

NOVEMBER 6, 2024

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE REPORT

REPORT NO. CW-086-2024

ENVIRONMENTAL LEADERSHIP CANADA - MUNICIPAL CLIMATE INTERN PROGRAM

**KRYSTIN STITT
PROJECT MANAGEMENT SPECIALIST**

RECOMMENDATIONS

For information purposes.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Counties are required to contribute \$3,000 to the Municipal Climate Intern (MCI) Program, which will be included in the 2025 operating budget. The MCI program is primarily funded by foundation grants, and the intern will receive a monthly stipend of \$2,900, along with travel assistance and professional development funding provided by Environmental Leadership Canada.

CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

This internship will directly contribute to the advancement of the Counties' Climate Change Action Plan by increasing capacity to gather and analyze climate data. The intern will support efforts to compile emissions inventories and track progress toward reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, advancing our overall climate mitigation and adaptation goals.

ACCESSIBILITY CONSIDERATIONS

The Counties are committed to providing a welcoming, inclusive, and accessible environment for the intern, ensuring compliance with accessibility regulations and accommodating individual needs.

COMMUNICATIONS CONSIDERATIONS

Internal and external communications will be coordinated to highlight the start of the internship program, its objectives, and how it will support the Counties' Climate Change Action Plan. Collaboration with the Task Force, Counties' staff, member and partner municipal staff, and Environmental Leadership Canada will be emphasized, and the initiative will be promoted through relevant channels to raise awareness of climate action efforts.

BACKGROUND

In July 2022, the Committee of the Whole directed staff to initiate discussions with local Chief Administrative Officers (CAOs) to develop a strategy for climate change adaptation and mitigation in Leeds and Grenville. A climate change survey was circulated among member and partner municipalities to assess ongoing climate initiatives and to gather input on how municipalities wanted to participate in the development of a Counties-wide climate strategy. The survey revealed while climate change initiatives were in their infancy, there was widespread support for the development of a comprehensive strategy.

The Counties have experienced several extreme weather events, including flooding, severe storms, and hotter summers. These events pose significant risks to infrastructure and the local economy. Recognizing these challenges, the Counties' adopted a Climate Change Action Plan in March of 2023. Following the adoption and formation of the Task Force, the Counties initiated collaboration with Queen's University and the Smith School

of Business to develop a dashboard system to monitor and manage climate data from local municipalities. This data will be foundational in establishing baselines, tracking GHG emissions and identifying areas for improvement.

In September, Counties' staff submitted an Expression of Interest to Environmental Leadership Canada to be considered as a host municipality of the 2024-2025 Municipal Climate Intern Program and were successful. The Municipal Climate Intern, supported by Environmental Leadership Canada, will be tasked with working alongside local municipalities to gather and analyze this data, helping to create an emissions overview and guide the Counties' climate action efforts. The intern's role is aligned with broader national and provincial climate objectives, including Canada's commitment to net-zero emissions by 2050. The intern will start between January 27th and February 3rd, 2025, and work for six months with Counties staff. The Municipal Climate Intern Program is in its second year, after a successful first year where interns partnered with the County of Lanark, County of Frontenac, and the United Counties of Stormont-Dundas-Glengarry.

DISCUSSION/ALTERNATIVES

The Municipal Climate Intern will provide essential human resource capacity to help progress the Counties' Climate Action Plan, a key goal under the Strategic Initiatives Framework. Their work will focus on collecting and compiling climate data across our local municipalities, creating a comprehensive overview of the Counties' emissions profile. This baseline will allow the Counties to create and measure progress against reduction targets and inform future climate-related decisions.

ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC INITIATIVES FRAMEWORK

<u>Pillar 1</u>	Invest in roads, bridges, infrastructure, and sustainable growth
<u>Goal 1.5</u>	Plan to mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change and steward our natural environment
<u>Initiative 1.5.1</u>	Implement County Climate Change Action Plan

ATTACHMENTS

Nil.

The report set out above has been reviewed and the information verified by the individuals listed below.

KRYSTIN STITT
PROJECT MANAGEMENT SPECIALIST

OCTOBER 21, 2024
DATE

PAT HUFFMAN
TREASURER

OCTOBER 21, 2024
DATE

ALISON TUTAK
INTERIM CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

OCTOBER 29, 2024
DATE