, measuring of community natural gas usage. This has only made minor impacts, and the level of GHG within the township continues to rise.

This is due to two main factors, the limited scope of control the Township as an organization has on community emissions, and lack of dedicated resources within the organization to address internal emissions.

To move this initiative forward Council must recognize that the community as a whole is responsible for driving the necessary changes to reduce overall emissions. The community groups that have come together to identify the necessary changes, must lead the work in bring resources and awareness to them. The Township has limited influence in how the community implements these changes. In addition, several of the items that are shown as the Township being a lead of are items that the Region is responsible for, related to Transit services. The Township has a role in advocating and working with regional staff in developing transit strategies, but ultimately, they are left to regional council to approve.

With regards to internal changes that can be undertaken, progress on reducing emissions requires both staff and funding to make the necessary investments. Replacing existing vehicles with electric vehicles generally comes at a higher cost, and in many cases an electric option may not be suitable given the demands on the vehicle. Facilities are top producer of GHG emissions within the Township operations. Reducing these emissions requires a combination of investments, new technology for heating and cooling, improvements to building envelopes to manage heat gain/loss, automation of systems to optimize overall building operations. Even with significant investment, given the age of many of the facilities, bringing them to net zero is not possible. New facilities can be designed and constructed with a net zero impact, this does add up front capital costs and may require higher operating costs depending on the systems utilized.

There is no current costed plan which will provide Council and the public with the impact of meeting the targets endorsed in 2021. A first step in building momentum towards these goals would be to approve funding within the 2026 Operating budget to enable the development of a comprehensive plan focused on the Townships operations, which would inform future budget asks.

ALIGNMENT WITH THE TOWNSHIP OF WILMOT STRATEGIC PLAN:

Healthy Community

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS:

Development of a comprehensive plan would require internal resources to carry out the necessary assessments, develop the project plans, manage the projects and measure the progress against targets. Additional funding would also be required to engage experts in energy usage and management to assist in development of the plan. A budget of \$150-200k

annually would be needed to develop and sustain this plan over the next decade plus. Staff will prepare a more detailed ask as part of the 2026 budget.

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment 1 - COR-2021-022 TransformWR 80x50