



## CORPORATE SERVICES

### *Staff Report*

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REPORT NO: COR 2021-022

TO: Council

SUBMITTED BY: Ashton Romany, CPA Manager of Finance / Deputy Treasurer  
Sustainability Working Group

PREPARED BY: Ashton Romany, CPA Manager of Finance / Deputy Treasurer

REVIEWED BY: Sandy Jackson, Interim CAO

DATE: June 14, 2021

SUBJECT: TransformWR 80x50

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#### RECOMMENDATION:

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.

#### SUMMARY:

This report outlines the TransformWR strategy document that aims to achieve 80% reductions in emissions by 2050 in Waterloo Region.

## BACKGROUND:

Over the past two years, staff representatives of the eight regional municipalities have worked together with REEP Green Solutions and Sustainable Waterloo Region, through the ClimateActionWR collaborative to produce a broad umbrella strategy called TransformWR. Under this strategy, municipalities, businesses, organizations and households will work to transition our community off of fossil fuels.

Based on extensive community and technical consultation and expertise, the strategy was developed using a “backcasting” approach, identifying a community vision for Waterloo Region as a low-carbon community in 2050, and working backward to identify what is required to achieve this. The recommended 80by50 “technical pathway” describes what we need to do to reduce our emissions, and how fast we need to do it.

Based on this technical pathway, the draft strategy identifies six Transformative Changes that must be achieved to reduce emissions and achieve an equitable, prosperous, resilient low-carbon community by 2050. Each transformative change is supported by strategies and actions to achieve it.

The Six Transformative Changes to be achieved by 2050 are as follows:

- 1) Majority of travel is taken using active transportation, with the support of a robust public transit system.
- 2) Remaining personal and commercial vehicles are zero emissions.
- 3) Businesses and households no longer use fossil fuels for heating and cooling, and water heating.
- 4) Waterloo Region uses less, wastes less, and no longer disposes organic matter in landfills.
- 5) Waterloo Region has a thriving local food system built on local farming and food processing that feeds much of our community.
- 6) Waterloo Region has leveraged reducing GHG emissions to increase equity, prosperity, and resiliency for all.

As an interim target, the strategy contains a 10-year plan for work to be completed in the next decade to:

- 1) Reach an interim target of 30% by 2030
- 2) Lay the groundwork to substantially transform Waterloo Region by 2050.

Bold and immediate action is needed to achieve GHG reductions, and to ensure that we are doing everything we can locally to reduce GHG emissions and do our part in achieving the Paris Agreement objectives. With increased support from other levels of government, it may be possible to exceed this target.

In April 2021, the Sustainability Working Group (SWG) received a presentation on the strategy by Samantha Tremmel from ClimateActionWR. This initiative was then fully supported by the SWG.

## REPORT:

Municipalities are key capacity holders in the transition to a low-carbon community, and as a result, this strategy is intended to guide bold and immediate action by municipalities across Waterloo Region over the next 30 years. The strategy expects the same bold and immediate action from other organizations, businesses, and individuals, and identifies ways to support them in this work. A summary of the actions that Wilmot is responsible for as a co-lead, collaborator, supporter, and participating organization is available in Appendix B.

The TransformWR strategy sets out aggressive actions and timelines to meet the 2030 target of 30% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. The strategy identifies 78 actions required to reach that target. Rural areas in the region, including Wilmot, are identified as the co-lead for 24 actions. Wilmot will work collaboratively with area municipalities on these items where applicable.

Implementing actions identified in the strategy will require funding as approved or secured by the municipality, in addition to anticipated financial support from higher levels of government.

Achieving the strategic goals in a timely and effective manner requires the staff capacity and expertise to implement and advise on the actions. Moving forward with the strategy, consideration for a partnership with Regional Townships to share in resources to achieve best outcomes, as well as benefit from efficiencies of scale, may be required.

## Area Municipality Communication and Public/Stakeholder Engagement:

Community consultation was a key component of the project throughout the strategy development process. Approximately 1,600 community members were engaged during the strategy development process.

More recently, the draft TransformWR strategy was available for public consultation on the EngageWR platform from March 10 to April 12, 2021. During this period, more than 3000 individuals visited the project page, and more than 500 downloaded the full strategy document. The feedback survey was completed by 364 visitors. A summary of what was received in this final consultation, and the changes made in response are included as Appendix C.

Members of the ClimateActionWR collaborative team have facilitated consultation with staff throughout their municipalities, and staff at all eight Municipalities are recommending approval of the strategy by their councils.

## Implementation:

The implementation plan would detail actions that could be accomplished with existing township resources as well as identify additional resources that would be required to accomplish the remaining actions.

Each department will be asked to consider and include actions outlined in the TransformWR strategy in their annual budgets for council approval.

#### ALIGNMENT WITH THE TOWNSHIP OF WILMOT STRATEGIC PLAN:

This strategy is aligned with the Strategic Plan goal of Environmental Protection.

#### FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS:

ClimateActionWR, with support from the Region and all Area Municipalities, received funding from the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) through its Transition 2050 program to develop the TransformWR strategy. Annual operating funding for the ClimateActionWR program is provided to Reep Green Solutions and Sustainable Waterloo Region by the Region of Waterloo and the Cities of Cambridge, Kitchener, and Waterloo.

Implementing of several actions identified in the strategy will require funding as approved by the municipality, in addition to anticipated financial support from higher levels of government.

Future consideration of area Townships sharing resources to implement the actions outlined in the strategy may demonstrate a need for additional funding. Any funding needs will be included in future operating and capital budgets.

#### ATTACHMENTS:

Appendix A - TransformWR: Waterloo Region's transition to an equitable, prosperous, resilient, low carbon community TransformWR Strategy

Appendix B - Summary of Municipal Actions - Township of Wilmot

Appendix C – Final Community Consultation Results Summary

Appendix D - Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) about TransformWR